A COMMENTARY VPON THE PROPHECIE OF ISAIAH.

By

M^r. IOHN CALVIN.

WHEREVNTO ARE ADDED FOVRE TABLES: The first touching places of Scripture alleaged: The second, of the principall matters handled: The third, of Authors and diuers names mentioned: The fourth, of certaine texts cited out of Isaiah in the new Testament, Which by the Author in the Commentarie are compared and reconciled.

TRANSLATED OVT OF FRENCH INTO ENGLISH: BY C.C.

Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sinne of the world. Iohn 1.29.

To him also giue all the Prophets witnesse, that through his name all that beleeue in him, shall receiue remission of sinnes. Act.10.43.

Lord, who will beleeue our report? And to whom is the arme of the Lord reuealed? Isai.53.1. Iohn 12.37.38.

AT LONDON
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A
COMMENTARY
UPON THE PROPHECIES
OF ISAIAH.

TO THE HIGH AND MIGHTIE PRINCE,

HENRIE, PRINCE OF GREAT BRITTAINE, SONNE AND HEIRE APPARANT TO our Soueraigne Lord, IAMES King of *Great Brittaine, &c.*

AND TO THE MOST NOBLE AND VERTVOVS PRINCESSE, THE LADY ELIZABETHS GRACE, his Highneſſe moſt deare Siſter; all honour and happineſſe, *with eternall glorie through Chriſt* IESVS.

MOſt gracious and renowned Princes, hauing tranſlated out of French into our Engliſh tongue, the booke of the prophecie of *Iſaiah*, interpreted and expounded by Maſter *Iohn Caluin*, of reuerend memorie: I humblie craue that it may be publiſhed vnder your moſt Princely names and protection. The reaſon of this my humble petition is, that the honor of ſo noble a worke may not be imbaſed by the meanes of my endeuours. This Prophet by birth was the ſonne of *Amos*, eſteemed by many to haue been brother to *Azarias* King of Iudah, and Father in law to King *Manaſſes*: which being ſo, this Prophet was by birth of the blood Royal, and deſcended of the houſe of *Dauid*, which for the promiſe of Chriſt to come of him, was the moſt noble houſe of all the Kings of the earth. Being ſo borne, his education could not be but Princely, and his bringing vp in all good learning, wiſdome, vertue and honor. His ſpirituall graces, not attained vnto by ordinarie meanes, but inſpired into him immediatly by the Spirit of God, were excellent. This appeareth particularly in the ſixth Chapter of this Prophecie, declaring that an An-

gell of God with a burning coale taken from the Lords Altar, and laide to the mouth of the Prophet, refined his lips and his tongue, that they became pure and precious as the fineſt Gold. The ſame is manifeſt in all the booke of his Prophecie; wherein both the light and the heate of that heauenly fire appeareth. For he not onely declared the will of God ſincerely, according to the lawe and teſtimonie deliuered to *Moſes*, but alſo foreſhewed the future euents of the Kingdome of *Judah*, and of all the flouriſhing ſtates and Kingdomes of his time.

He Prophecieth alſo of the birth of Ieſus Chriſt, as if hee had been taught by the Angell *Gabriel*; who brought the annunciation and meſſage of it to the bleſſed Virgin his mother. Of his paſſion and death he ſpake, as if with the Apoſtle *John* he had ſtoode by when he was crucified. His reſurrection he deſcribed, as if with all the Apoſtles he had ſtoode vpon Mount Oliuet, where the Lord tooke the cloude of glorie as his heauenly Chariot to aſcend and goe vp to his Father. His zeale and indignation againſt ſinne is euident euery where, in his ſharpe reproofes of the offences of all eſtates.

Finally, the booke of his Prophecie beareth written in the head of it the names of foure Kings, in whoſe time he prophecied; and before whom as a veſſell of golde he bare the name of God with great honour. All which things being royall, it ſeemed to me moſt conuenient that his booke ſhould ſtill beare in the front of it the names of Princes. And as hee foreſhewed that Kings ſhould bee Foſterfathers, and Queenes Nurces of the Church of Chriſt, ſo my deſire was that his booke might be publiſhed vnder the names and protection of Chriſtian Princes.

Moreouer, I was led hereunto by the example of this Interpreter, whoſe expoſition vpon *Iſaias* propheſie I tranſlate; namelie, of M. *John Caluin*, a man in his time of excellent pietie and learning; and one of the great lights, whereby it hath pleaſed God both to chaſe away the errors of poperie, as the darknes of the ſhadow of death; and to cauſe his maruellous and comfortable light of the Goſpell to ſhine vnto this preſent age. For hee dedicated his firſt expoſition of this booke to the young Prince, King *Edward* the ſixth, of famous memorie, for the princelie graces, for the zealous loue of true religion, and of al heroical vertues, wherewith in his young yeeres he raiſed an admirable expectation of future

ture glorie, if his precious life had long continued. He was also most worthily renowned with highest glorie, for that gracious reformation in religiō, which was established by his regal authority, and which our English Church at this day with great comfort doth enioy, vnder the happie gouernment of our Soueraigne Lord the King, your most noble and renowned Father.

Furthermore, the same Author setting out againe this Commentarie, amplified and enlarged, he dedicated this second edition to our late most gracious Queene *Elizabeth*, worthie of eternall memorie in this Kingdome, for the reestablishing (after a few yeeres alteration) of the zealous reformation of her most vertuous brother. Which example hath led mee in most humble manner to seeke for the same worke, the high patronage and protection of such Princes, like those to whom hee presented this his seruice.

To whom I know none so like as your selues, both in regard of your high estate, and also in like most noble descent from the vnited houses of Yorke and Lancaster. Besides which resemblance, your Highnesse also is of like yeeres to the yong Prince King *Edward*, and in the eies of all the kingdome, of like hope of excellent vertue and zealous proceedings in the aduancement of Christian religion.

In like manner your Grace resembleth the most gracious late Queene *Elizabeth*, both in her royall name, and also in the constant expectation of all men, to expresse in time all the princely vertues and graces that shined in that most renowned Princesse, from this Westerne part of the world, to the furthest East, and to the rising of the Sunne.

In which respects, esteeming such a dedication, most like that which my author made of his owne worke, I haue most humblie craued that this my translation of it might bee vouchsafed the honour to haue your Princelie names written in the beginning of it. For notwithstanding the great difference that is betweene a reuerend learned writer and expounder of the holie Scriptures, and the translator of such an exposition, yet this meane seruice hath also his good vse in the Church of God; and is of long and tedious labour to such as take paines therein; which being graciously accepted, may encourage others to trauell in this kind, and cause many to giue thankes to God for you both, by whose most

princely fauours and protection, they are made partakers of ſuch worthie writings. And I ſhall alwaies pray Almightie God, with this new yeere, to multiply many more vpon you, and dailie repleniſh your hearts with all princely and heroicall graces, that may enable and adorne Princes of ſo hie eſtates, amongſt this people.

Your Highneſſe, and Graces moſt humblie deuoted, in all loyall and dutifull affection,

CLEMENT COTTON.

TO THE MOST HIGH AND RENOWMED PRINCESSE,

ELIZABETH, Queene of England, &c. A most gracious *defender of the true Christian Faith.*

IOHN CALVIN.

ALthough in correcting and polishing of this Commentary, most noble Queene, I haue trauelled with such diligence, that it may well be esteemed a new booke: yet because in the first edition it was dedicated to your brother King Edward, *who in his infancy farre surpassed the men of his time; whose memorie also I wish euer to flourish, as worthily it deserues: I was determined to alter nothing touching the inscription. But because in this miserable and wofull scattering of the Church, and the abolishing of the sincere doctrine which hath happened in so short a space, with an incredible violence; this booke, with the whole word of God, was banished England for a time: and that now as I hope it shall be receiued (as before) at your happie entrance into that kingdome; I haue committed no absurditie, as I thinke, if together with the name of so worthy and excellent a King, I also ioyne yours; which all good men do both loue and honour. Yea, besides this occasion which thus offers it selfe; necessitie also may seeme to require that I should intreate your fauour touching this Commentarie in particular; the banishment whereof hath (I am well assured) been much lamented by very many of the faithfull, your louing subiects.*

Although I confesse my meaning is not so much to obtaine your fauour onely in respect of my labours, as humblie to beseech, yea and by the sacred name of Christ to adiure you, that not onely all good bookes may againe find intertainement, and bee freely vsed in your kingdome vnder your allowance: but also that you be carefull in the first place, of that true religion which hath been shamefully corrupted. If Iesus Christ, the onely sonne of God doth iustly challenge this of all the Kings of the earth, then hath he bound you, most noble Queene, with a more holy band to put your sacred hand to such a worke. For in that time wherein your selfe, the daughter of a King, were not free from that dreadfull tempest rushing downe so furiouslie vpon the heads of all the faithfull; (this Lord Iesus I say) plucking you safe thereout, albeit you had your part with them in the feare of this danger; he hath obliged you to vow your selfe and all your designes to his seruice. And so farre is it off that you haue any cause to blush in respect of such a deliuerance, that contrariwise God hath therein giuen you ample and plentifull matter of reioycing, in vouchsafing thus to conforme you to the Image of his sonne; vnto whom our Prophet among other glorious titles giues him this, namely, That out of prison, and from iudgement was he taken, and exalted vnto a soueraigne degree of celestiall rule and dominion. As it is not a common honour then to resemble such a Patron: so as oft as you shall call the same to mind (which you should neuer forget) out of what perplexed and wofull feares you are escaped through

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Gods prouidence, who hath in a visible manner as it were, reached forth his hand from heauen vnto you. Know yee, that he sets this marke before you; namely, that with a feareless constancie, and an inuincible magnanimitie of mind, you should interchangeablie reserue vnto your Protector and Redeemer, that right which vnto him appertaineth; and setting all other businesses aside (with which on all sides you shall be enuironed in these beginnings of your reigne) you will (which I nothing doubt of) giue such order that his seruice vnworthilie corrupted for a time in your countrie, may bee there reestablished in its first glory.

And if Satan endeuour to terrifie, or weaken you in proposing many and great impediments; you know of whom you ought to craue courage, cheerefully to goe on, and to ouercome all obstacles. God also for his part, who approoues of mens particular actions, will crowne in you his worke, with an happie and wished end.

Moreouer, your dutie to religion, most excellent Queene, should the rather prouoke you; seeing our Isaiah requires, that Queenes should be no lesse nurcing mothers to his Church, then Kings the nurcing fathers thereof. Neither are you only bound to purge out the filth of poperie againe; and that the flocke lately affrighted and dispersed, be againe gathered together and fostered: but that you also call home the banished exiles, who chose rather to lose the present profits of their natiue countrie, then there to continue, whilest pietie was chased thence. Here is the summe of your thankefulnesse towards God, and a sacrifice of a most sweet sauour, namely, that the faithfull seruants of God, who were constrained to wander to and fro in farre countries for the profession of the Gospell, may now returne home to their houses by your fauour.

As for vs, who for good cause haue bitterly bewailed so lamentable a spectacle (we, I say) haue iust occasion giuen vs now to be glad, and to gratifie you, when by the clemencie of your eie, we presently see the way made open to our brethren, not onelie to serue God with freedome in your Maiesties dominions; but also to be a meanes whereby others may enioy the like benefit there with them.

To conclude, most noble Queene, if of your fauour you accept (as I hope you will) this testimonie of the reuerence which I owe to your Greatnesse; though many may esteeme the same small and contemptible: yet shall I thinke my selfe abundantly recompenced, and will all my life endeuour by all meanes possible to manifest my thankefulnesse to your Highnesse for the same.

The Lord guide and gouerne you, most noble Queene, by his Spirit of wisdome; strengthen you with inuincible fortitude; defend and inrich your Highnes with all sorts of blessings. From Geneua, the yeere 1559. Ianuarie the 15. which, as they say, is appointed for the day of your Coronation; for which cause I did the more willingly set pen to paper, hauing obtained some release from a quartan Ague.

TO

TO THE MOST NOBLE AND RENOWMED, EDVVARD THE sixth, King of England, &c. A true Christian *Prince*.

IOHN CALVIN.

ALbeit I acknowledge (most noble Prince) this Commentarie to be faithfully and aptly gathered from my ordinarie readings: yet in regard it was polished by another hand; at the first I feared, lest being published vnder the title of your name, it might seeme I had not furnished my selfe with a present worthie of your Maiestie. But one speciall reason among others, in the end freed mee from this feare; namely, that as this Princely Prophet descended of the blood Royall; and a most honourable Ambassador of Christ the Soueraigne King, suted well with your person: so I hoped that my labours which I haue taken in expounding his prophecies, would bee accepted and esteemed of you.

Moreouer, seeing he had good experience of the disposition of fiue Kings, far vnlike each other, to whom he continually preached: yet I need not aduertise you, which of these you ought to follow, neither yet to exhort you to the performance of such duties, vnto which you shew your selfe alreadie most willing.

Vzziah and *Iotham* fauoured him; and yet they wanted sufficient courage in erecting Gods pure worship: the greatest conflicts he sustained was with *Ahaz*: not that he was an open enemie; but a false hypocrite, full of dissimulation, and treacherie. And what enemies (I pray you) gaule Gods seruants more then such? His successor *Hezechiah* not only reuerenced this holy personage, but also modestly, as one of the cõmon sort, submitted himselfe to his doctrine; obeyed his counsels, and suffered himself to be gouerned by his admonitions. Nay which is more, he willingly yeelded to be sharply reprooued by the Prophet when need required. The last, which was *Manasses*, who, as all the Iewes with one consent affirme, was his father in law, wickedly slew him by cruell torments. Yea, euen during the time that good Kings aided him, and also vnder *Hezechias*; who shewed himselfe so godly a protector of pietie and godlinesse, yet then, was he continually vexed with sharpe and tedious trauels, and made to vndergoe very grieuous conflicts: so difficult and rare a thing is it to see men consent to wholsome doctrine. I say more; such as will faithfullie and vprightly discharge their duties in this propheticall function, must needes make account to be at continuall oddes with the world. So much the more therefore ought faithfull Kings, by their defence, to succour the Ministers of Christ, that they be not molested nor pressed aboue measure, by the insolencie of the wicked.

But by how much the more as this vertue is excellent, and truely heroicall; so if wee shall call to mind what hath past in all the ages from the first (till now;) how rarely hath it been found; or how few haue giuen themselues to the practise of it? Many being remisse and fainthearted, haue through meere negligence suffered Gods truth to be suppressed, as if the matter had not at all concerned them. The greater part shewing themselues aduersaries, haue with furie and violence rushed against it. And would to God all those who at this day professe themselues Christians, had but so much heart to aduance the doctrine of saluation, as they are proude in glorying of this name.

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But to be ſilent touching others, we may yet at the laſt worthilie eſteeme this comfort not as a common fauour, in the miſeries wherein the Church now is, that you, moſt noble King, haue been raiſed vp of God, with this ſpirit, and excellent magnanimitie of mind, to maintaine the pure religion; and as effectually to offer vnto God your ſeruice in this behalfe, as you know he receiues and approoues the ſame at your Maieſties hands. For howſoeuer the affaires of the Kingdome be yet managed by your honourable Counſell: and that as wel the moſt noble Duke of Sommerſet, your Maieſties Vncle, as alſo many others, haue taken the cauſe of religion ſo to heart, that they labour diligently (as it is very fit they ſhould) to eſtabliſh the ſame: yet doe you in ſuch ſort outgoe them all; that it well appeares, the zeale which they ſee in you prouokes them not a little to follow you. For you haue the fame, not only to be of ſuch a princely diſpoſition as promiſeth much, and to haue ſome ſeeds of vertues alſo, (which yet neuertheleſſe ſeemes great in ſo young yeeres) but more then that, ſuch a ripeneſſe of theſe vertues alreadie growne beyond your age; which to the moſt aged, gets not only rare praiſe, but alſo makes them much to be admired. And aboue al, ſo greatly is your pietie commended, that I am very wel aſſured our Prophet ſhal haueone, that wil with like reſpect reuerence him being dead, as *Hezekias* did whileſt he was liuing.

As concerning the fruite which may happily redound vnto you thereby, it is beſt your ſelfe ſhould learne it by your owne experience in reading of him: and yet I haue touched that alſo a little in the preface. There is only one thing which I haue determined to ſay vnto your Maieſtie, (and this it is:) After the Prophet hath laid foorth Gods iuſt complaints againſt this ſo vnthankfull a people, and hath threatned the Iewes with ſuch chaſtiſements as their diſloyall reuolt, and deſperate obſtinacie deſerued; namely, that the time approched, wherein they ſhould be brought to an horrible ruine: foorthwith comming to ſet foorth the new and incredible reſtauration of the Church, hee promiſeth that God will ſo reſpect the ſame, that in deſpite of all her enemies, ſhee ſhall alwaies flouriſh in beauty, and happineſſe. Thoſe which returned from the captiuitie of Babylon felt this ioyous and bleſſed eſtate, when the ſacrifices being againe newly erected, they might conceiue ſome good hope of greater benefits, then thoſe which they then enioyed: as when we behold the breake of day, wee expect the Sunne-riſing ſoone after. But when Chriſt the ſunne of righteouſneſſe appeared with his glorie in his Goſpell, the thing it ſelfe greatly ſurpaſſed all that which had been highlie praiſed by the Prophets reuelations.

Within ſhort ſpace the knowledge of the true God was diſperſed almoſt throughout the whole world. The pure religion which before was deſpiſed and ſhut vp within the bounds of Iudeah (as in a narrow corner) now began to bee ſpread into al nations and prouinces, yea, ſo honoured, that God was called vpon with one conſent of faith by infinit multitudes. The ſonne of God hauing here and there gathered the Churches, ſet vp his royall throne, and aduanced the ſame into the higheſt degree to be ſeene of all from the Eaſt vnto the Weſt. The Churches adorned with admirable graces of the holy Ghoſt, not onely taſted of the incomparable fruite of the diuine goodneſſe, but were alſo faire and ſhining theaters to manifeſt the wonderfull power of God, euen to ſuch as were blind. And albeit, Chriſt raigned vnder the croſſe, yet amiddeſt the fierie conflicts and perſecutions, his glorie ſhined more glorioufllie, and his triumphs more ſtately, then if the Church had alwaies enioyed tranquillitie.

In the end it came to paſſe, that that hautie pride of the Romane Empire ſubmitting it ſelf alſo vnto Chriſt, was a ſingular ornament to the houſe of God. But the malice & ingratitude of men was the cauſe why this happineſſe laſted not ſucceſſiuely. And ſo the ſpouſe of Chriſt as one ſtripped of ſo pretious a robe, ſpoiled of her dignitie, and depriued of her honourable attire, was brought backe againe to a miſerable deformitie: yet God alwaies preſerued ſome remainders, as it were in ſecret corners; but as touching the outward face of the Church, for the ſpace of many yeeres, nothing appeared any where, but ſcatterings and confuſed waſts. And we at this day behold how the Roman Antichriſt, vſurping farre and neere ouer the ſanctuarie of the Lord, by a ſacrilegious tyrannie holds it vnder his feet rent and oppreſſed. For ſeeing the puritie of doctrine is there corrupted by monſtrous errors, and that Gods ſeruice being ouerturned, idolatries raigne there without number; that in ſtead of a gouernement rightly inſtituted, a cruell torture hath been

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brought in, that the Sacraments be in part by grosse and absurd abuses corrupted, and partly shamefully set to sale? what remaine there (I pray you) but wofull ruines of that naturall beautie of the spirituall building?

Notwithstanding the Lord in our times hath begun againe to set vp that which was fallen downe, that at least there might be some image of the true Temple where he was purely serued according as he hath ordained in the Gospel. To which end he hath selected our as it were from among the least of the common people, his chiefe builders, to aduance this worke by sincere doctrine. I grant, it is of it selfe a difficult worke, and of great waight, though Satan should let vs alone in quiet. But if euen now whileſt some part of this building is raised vp, he doth his vtmost to break it downe, is it any maruell if we labour much, and with great care, & yet see little or no fruit for the present to come of our labors? Therfore these mightie Giants proudly scorne vs: as if whileſt we studying how to practise the ruine of the tyrannous Romane sea; wee should striue to ouerthrow the mount Olympus.

These great wits also, who (as they thinke) know somewhat, deride our diligence; in regard we are so earnestly busied in restoring the Church to her first estate: as if in the same any certaine or setled estate were to be expected. For these (forsooth) imagine that they are so well founded, and on all sides so furnished, that it is no lesse easie to abolish poperie, then to mingle heauen and earth together. But the conceit of these wise men differs somewhat. For in regard the peruersitie of the world is so great, that it cannot be held in awe, they thinke we trauel in vaine, and against the streame to seeke in correcting vices, to haue a pure and sincere administration of a Church. The flout of *Erasmus* is well enough knowne; What hopes *Capito* of the tenth which shall come after him? It cannot be denied but *Wolfangus Capito* was an holy man, who with a most sincere affection endeuoured to purge the Church. But because he was perswaded that the Ministers of Christ should no lesse lose their labour in correcting the stubbornenesse of the world, then if they should haue taken vpon them to haue forced the streame the contrarie way (for thus they are wont to thinke who talke of things in the shade) he taxeth vs all of inconsiderate zeale in the person of one. But both the one and the other are much deceiued, in that they consider not, that wee so imploy our selues in the Lords seruice, as he hath commanded, that in the meane while the restauration of the Church is meerely the worke of his owne hands. Neither is it without cause that the whole Sctipture commonly testifies, and that our Prophet againe and againe so carefully repeates it. Wherefore being mindfull of this doctrine, let vs no way be discouraged from vndertaking vnder Gods guidance, a businesse which farre surmounts our owne abilities; that so no encumbrances may either breake off our purpose, or so weaken vs, that we should desist from our enterprise.

And here I doe expresly summon you, most excellent King, or rather God by the mouth of his Prophet *Isaiah* calles you, namely, to goe on in imploying whatsoeuer power and force God hath endued you withall; and with new encreases to set forward the restauration of the Church, which is now so happily begun in your kingdome. First, you daily heare and reade that this charge is committed vnto you in that Kingdom ouer which God hath placed you. Yea, and *Isaiah*, as I haue said, calling Kings nurcing fathers of the Church, permits not that the helpe which shee in this behalfe requires of you in her affliction, should now be wanting vnto her. Neither ought your heart to bee lightly touched with that, where the Prophet denounceth an heauie curse to fall vpon all Kings and nations, which shall defraud her of their aide.

Againe, your Maiestie also euidently knowes, that euen the necessitie of these times requires it. And albeit by your endeuours, it may be you shall gaine little; yet knowing how acceptable a seruice this is vnto God, and that it is a sweete smelling sauour in his nostrils, no dangers whatsoeuer ought to turne you from this enterprise.

Seeing then that God thus exhorts you to behaue your selfe valiantly, and therewithall promiseth you an happy issue: why shuld you not cheerfully follow him whē he cals you? In another place our Prophet cries; *Prepare, prepare the way for my people.* It is wel enough knowne, how there was no hope that the poore captiues could bee restored home to their countrie againe, neither was this presently performed. But in regard the Prophet by the spirit of prophesie, then foresaw what the posteritie should effectually feele, lest by so la-

mentable a ſpectacle, the faithfull might be diſcouraged, he preuents them betimes; telling them that there are no obſtacles or impediments, whatſoeuer (be they as firme and as cloſe as they may be) thorow which God wil not make a way to deliuer his Church. Neither do we ſtand in leſſe need of conſolation to quicken vs vp at this day. And as for you, moſt noble King, it is very requiſit that you be readie and watchfull, in reſpect of the charge which is committed vnto you, ſeeing *Iſaiah* exhorts all Kings and Magiſtrates, in the perſon of *Cyrus*, to reach foorth their hand to the Church in her trauel, to the end ſhee may be reſtored to her former eſtate. Although in this regard your condition differs much from that of *Cyrus*, in that he being but a ſtranger ouer the Lords flock was neuer taught expreſſlie, willingly, and with a franke courage to offer himſelf to reſtore & maintaine the Church: but you, whom the Lord hath not only vouchſafed to receiue by adoption, but hath alſo placed you in higheſt ranke among his children; the Prophet calles you to this office, as if he reached you out his hand. So much the more confidently therefore, and with the more ardent affection ought you to proceede on in this race. The matter (as I haue ſaid) is in it ſelfe full of great difficulties, intangled with much tedioufneſſe, and mingled with dangers; becauſe Satan ceaſeth not to broch his cunning ſhifts and deuices (if by any meane he might) either to ouerthrow, or deſtroy the holie temple of God; ſometimes alſo God by ſuch trials will prooue our conſtancie. But if you be reſolued, that hitherto you haue enterpriſed nothing by your moſt graue Counſell but by diuine authoritie from Gods word, and that for the preſent you ſo continue in reſtoring the eſtate of ỹ Church, no doubt but you ſhall find by experience how wonderfully God will effect that which he hath giuen his Miniſters in charge. England ſhall receiue an incomparable fruit from this ſo happie a going forward: and we ſhall haue cauſe too, with you and your whole kingdome to reioyce. In the meane while I will not ceaſe to further your holy endeuours, as there is good cauſe, by my poore prayers, in regard they are the beſt meanes I am able to afford you.

Farewell moſt noble King. The Lord long preſerue your flouriſhing eſtate, aſſiſt and guide you by his holy ſpirit, and in all things bleſſe and proſper you. So be it. From Geneua this fiue and twentieth of December.

1551.



To the Reader.

OF ſuch pretious eſteeme (Chriſtian Reader) were the expoſitions of this reuerend author in the Church of *Geneua*, that albeit ſome of them were by himſelf * ſpoken, and others of them * written in Latin; and that in fauor of the learned eſpecially: yet becauſe with his more then ordinarie depth of iudgement he alwaies matched a ſingular ſimplicitie and plaineneſſe, ſo that hee therein ſtoopes to the capacitie, euen of the ſimpleſt; it was thought fit, that by ſome of good note in the ſaid Church, they ſhould all be tranſlated into the vulgar French, for the benefit of all ſuch as vnderſtood the ſame.

* To wit, his ordinarie Lectures vpon the Prophets, which being read in the Schooles, were by approued Notaries there, taken from his mouth verbatim, and afterwards vnder the title of his leſſons, or readings, imprinted.

Which commendable zeale and godly care of theirs, as it worthily prouoked many of this our Church for the common good, (at the happie entrance of our late deare and dread Soueraigne Ladie Queene *Elizabeth* into this kingdome) to tranſlate diuers of his Commentaries vpon the bookes both of the * old, and * new Teſtament into Engliſh; ſo if their good beginnings had been ſeconded by anſwerable proceedings, thouſands might, I doubt not, haue reaped the like fruit by thoſe that are yet * vntranſlated, which they haue done by the former. Wherefore, this ſeruice to the Church of God hauing been a long time neglected, and not hearing of any that purpoſed to ſet his helping hand to this ſo neceſſarie a buſineſſe, I thought it might happily prooue a labour not altogether vnſeaſonable nor vnprofitable, if according to my poore abilitie I endeuoured either to continue forth thoſe former good beginnings, or at leaſt thereby to quicken vp the care of ſuch as are much more able then my ſelfe, to proſecute the ſame.

* Namely, his Commentaries, which were written by him at ſpare times in the houſe.

* Geneſis, Ioſhua, and Pſalmes.

* All the Euangeliſts, Acts, Rom. &c.

* Namely, his leſſons vpon the prophecie of Ieremiah, the Lamentations, Ezechiel, &c.

To which purpoſe (good Reader) ſome few yeeres ſince, for the firſt aſſay, I ſelected out of this learned Authors workes in French, his Commentary vpon the Hebrewes, not before tranſlated; which being authorized, I was bold ſoone after to preſent thee therewith. Now becauſe, as I ſuppoſe, it hath not paſſed abroad without ſome good fruit, it hath the rather incouraged me once more, whileſt I profited my ſelfe in reading this Commentarie vpon the princelie Prophet *Iſaiah*, to haue ſome reſpect of thy profiting alſo. For which cauſe thou haſt the ſame now, as the former; tranſlated, allowed, and alſo publiſhed (if thou wilt) for thy particular vſe and profit.

As touching the fruit that is thence to be reaped, it would bee much better that thy ſelf from thine owne experience mighteſt be able to report, then for me here at large to dilate. Only this I thinke I may not omit: if in reading this propheſie thou wouldeſt haue the difficulties therein cleared; thy iudgement in other things not obſcure, either rectified, or confirmed; thy meditations concerning diuers ſorts of inſtructions, menaces, reprehenſions, promiſes, and conſolations enlarged; loe here a *Philip* readie at hand in any of theſe things to ſa- Act 8. 27. to 39.

tisfie thy desires. To conclude, if thou entrest vpon the reading of this booke, and wouldest indeede benefit thy selfe thereby, then giue me leaue to vse the
Gal.6.9. Apostles exhortation (though by him vsed to another purpose) *Be not wearie in weldoing*, but proceed on constantlie, *so shalt thou* (I doubt not) *in due season reape, if thou faint not.*

Farewell, and profit more and more in the studie of Gods word, neuer giuing the Lord rest day nor night, till in the truth of thy heart, thou canst in some good measure professe with these three Worthies following, that thou likewise hast made the same thy chiefe repast, delight and treasure.

Iob. *I haue not departed from the commandements of his lippes, and I haue esteemed the words of his mouth more then mine appointed foode:* Iob 23.12.

Ieremiah. *Thy words are found by me, and I did eate them, and thy word was vnto mee the ioy and reioycing of mine heart:* Ier.15.16.

Dauid. *The law of thy mouth is better vnto mee then thousands of gold and siluer:* Psalm.119.72.

Thine in Christ, C. C.

THE FRENCH TRANSLATOR TO THE READER.

IT is twentie yeeres ſince and more, good Reader, that the leſſons of M. Iohn Caluin vpon the Prophet Iſaiah (which being collected by M. Nicolas Gallars) were printed vnder the title of a Commentarie; and dedicated to that noble Prince of bleſſed memorie, Edward the ſixth, King of England. A long time after, the Author himſelfe reuiewing this collection, imprinted both in Latin, and in French: ſatisfied not himſelfe only to reuiew it, thereby to explane that, which otherwiſe ſeemed obſcure, by reaſon of the breuitie of it; and to ſet that in order, which was ſomewhat confuſed: but he laboured therein with ſuch diligence and good ſucceſſe, that he augmented it in Latin with excellent and neceſſarie matters for the vnderſtanding of the text; more then the third part: bringing all things into ſo exact a forme, that if any bee pleaſed to take ſo much paines, as to conferre the firſt Commentarie or collection of thoſe leſſons, with this ſecond; he ſhall find that which we haue ſaid to be very true. Neither was this gathered in the ſchooles the ſecond time, as at the firſt; but was written in the houſe, euen word for word by the Authors owne direction: who hath ſo aptly diſpoſed and couched the whole together, that in peruſing of it, you ſhall perceiue in this booke, as well as in others which haue alreadie paſſed his hands, that he hath done great ſeruice to the Church of God, and hath alſo faithfully chalked out the way vnto ſuch as deſire to profit in diuine ſtudies. But eſpecially by theſe his Commentaries, which being carefully read, will ſerue no leſſe to the explaning of many texts that are contained in other bookes of the holy Scripture, as they will alſo be moſt helpefull to giue the true ſenſe of the Prophet Iſaiah; which hath mooued mee (good Reader) to beſtow my paines in tranſlating the whole anew into French: leſt ſuch among you as vnderſtand not the Latin tongue, ſhould be deprined of ſo great a benefit.

Reade, and profit thereby in the feare of God.

A PREFACE TO THE PROPHECIE OF ISAIAH:

BY Mr. IOHN CALVIN.

THey haue been wont to spend many words in setting forth the office of the Prophets. But I see no readier way then to referre them to the law; whence their doctrine is drawne, as the riuers from the fountaines. For they set the law before them for their imitation, so as by good right we may affirme and hold them to be the expositors thereof, in whom there is nothing separate from it. Now the Law containes three points. First, the doctrine of life: secondly, the threatnings and promises: thirdly, the couenant of grace, which is founded in Christ.

The Prophets ground their doctrin vpon the law.

Whereof they are the Expositors.

The law containes three points:

For as touching the Ceremonies, they were exercises, by which the people were held in the seruice of God, and in godlinesse; according to the Contents of the first Table.

The Prophets then expound the doctrine thereof more at large; and lay that foorth in more plaine termes, which is brieflie contained in the two tables; teaching that which the Lord principallie requires.

As touching the threatnings and promises which *Moses* touched in generall; they applie them to their owne times, and describe them particularly. Lastlie, that which is said obscurely in *Moses*, touching Christ and his grace; they set it foorth more perspicuouslie, and alleage more ample and abundant testimonies of the free couenant.

Threatnings:

Promises:

But that the thing may be more cleere, we must fetch the matter further off; namely, from the Law it selfe, which God ordained as a perpetuall rule for his Church, that it might alwaies be in mens hands: and that all their successors should follow it.

Now because this doctrin of the law sufficed not this obstinate & vnruly people; the Lord also foreseeing that they would neuer be held in, vnlesse it were by some bridle: hee addes a prohibition, not to seeke to Magitians, Southsayers, Inchanters, Sorcerers, nor to such as regard the times, or the flying of birds, to such as asked counsell of familiar spirits, or at the dead; because such things were an abomination to the Lord.

Prohibitions. *Deut.* 18.9. 10.11.12.

And to preuent the replies which they might make, namely, that their condition should be worse, then that of the infidels, who had their Southsayers, Astrologers, Sacrificers, and such like, of whom they might aske aduice and counsel; but they shuld be destituted of any that might be able to giue them satisfaction in doubtful and intricat causes: herein, to take away al pretext, & that they might not defile themselues in these execrable customes of the Gentiles, God

Deut.18. promiseth to raise them vp *Prophets*, by whom he wil manifest his wil, who also shall faithfully teach them whatsoeuer hee shall giue them in charge; that they might haue no cause to complaine for the time to come, as if any thing were wanting vnto them.

I grant, that in that place *Moses* mentions a *Prophet*, and not Prophets. Notwithstanding it is a change of the number, to wit, the singular for the plurall, a thing common in the Scriptures. And howsoeuer the place ought properly and principally to bee vnderstood of Christ (as S. *Peter* expounds it Act.3.) in regard he is the Prince of the Prophets, and that all of them, with their doctrine also depend vpon him, and with one consent aime at him: yet by this name, which is collectiue, it also comprehends the rest of the Prophets.

The Lord then hauing promised them Prophets, by whom hee would declare vnto them his counsell and will, he commanded the people to rest in their exposition and doctrine. Not that the Prophets should adde any thing to the law, but that they should faithfully expound the same, and conserue the authoritie thereof.

Whence also it is, that *Malachi* exhorting the people to persist in that doctrine, saith, or rather God by him: *Remember the Law of Moses my seruant, which I gaue him in Horeb for all Israel.* Thus bringing them backe to Gods law *only*; and commanding them to be *content therewith.* But would *Malachi* haue them to despise the *Prophets* then? No. But for asmuch as the propheſies are dependances of the law, and that the law summarilie comprehends them all, this exhortation sufficed. For such as are well acquainted with the summe of the doctrine, and principall heads of it, hauing their willes well inclined thereto; it is certaine that they will not contemne the propheſies: for it were a thing too fond to boast of hauing affection to the law, and yet in the meane while not to make any account of the diuine interpretation thereof: such as are some at this day, who are so shameleſse, that they dare brag of louing Gods law, and the whilest cannot endure to bee admonished or reprehended by the doctrine which is drawne and collected from the same.

Mal.4.4.

Note.

Thus when the Prophets deale with mens manners, they bring in no new thing, but explane those things which were misunderstood in the law. As for example, the people thought they had done their duties to the vtmost, when they had offered sacrifices, and obserued the ceremonies: for the world is wont alwaies to measure God according to their owne ell, and to botch him vp a carnall seruice. This corruption the Prophets reproue sharpely, shewing that all ceremonies are nothing where the integritie of the heart is wanting; and that God will be worshipped by faith, and a right inuocating of his name. This was manifested to them plainely enough in the law, but it was needfull it should take a deeper impression, and that they should be put againe in mind of it. The hypocrisie, wherewith men maske themselues vnder the vaile of ceremonies, was to be discouered.

The first table.

The second table.

As touching the second table, the Prophets thence drew their exhortations, shewing how all wrong, fraud and violence was to be abandoned. The Prophets office then was nothing else, but to hold the people in obedience to Gods law.

In the threatnings and promises they haue something more speciall. For what *Moses* propounded in generall, they describe in particular. Besides, they had visions, which were proper to them: by which the Lord reuealed things to come, that so they might applie the promise and threatnings to the peoples vse, and might further assure them of Gods will.

Threatnings.

Visions.

Moses

Moſes threatens, *God will purſue thee with the ſword, the enemies ſhall vex thee without*, and within, domeſticall contentions ſhall *annoy thee. Thy life ſhall hang as by a thread; thou ſhalt tremble at the ſhaking of a leafe*; and ſuch other things. Moſes.

But the Prophets ſay: *Behold, God hath raiſed againſt thee the ſword of the Chaldeans, and of the Egyptians:* alſo, *God hath armed theſe to the battell. This citie ſhall be deſtroyed at ſuch a time.* The like is to be ſaid of the promiſes. The Prophets

Moſes ſaith, *If thou obſerueſt the commandements, God will bleſſe thee.* And then he goes on in recounting bleſſings in generall. Moſes.

But the Prophets in particular affirme, *The Lord will bleſſe thee in ſuch a thing.* The Propheis

Alſo the Lord promiſeth by *Moſes* in theſe words, *Although thou wert ſcattered and driuen to the vtmoſt parts of the earth, yet from thence will I gather thee.* Moſes.

But the Prophets promiſe, that albeit the Lord hath ſcattered them *as farre as Babylon, yet within 70. yeeres he will cauſe their captiuitie to returne.* The Prophets

And as touching the free couenant which God made with man through Chriſt, the Prophets are much more euident, and doe much more confirme the people in it. For they *ſet Chriſt before their eies*, when they would comfort the faithfull, and raiſe vp their minds to the hope of his comming, euen as it were to the foundation, and to the place of the couenant, vnto whom the effect of the promiſes was to be referred. Couenant of grace.

Whoſoeuer ſhall ponder theſe things, ſhall eaſilie perceiue what hee is to ſeeke in the Prophets, and whereunto their writtings tend. But for the preſent, it ſufficeth that we haue pointed it foorth as with the finger.

Hence we may ſoone gather how wee ought to handle the doctrine of the word, and how we ought to imitate the Prophets; who ſo much admired it, that thence they collected the admonitions, reprehenſions, threatnings and conſolations, to applie them to the peoples vſe. For though it be not dailie reuealed vnto vs what we ought to doe, yet are wee to compare the conuerſation of the people of our times, with that of the people of old; and by hiſtories and examples to denounce the iudgements of God. Namely, that from the vengeance he tooke vpon ſuch ſinnes in that time, he will likewiſe be reuenged vpon thoſe that reigne euery where in our time. Why ſo? Becauſe he is alwaies like himſelfe. Note. God alwaies like himſelfe.

The faithfull teachers then muſt come furniſhed with the like wiſdome, if they meane to handle the doctrine of the Prophets profitablie. Thus much as touching the propheſies in generall.

To come to our Prophet *Iſaiah*: the inſcription ſufficiently ſhewes both what he was, and in what time he publiſhed his propheſies. For his father is here named, to wit, *Amos* brother of *Azarias* king of Iuda. Whence it appeares hee was of the blood royall: and of this opinion are all the ancients. And yet neither his ſtocke, nor neere affinitie to the King (for the Iewes affirme he was father in law of *Manaſſeh*) could hinder him from being put to death in hatred of his doctrine, neither was he reſpected any more, then if he had been of ſome baſe eſtate or condition. The inſcription. Iſaiah deſcended of the blood Royall.

The names of the Kings here mentioned, ſet foorth the time, in which hee propheſied. There are ſome who thinke that he began about the end of *Vzi-ahs* raigne. And they take their coniecture from the viſion which is recorded in the ſixth chapter, by which he teſtifies hee was confirmed. But this coniecture is too weake; as ſhall be ſhewed in place conuenient. It rather appeares by the inſcription, that he propheſied in the daies of *Vziah*; of which I ſee nothing The time when Iſaiah Propheſied.

thing to the contrarie. How euer it bee, it plainely appeares that he propheſied aboue 64. yeeres. For *Iotham* raigned 16. yeeres: *Ahaz* as much; *Hezekias* 29. This makes 61. Ad thoſe in which he propheſied vnder *Vziah*; and afterwards vnder *Manaſſes*, who put him to death: Theſe at the leaſt will make vp 64. yeres; in which *Iſaiah* ceaſed not to performe the office of a Prophet. And it may well be that he propheſied longer: but of this we can gather no certentie from the hiſtorie.

Iſaiah put to death by Manaſſes.

Iſaiah, a paterne for all Paſtors.

This then ought to be ſeriouſlie marked of all the Miniſters of the word, that from his example, they may learne patiently to beare the burthen of their office, though it be cumberſome and painefull: not thinking it any diſgrace to ſuffer many ſore and tedious trauels, ſeeing they haue ſo many worthie paternes ſet before them. I grant it muſt needs diſcourage them exceedinglie, when they ſee that things goe not forward; and that their labours take not ſuch good ſucceſſe as they deſire: thinking it better to leaue all, rather then to beſtow ſo much labour in vaine. They haue need therefore often to remember, and to ſet before their eies ſuch examples. (Why ſo?) Becauſe *Iſaiah* fainted not, although he gained little by ſo many painfull trauels.

Ieremiah.

Ieremiah alſo ceaſed not by the ſpace of 50. yeeres to call vpon this people, who in the meane while hardned their hearts the more: and yet wee ſee they forſooke not their charge, whatſoeuer difficulties came betweene. Euen ſo muſt wee follow our vocation, and conſtantlie beare all ſorts of encumbrances.

The change of Kings.

Note alſo the circumſtance of the change of Kings which are here numbred vp, chap. 1. 1. For it is impoſſible that in ſo great diuerſitie, the State ſhould alwaies continue alike. No doubt but many troubles fell out. And yet our Prophet perſeuered with an inuincible conſtancie; and neuer ſuffered his heart to be ouercome of feares.

Queſt.

Anſ.

But ſome may aske whether *Iſaiah* himſelfe put this title to his propheſie, or ſome other. None of the expoſitors that I haue read, anſwers this queſtion. For my owne part, albeit I am not very well ſatisfied, as touching this queſtion, yet I will ſhew what I thinke.

How the Prophecies were collected.

After the Prophets had preached to the people, they gathered a compendious ſumme of their ſermon; which they affixed to the gate of the Temple, that the propheſie might the better be viewed and learned of all. And after it had remained there a ſufficient time for ſome certaine daies; the Miniſters of the Temple took it downe, and put it into the treaſurie of the Temple, that the memorie thereof might continue for euer. Very likely it is (I ſay) that the bookes of the Prophets were thus gathered, as may appeare by the ſecond Chapter of *Habacuk*; whoſoeuer be diſpoſed to conſider the ſame well: as alſo from the eight of this propheſie.

Hab. 2. 2. See chap. 30. 8. and chap. 8. 1. 2.

The Propheties preſerued by the ſingular prouidence of God.

Now this was done no doubt by the ſpeciall prouidence of God, that by the Prieſts themſelues, whoſe office it was to conſerue the propheſies for ſuch as ſhould ſucceed, it is come to paſſe that wee at this day enioy theſe treaſures; which they for the moſt part lightly eſteemed. For the Prieſts were the greateſt enemies, that the Prophets had to deale withall.

An Epigram vpon the Tranſlation of M. Caluins Commentarie vpon the Prophecie of Iſaiah.

THrice happie (England) if thou knew'ſt thy bliſſe,
Since Chriſts eternall Goſpell in thee ſhin'd
Thou art. H'is beetle-blind that ſees not this,
Brutiſhly ingrate that with a thankfull mind
Doth not acknowledge Gods great Grace herein,
And learne thereby for to forſake his ſinne.

Gods word hath long in thee been ſoundly taught,
The ſound thereof hath rung throughout the Land,
And many a Soule by Fiſhers net been caught,
Which erſt lay thrall in Satans cruell band:
This fauour great by none can be expreſt,
But ſuch as haue it felt in their owne breſt.

Thy natiue ſonnes in thine owne bowels bred,
Like faithfull Shepheards haue done worthilie,
And thee with ſtore of heauenlie Manna fed,
Forcing the Wolues to leaue their crueltie,
To ſlinke aſide, and hide themſelues in holes,
In caues and dens, like pur-blind Backs and Moles.

Tyndall, Frith, Philpot, *father* Latimer,
The Goſpell preacht by word, by life, by death:
Iuel, Fox, Reynolds, Fulk *and* Whitaker
To ſecond them haue ſpent their vitall breath
In hot purſuit of that great Romiſh Bore,
Who ſpoiled quite this Engliſh vine before.

I ſpare to ſpeake of Deerings *ſiluer voice,*
Of Greenhams *zeale, of* Perkins *labours ſound,*
Of hundreds moe of Zion-builders choice,
The like whereof can ſcarce elſe where be found:
Such ground-worke they of Gods Truth here haue plas'd
As neuer ſhall by Hels whole force be raz't.

Beſides all theſe, of ſorren Lights the chiefe,
Beza, *and* Vrſinus, *many other moe,*
Martyr, Muſculus, *for thy more reliefe*
Are ſeene in Engliſh weed abroade to goe,
From place to place in euery Shire and Towne,
To teach the Truth and throw all Errors downe.

And

And here presented is vnto thy sight
The Roiall Prophet Esais *Euangel:*
For so me thinkes I may it terme aright,
That Prince of holy Prophets doth so well,
So liuely Christs whole historie presage,
As if h'had liu'd in that same very Age.

Whose Oracles great Caluin *doth vnfold*
In thine owne native Tongue for thy Soules health.
Here maist thou gather precious Stones and Gold,
And store vp heapes of Heauenly lasting wealth;
Here maist thou find with very little paine
Which would'st not lose for thousand Worlds againe.

Here maist thou see the black-mouth'd Atheists
Confounded quite by Demonstration cleare;
The cunning Papist put vnto his shifts,
And made in his right Colours to appeare;
Her's Christ, his Truth, and Life, thee set before,
Heauens Gates set open wide: what would'st thou more?

By Francis Hering, Doctor in Physicke.

A COMMENTARIE VPON THE PROPHESIE OF ISAIAH, WRITTEN BY THAT REVEREND AND PAINEFVLL Paſtor, in the Church of Chriſt, Maſter IOHN CALVIN.

Verſ. 1. *A viſion of Iſaiah the Sonne of Amos, which he ſaw concerning Iudah and Ieruſalem; in the daies of Vzziah, Iotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah Kings of Iudah.*

ALthough the Hebrew word *Chazon* which the Prophet vſeth be deriued of ſeeing, and doth properly ſignifie *viſion*: yet notwithſtanding for the moſt part it imports aſmuch as *Reuelation*. For as oft as the Scripture makes mention of ſpeciall viſions which appeared to the Prophets, whereby the Lord meant the better to confirme them when hee would haue ſome excellent thing come to light, it vſeth the word *Mareah*, which properly ſignifies *viſion*. But to the end I heape not vp many teſtimonies, in the third chapter of
1. Sam. 3. 1. 15. the firſt booke of *Samuel* (where mention is made in generall of propheſies) the author of that booke ſaith, that the word of the Lord was precious in thoſe dayes, becauſe there was no manifeſt viſion (where he vſeth the word *Chazon*) and a little after, the viſion by which God manifeſteth himſelfe to *Samuel*, is expreſſed by the word *Mareah*. Alſo in the
Numb. 12. 6 twelfth chapter of the booke of Numbers, where *Moſes* diſtinguiſheth the two ordinarie meanes of Reuelation, hee there with dreames conioyneth *viſion* as the ſpeciall.
1. Sam. 9. 9. And yet by the ninth chapter of the ſame booke of *Samuel*, it appeares that the name of Seer was impoſed in old time vpon the Prophets: but by way of excellencie; becauſe God diſcouered his counſell familiarly vnto them.

Now as touching this preſent place, it is out of doubt that the certaintie of doctrine is deciphered out vnto vs by this very word; as if it had been ſaid; There is nothing contained in this booke which was not manifeſted to *Iſaiah* by God himſelfe. Wherefore the true ſenſe of the word is to be obſerued; for thereby wee learne, that the Prophets ſpake not of themſelues, neither yet preferred their owne imaginations: but that they were enlightened by God, and had their eyes opened to ſee thoſe things which otherwiſe of themſelues they had not been able to haue comprehended. The doctrine of *Iſaiah* then, euen in the very inſcription, is recommended vnto vs; to wit, becauſe it containes nothing of mans inuention, but the *reuelations* of God: to the end we might bee aſſured that whatſoeuer is contained in this booke, was reuealed vnto him by the holy Ghoſt.

Concerning Iudah.] It were not amiſſe if it were tranſlated *Againſt Iudah*. For the particle *Al* ſignifies both the one and the other; and the ſenſe will be all one: for whatſoeuer this booke contains, it doth properly appertaine to *Iudah* and *Ieruſalem*. But if any ſhall obiect that there are many things mingled in this booke which concerne *Ægypt*, *Tyrus*, *Babylon*, with other cities and countries: the anſwere is, that it was not neceſſarie to recite euery particular in the inſcription; becauſe it was ſufficient that the principall ſumme ſhould be ſet before vs, thereby ſhewing to whom the Prophet was chiefely ſent, namely, to *Iudah* and *Ieruſalem*. For whatſoeuer his propheſies containe beſide, it is accidentally as they ſay: neither yet was it any digreſſing from the ſcope of his office to preach to others alſo what calamities approached neere vpon them: for *Amos*, though he were ſpecially ſent to them of Iſrael, yet paſſed hee not the bounds of his vocation when he propheſied alſo againſt *Iudah*: yea we haue yet a more familiar example hereof in S. *Peter* and S. *Paul*; *Peter* was appoynted ouer the Iewes, and *Paul* ouer the Gentiles, and yet Saint *Peter* paſſed not beyond the bounds of his office in preaching to the Gentiles, as when he went in to *Cornelius*: neither S. *Paul*, when he offered the preaching of the Goſpell to the Iewes, to whom he reſorted as ſoone as he entred into any citie. And thus was it lawfull for *Iſaiah* to doe, in like manner. Nor whileſt he endeuoured to diſcharge

Obiection.

Anſwere.

Gal. 2. 8. Act. 10. 17. & 13. 5. & 14. 1. & 17. 2. 10. & 18. 4. 19.

his dutie to the vttermoſt in teaching of the Iewes, and purpoſely bent all his ſtudies that way: did he yet go beyond his calling when hee ſpeakes (as it were by the way) of other nations?

He takes *Iudah* here for the whole nation, and *Ieruſalem* for the chiefe ſeate of the kingdome: for hee ſeparates not the citie from the kingdome; but names it by way of excellencie, as being the mother citie. Euen as if a Prophet at this day ſhould be ſent to ſpeake vnto the whole kingdome of *France*, ſhould name the citie of *Paris*, as the chiefe of the kingdome. And it was needefull that 1 this ſhould be done; firſt, to the end the Citizens of *Ieruſalem* ſhould not exempt themſelues, as though they were guiltleſſe: or rather, as being diſpenced withall, from being vnder any checke, in reſpect of the greatnes of their dignitie. Secondly, that by meanes 2 hereof they might be preuented from ſending the Prophet backe to the Commons, and countrie people. But they are deceiued, who would haue *Ieruſalem* to bee named a part, becauſe it was ſituated in the tribe of *Beniamin*, ſeeing the one halfe thereof, which was ſubiect to the ſucceſſors of *Dauid*, is comprehended vnder this name of *Iudah*.

Verſ. 2. *Heare O heauens, and thou earth hearken: for the Lord hath ſaid, I haue nouriſhed, and brought vp children, but they haue *rebelled againſt me.*

* Or, haue done wickedly againſt me.

Iſaiah hath here imitated *Moſes*: for ſo it is the cuſtome of all the Prophets to doe; neither is it to be doubted but he alludes to that excellent ſong of *Moſes*, Deut. 32. 1. in the very entrance whereof he cals heauen and earth to witneſſe againſt the people. I graunt that it is a terrible proteſtation: for it is as much as if both of them ſhould turne themſelues to the dumbe elements voyde of ſenſe, becauſe men had no eares to heare, but were become vtterly benummed in all their ſenſes. *Iſaiah* then ſpeakes here as of a rare and prodigious thing, which were euen enough to ſmite the very elements with aſtoniſhment (though otherwiſe ſenſeleſſe in themſelues.) For what could be more horrible then to ſee the Iſraelites reiect the Lord, from whom they had receiued ſo many benefits? Thoſe who by *heauen*, vnderſtand the Angels, and by *earth*, men, doe too much leſſen the force of theſe words: and doe alſo take away that wherein the chiefeſt weight of the Prophets vehemencie lieth. Now all the expoſitors almoſt doe finiſh the clauſe, *For the Lord hath ſpoken*, here: As if the Prophet meant to ſay, Seeing God hath opened his ſacred mouth, it ſtands all men in hand attentiuely to receiue his word. And thus the ſentence in appearance indeed is more full: but the circumſtance of the place requires another knitting together of the words; namely, that this word *hearken* bee referred, not generally to what purpoſe one will; but ſolely and onely to the next complaint. And ſo, the ſenſe is thus; Heare the complaint which God commenceth againſt you: *I haue nouriſhed*, &c. For he recounts ſuch a monſtrous thing, as he is almoſt caſt into a ſwound at the ſight of it: ſo as he is faine to call in all the inſenſible creatures (contrarie to all order) to be witneſſes thereof. I had rather then take theſe things in their proper ſignification, becauſe they doe better ſet forth the Prophets meaning.

And to the end that no man ſhould wonder why he ſpeakes thus to things without ſenſe or reaſon, experience it ſelfe not obſcurely teacheth vs that the voyce of God is heard euen of the dumbe creatures: yea, and the very order of nature is nothing elſe but an obedience, which is yeelded vnto him thorowout all the partes of the world, to the end his ſoueraigne authoritie might ſhine in all places. For the elements, the heauens and the earth, doe their duties, and yeeld obedience to the commaundement which is preſcribed them, and that at the leaſt becke which God maketh to them: The earth bringeth foorth her fruits; The Sunne, the Moone and the Starres doe finiſh their courſes; The Sea paſſeth not beyong the limits which God hath appointed vnto it; The heauens alſo doe turne about to their certaine ſpaces: Finally, in all things wee may obſerue a wonderfull diſtinction, although all theſe creatures be deſtitute of reaſon and vnderſtanding. But man, who is indued therewith, in whoſe eares and heart the voyce of the Lord ſo often ſounds, as if he were wholly ſenſeleſſe, mooueth not, neither boweth he his necke to ſubmit himſelfe to the obedience of his God. The dumbe and inſenſible creatures then ſhall beare witnes againſt ſuch obſtinate and rebellious perſons, to the end they may one day feele that this obteſtation was not vſed in vaine.

I haue nouriſhed.] Word for word it is, I haue made them great. But becauſe he ſpeaketh of *children*, wee cannot turne it better then that, *I haue nouriſhed*, or brought vp. For the Latines, in ſtead of nouriſhing; ſay, to bring vp children. Yet hee by and by addes other benefits wherewithall hee had wonderfullie inriched them: as if he ſhould ſay, I haue not onely performed the office of a good father in nouriſhing, and ſuſtaining you in this life: but I haue alſo taken paines to exalt you to honour and dignitie. For there was no kind of fauour or mercie which the Lord withheld from thē, euen as if he meant wholly to emptie himſelfe. As hereafter in the fifth chapter he reprocheth them ſaying, What could I haue done any more to my vineyard that I haue not done vnto it? Why? the Lord might very well haue ſaid as much to all nations, ſeeing hee nouriſhed, and beſtowed many bleſſings vpon them: but the Iſraelites were his ſpeciall choſen people, whom he had adopted before the reſt of the world to himſelfe, and intreated them as his moſt deere children, embracing and cheriſhing them with a ſpeciall care, euen as in his very boſome. In a word, he adorned and beautified them with all manner of good things.

Now to apply this to our time; let ys conſider

ſider whether our condition bee not like, or rather much better than that of the Iewes in auncient times. The adoption of God obliged them to the puritie of his ſeruice: our bond or obligation is double: namely, becauſe he hath not onely redeemed vs by the blood of Chriſt, but becauſe he who hath once vouchſafed to deliuer vs, doth ſtill call vs alſo to himſelfe by the preaching of the Goſpell, and therein prefers vs farre before all thoſe whom he hath yet left blinded in their ignorance. If we acknowledge not theſe things, of how much greater puniſhment ſhall we be worthie? for by how much the more the grace of God hath been abundantly powred forth vpon vs, of ſo much the more ingratitude ſhall we be conuinced before him.

But they haue rebelled] S. *Ieroome* tranſlates it, They haue deſpiſed me. But it appeares ſufficiently by other places, that the Hebrew word *Paſhang*, expreſſeth yet ſomewhat more; namely, that they reuolted. God teſtifies then that he could not hold them vnder his obedience; no not by all the benefits hee could beſtow vpon them. But that they turned away more and more, & eſtranged themſelues, no otherwiſe then the ſonne, who by leauing his fathers houſe, ſhewes that hee is become altogether incorrigible. It is a monſtrous thing for children not to be obedient to their fathers; eſpecially to ſuch a one as neuer ceaſeth to doe them good, beſtowes his whole care as it were vpon them. *Lycurgus* would not make any law againſt the vnthankfull (becauſe it was a thing againſt nature not to acknowledge a benefit receiued. A child then that is vnthankfull to his father is a double monſter, yea rather a threefold monſter againſt a liberall father, who ceaſeth not to doe him good. For albeit the Prophet cals them *children*, it is not giuen them heere as a title of honor, but the more to aggrauate this their reuolt, and to make it the more odious.

Verſ. 3. *The Oxe knoweth his owner, and the Aſſe his maſters Crib, but Iſrael hath not knowne: my people hath not vnderſtood.*

THis compariſon doth further exemplifie the crime of their reuolt. For the Lord might well haue compared his people to the Heathen, and Infidels: but he toucheth them neerer, in comparing them to brute beaſts, and in ſhewing that they are yet more fooliſh then they. For albeit theſe beaſts be voyd of reaſon & vnderſtanding, yet are they teachable, at the leaſt wiſe in this reſpect, that they acknowledge thoſe who feedes them. Seeing then that the Lord had not only fed this people as in a ſtaule or Crib, but had fed them largely and abundantly, no otherwiſe then the father doth his children whom he tendreth; and had not onely pampered their bellies, but did alwaies repleniſh them with ſpirituall foode: had he not good cauſe, think you, to eſteeme them worthie rather to bee ſent to ſchoole to learne of *Oxen* and *Aſſes* then of men; eſpecially when hee ſaw they were become ſo beaſtly? he ſends his people then to theſe brute beaſts to learne their duties of them. And no meruaile; for it often fals out that the vnreaſonable creatures do better follow the order of nature, and doe in their kind ſhew more humanitie then men themſelues. And not to alleadge many examples, this one which *Iſaiah* here propounds ſhall ſuffice: namely, that theſe beaſts being altogether ſenſeleſſe and blockiſh, doe yet notwithſtanding obey their maſters and thoſe who haue the gouernment of them. And if in other things we ſhall conſider wherein the beaſts doe ſurpaſſe men, how many particulars ſhall wee find out? What is the cauſe that ſcarcely any beaſt will offer violence to one of his owne kind? and that he ſhould therein, as you would ſay, acknowledge his owne likenes. What is the cauſe alſo that all ſorts of beaſts doe take ſuch paines to nouriſh their little ones, ſeeing it often falleth out that women forgetting nature, and all womanhood, doe reiect and forſake their children? And do we not obſerue how beaſts wil keepe ſuch a mediocritie that they will eate and drinke no more then that which ſufficeth them for life, and to vphold their ſtrength; whilſt men in the meane ſpace doe ſtuffe and gorge themſelues, or which is worſe, do ouerthrow themſelues with ſurfetting? Laſtly, the beaſts do in nothing paſſe beyond ỹ bounds of nature, which are ordained for them.

But the Papiſts (whoſe cuſtome it is to ouerthrow the natiue ſenſe of the Scriptures and by their dreames do corrupt all the myſteries of God) haue here found out a notable fable: for they make men beleeue that the *Oxen* and the *Aſſes* did worſhip our Lord Ieſus Chriſt lying in the cratch after he was borne: wherein they ſhew themſelues to bee excellent aſſes. And yet would to God they themſelues would but follow the poore Aſſe which they haue forged! namely, that they were Aſſes worſhipping the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and not rather wincing and kicking againſt his Maieſtie with their heeles. For the Prophet ſpeakes not here of a miracle, but of the order of nature: declaring that whoſoeuer they be that doe ouerthrow the order thereof by a bad conuerſation, are become monſters. We neede not forge new miracles then to giue authoritie to Ieſus Chriſt: for ſo, by mingling the falſe with the true, this inconuenience would follow vpon it, ỹ none would beleeue either the one or the other. Neither neede we doubt, if there had been any ſuch miracle, but the Euangeliſts would haue put it in writing.

The name *Iſrael* which here he oppoſeth againſt theſe beaſts, hath a very great emphaſis in it. We know what honour it was to the poſteritie of *Iacob* to beare this name, which God himſelfe had impoſed vpon this holy Patriark, becauſe he ouercame the Angel in wraſtling. Which name was ſo much the more diſhonoured, by how much the more theſe baſtard and degenerate children durſt notwithſtanding make their bragges of that title. And firſt there is a cloſe reproch in it;

not onely becauſe they vſurped the name of this holy perſonage (whoſe vertues they imitated nothing at all) but alſo becauſe they were vnthankfull vnto God from whom they had receiued all manner of benefits. Laſtly, we muſt ſupplie an outerthwart comparison: for the greater their dignitie was, in that they had been exalted farre aboue all other people, ſo much the more (to reproch them vnder this honorable title) are they ſeparate from other nations. The Greeke Interpreters haue added this word *me*; but I had rather repeate that which the Prophet hath ſaid, to wit, that Iſrael hath not knowne his poſſeſſer or *owner*; that is to ſay, God: nor his *crib*; that is, his Church, wherein hee was nouriſhed, and to which hee ought to bee gathered. Eſpecially ſeeing theſe poore beaſts doe acknowledge their maſter that feedes them; and doe voluntarily returne to the place where they were wont to find paſture.

Verſ. 4. *Ah, ſinfull nation*, a people laden with iniquitie, a ſeede of the wicked, corrupt children: They haue forſaken the Lord: they haue * prouoked the holy one of Iſrael to anger: they are gone backward.*

* Or, ſinfull woman.

* Or, they haue deſpiſed.

AH.] Although he had reproued their fault ſharpely enough, yet notwithſtanding the more to amplifie it, he yet further addes this exclamatiō: by which he ſhewes his deteſtation againſt ſo horrible and foule an ingratitude. Some thinke this particle *Ah*, is put here in ſigne of lamenting. Saint *Ierome* hath interpreted it, Woe: but me thinks it ſhould more fitly agree to an exclamation, ariſing partly from aſtoniſhment, and partly from ſorrow. For wee are wont to burſt into outcries, when ſo vnworthie a thing is committed, that words cannot expreſſe it; or rather when words anſwerable to the greatnes of the griefe failes vs. In ſtead of *ſinfull nation* as we haue tranſlated it, the Greeks haue turned ſinfull woman, the vulgar tranſlation alſo bearing the ſame. But the Hebrew word ſignifies thoſe who are giuen ouer to wickednes, and it is not to be doubted, but the Prophet here accuſeth them of their deſperate malice.

A people laden] &c. We muſt note the force of the ſimilitude; for hee not onely meanes that they were plunged in their iniquities, as in a deepe mirie pit; but alſo reprocheth them that they ſinned not ſo much of ignorance or infirmitie (as the weak often do) but that they followed on and continued in their rebellion of ſet purpoſe. As if he ſhould haue ſaid, They are giuen vp to all iniuſtice, and haue wholly ſold ouer themſelues to commit euill. Where he addes, *Seede of the wicked*; it is as much, as miſchieuous ſeede. Some expounding it more wittily, ſay, that they declared themſelues vnworthie to hold any place among the children of *Abraham*: becauſe they were become baſtards, and degenerate. As in other places they are called a ſeede of Canaan; yea they are reproched with the name of vncircumciſed; euen as though they had bin begotten of prophane or a ſtrange people. But it is an vſuall manner of ſpeech among ỹ Hebrews; which the Greekes alſo obſerued in their ſpeech, when they ſay, ſonnes of the good, for good children.

Corrupt children.] It is word for word, corrupting: and therefore the expoſitors ſupplie, Themſelues, or, their waies. But me thinks baſtard, or degenerate agrees better. For his meaning is that they are ſo depraued, that they reſemble their fathers nothing at all. Moreouer, hee adornes his nation here with foure titles, which are not very ſeemely: And ſuch indeed as were farre remote from the good conceit which they had of themſelues. But thus muſt hypocrites bee dealt withall, to awaken them: and the more they ſooth vp themſelues in caſting off the feare of God, ſo much the more muſt they bee thundred againſt. For a milder and a more gentle doctrine would not haue preuailed with ſuch a kind of people any thing at all: neither would a ſlight manner of reproſe haue moued them. The falſe perſwaſion therefore of their righteouſnes and wiſedome was to be plucked away from them; for therewith they maſked and diſguiſed themſelues, and often made their bragges thereof in vaine.

For they haue forſaken the Lord.] Now hee addes the reaſon why hee hath ſo ſharpely and bitterly reproued them: namely, leſt they ſhould complaine as they were wont to doe; that they were too ſeuerely dealt withall. Firſt then he vpbraids them with that, which is the fountaine of all euils: to wit, *they had forſaken the Lord.* For euen as it is the chiefe perfection of righteouſneſſe to cleaue vnto God, as *Moſes* teacheth; What doth the Lord thy God require of thee but that thou cleaue vnto him? ſo is it the greateſt miſerie wee can plunge our ſelues into, when wee haue *forſaken* him. Now the Prophets meaning is, to let the Iewes ſee, that they were not onely guiltie of one fault: but to ſhew them that they were become Apoſtats altogether. No doubt, but that which followes ſerues for an amplification; whether we reade, To prouoke, or, to diſpoſe; yet I rather reſt in the latter. For it was too groſſe an ingratitude to make light account of him who had adopted them for his owne, from the reſt of all nations. And for this cauſe he calles himſelfe the *holy one of Iſrael*, becauſe in giuing himſelfe vnto them he had thereby adorned them with his holines. For this name is ſo attributed vnto him euery where, in regard of the effect. From how barbarous a pride then did the deſpiſing of ſo great an honour proceed? If any had rather retaine the word *prouoke*; the ſenſe will be, that they had reiected the Lord: euen as if they meant to prouoke him to anger of ſet purpoſe. Whence we may ſee how deteſtable their Apoſtaſie was. Deut. 10. 12

They are gone backward.] The ſenſe is that when the Lord did ſet a certaine way and forme before them how hee would haue them to carrie themſelues, they on the contrarie were carried away with their luſts:

and

and yet he confirmes the former ſentence; to wit, that they had giuen the bridle ſo farre to their ſhameleſſe malepertnes, that they were altogether reuolted from God: yea, and that wittingly and willingly, by erring from that marke vnto which they ought to haue bent their courſe all their life long.

Verſ. 5. *Wherefore ſhould ye be ſmitten any more? for you fall away more and more: the whole head is ſicke, and the whole heart is heauie.*

Wherefore ſhould] &c. Some do turne it, vpon what? or, in what part? And they take it as if the Lord ſhould ſay, There are no more plagues left to ſtrike you withal. For hee had tried ſo many waies to bring them into the right way, that there was no chaſtiſement left. But I had rather interpret it, Wherefore, or, to what purpoſe? As alſo the Hebrew word importes ſo much; and withall I take it that the ſenſe ſeemes to agree beſt thereto. For ſo we are wont to ſay, wherefore; to what purpoſe, &c. His meaning is then, that the Iewes are growne to ſuch a pitch of wickednes and vngodlines, that it is impoſſible to make them become any whit better. We know by experience that after deſperate men haue once hardned their hearts, then they will rather be broken all to peeces then receiue any correction. Now he complaines that there was ſuch an obſtinacie in them, euen as if the Phyſitian hauing aſſaied all good remedies to cure his diſeaſed patient, ſhould begin to ſay at the laſt, All the skill I haue, will doe no good. And withall hee accuſeth them of extreame malice: for when the wicked are come to that paſſe that chaſtiſements will not humble them, then are they come to the very top of all wickednes. So then it is as much as if the Lord had ſaid, I ſee very well, that though I ſhould correct you neuer ſo much, yet I ſhall do you no good. For queſtionleſſe things are then become wholly deſperate when the chaſtiſements and calamities which God vſeth as remedies to heale our vices, will profit vs nothing. And yet for all that the Lord is ſo farre off from ceaſing to puniſh ſuch ſtil, that (which more is) it ſtirres vp and inflames his wrath ſo much the more againſt vs: For there is nothing more burthenſome to him, then ſuch an obſtinacie. Notwithſtanding it is rightly ſaid, that he *loſeth his labour*, when he cannot thereby draw vs to repentance: and that all the remedies hee applies to a people ſo vtterly paſt cure are in vaine. So then he is ſo farre off from ſparing ſuch, that hee not onely doubles his blowes and afflictions vpon them, trying all meanes poſſible; but he is conſtrained neuer to giue ouer till he hath vtterly conſumed them. But then indeede he plaies not the part of a Phyſitian, but rather of the Surgion: which is the cauſe why he ſo laments here, that his chaſtiſements ſhall now become vnprofitable to the people.

You fall away.] This is a confirmation of the former ſentence, ſo that I diſtinguiſh this member from the former, which others notwithſtanding doe connioyne together. As if he ſhould ſay, You wil be ſo far off from ceaſing to erre, that (which worſe is) you augment your wickednes more and more, for I ſee you are ſo carried away to doe euill, as if yee had laid your heads together, deliberately to conſpire thereof in your minds: ſo that there is no hope at al left of any moderation. Now God in this ſpeech purpoſed to manifeſt vnto al men how incorrigible their ſpirit was, to the end they might pretend no excuſes afterwards.

The whole head.] Others tranſlate, Euery head: and thinke that the princes and great men among the people are here meant by theſe particular names. But for mine owne part, I rather agree to their opinion, who tranſlate, *all the head.* For me thinks it is a plaine ſimilitude, taken from the body of man; to wit, when the bodie is ſo ſore afflicted, that there is no hope of health left. Now he names two principall partes whereupon the health of the whole bodie depends: and hereby he declares the extremitie of the diſeaſes, wherewith this wretched people was vtterly ſpent. It was not ſome part or common member of the bodie then, which was pained, but the *heart* was wounded; and the *head* very ſore diſeaſed: in a word, that the vitall parts (as they are called) were ſo putrified and infected, that they were incurable. But the Interpreters doe not agree in this behalfe: for ſome referre this ſicknes to ſinne: others, to puniſhments. To ſinnes thus; You are alreadie become a rotten and ſtinking bodie, wherein nothing that is whole and ſound is left: wickednes and ſinne hath gotten the ſwinge amongſt you, by the infection whereof all is defiled and corrupt. But I had rather vnderſtand it of the puniſhments: for the Lord doubtles ſtil purſues this complaint: namely, that the people are ſo rooted in obſtinacie, that they cannot bee brought to amendment of life for any plague inflicted vpon them; and that howſoeuer they had been ſmitten euen to death (at the leaſt wiſe, rent and torne in peeces with ſore blowes in a fearefull maner) yet that they became neuer the wiſer for all that.

Verſ. 6. *Euen from the ſole of the foote vnto the head, there is nothing whole therein, but wounds, and ſwelling, and ſores full of corruption: they haue not been wrapped nor bound vp, nor mollified with oyle.*

THeſe words alſo haue affinitie with the former, wherein hee ſtill proſecutes the very ſame matter vnder the ſame ſimilitude and manner of ſpeech. Thoſe who referre the firſt part vnto ſinnes, doe not ſufficiently waigh the remainder of ỹ text that followes. Let vs grant that the people corrupted with vices are compared to a ſicke bodie: what coherence will there be touching the things which by and by follow, to wit, that their

wounds were not wrapped nor mollified with oyle? It appeares therefore that the Prophet speakes of the afflictions wherewith the people were almost consumed. And he also sets forth this continuall languishing in them, as a testimonie of their extreame hardning. He calles the wound *Corrupt*, from whence flowes a continuall infection, as if a spring (deepe in the earth) should continually send forth new streames of venome. So that by this similitude, he shewes that the maladie is incurable, seeing the corrupt water which is in it runnes without stay. The amplification also is not small, when hee saith, there were *no remedies* applied thereunto. For the three similitudes which he cõioynes together, tend al to one end, namely, that this people were in so miserable a plight, that they were without any hope of comfort, without consolation and without remedie. So that in such kinds of punishments, one might easily discerne the extreame severitie of God.

Vers. 7. Your land is waste: your cities are burnt with fire: strangers devoure your land in your presence, and it is desolate like the overthrow of a *strangers.*

a Or, forreine enemies.

WAste] Word for word it is, desolation. And thus *Esaiah* prosecutes that more largely, and more clearely, which he had said before figuratiuely touching the *wounds*: to wit, that the *land* was afflicted with an horrible *waste*. For I had rather referre the sentences to the time past: because the Prophet rather recountes how many calamities have formerly happened, before he denounceth the vengeance of God. For he casts their dotage and benummednes of hart in their teeth, in that they continued so besotted in their miseries. *As the overthrow of strangers.* This is added for amplification sake. For their sense is too narrow and constrained, who would haue the Hebrew word *zarim*, which signifieth *destruction* (which word the Prophet also here vseth) to bee put in the stead of *zerem*, which signifies an ouerflowing of waters. True it is that the word may be applied to enemies: but it is better to take it in his proper signification, for strangers. For the calamitie is then much more grieuous when men vnknowne, and those that come from a farre countrie doe make warre in a kingdome; because they are lightly farre more cruell, and doe more hurt then the nighbour enemies. For they race the cities: they burne vp houses, buildings, and villages; destroying all things; and sparing nothing. In a word, they rush in with barbarous inhumanitie, seeking nothing but to kill, sack, and burne: yea, they study rather to do hurt, thẽ to get their booty. But ỹ neighbour enemies because they are able to hold that which they haue won, vse to leaue garisons there; and as soone as any reuolt is intended, or any trouble moued, they forthwith send succors: and therefore are not so cruell, neither doe they spoyle the countrie out of which they may fitly reape any commoditie. Hee therefore describes no ordinarie destruction, but rather so bloodie and fierce an one, as exceeded all the rest.

From hence then we may note, that when God hath once begun to chastice & correct, he makes not an end with vs by and by. But in striking vs with many wounds, hee redoubles the blowes, and ceaseth not to visit vs stil with one plague after another, if so bee wee cannot be brought to true repentance. Let vs then eschew and flee such an obstinacie, if we meane to escape the like punishments: or if we meane this reproach which was iustly cast vpon the Iewes, should not by as good right light vpon vs: namely, that albeit wee haue been diligently admonished, and haue felt the hand of the Lord, yet for al that we could not bee corrected nor amended. What matuaile is it then, I pray you, if wee are pressed with so many and so diuers calamities, whereof we can see neither end or issue? Surely we euen fight hand to hand as it were with God and against all his roddes by our rebellion. Is it not needefull then that hee should take vs in hand; and deale with vs, as men do with restie and vnruly Iades, who the more they wince and kick, the more they must bee pummelled about the head, and spurred vpon the sides? There want not many at this day, I dare say, who accuse God of crueltie as if he were too outragious, and that he ought to carrie a more soft and gentle hand ouer vs: But in the meane while they consider not how horrible our wickednesses be. For if they would looke well into them, truely they should easily perceiue an admirable mercie of God, euen in the midst of this his seueritie, which seemes so great in their eyes. And to the end wee may not thinke the Lord was too rigorous towards this people, let vs consider the vices which he by and by reckons vp.

But a question may here be demanded; to wit, why the Prophet should say that the people were so many waies afflicted, seeing he began to prophesie (as we said before) vnder the reigne of *Vzziah*; in whose time the state of the kingdome of *Iudah* was verie quiet, so that howsoeuer the kingdome of Israel sustained some losse towards the ende of *Vzziah* his daies, yet that notwithstanding appertained nothing at all to the kingdome of Iudah. For which cause the Iewes indeed thinke this to appertaine to the reigne of *Iotham*, and not to the reigne of *Vzziah*. Now howsoeuer their opinion seemes not to agree very well at the first blush, yet is it not without some probabilitie of reason, if wee shall examine the opinions of others. For wee know that they haue not alwaies kept the order of time in gathering together of the prophesies. And it may bee that this Sermon of *Esaiah* had obtained first place here for no other cause, but for that it containes a summe of that doctrine which shall be handled afterwards. Others thinke they escape easily away when they expound all these things of vices; and not of punishments: but they cannot so easily auoid that which is spoken of the burning of cities, and wasting of the land. If any thinke the Prophet speakes not of the

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preſent eſtate of the kingdome, but of that which was to come; and that in the perſon of God, hee denounceth the iudgements which were at hand, howſoeuer they then ſaw them not before their eyes; I doe not greatly gainesay it. Although it be very likely that the Prophet ſpeakes of things which were knowne vnto him. It is rather a certaine narration then of a thing done, than a propheſie: though in the verſe following I confeſſe he ſhewes what the iſſue is, which approacheth.

Verſ. 8. *And the daughter of Zion ſhall remaine like a cottage in a vineyard, like a lodge in a garden of Cucumbers, and like a beſieged citie.*

HE alludes euen to that cuſtome which is now in vſe amongſt vs in France: namely, to a little cottage which the Vinekeepers prepare when the grapes doe ripen. Alſo he vſeth another Similitude which is almoſt like vnto the former; drawne from the manner of that nation, when the ſeruants watched to keepe the gardens of cucumbers. Afterwards in verſ. 9. he himſelfe expounds what he meanes both by the one & by the other. Now the expoſition may be double; to wit, that all the countrie ſhould be waſted, and nothing left in ſafetie, but the citie of *Ieruſalem*, which ſhould remaine as a cottage: or, that the citie it ſelfe ſhould bee brought to nought. The Iewes follow the firſt interpretation, and vnderſtand this place of the ſiege of *Senacherib*: but I thinke it reacheth further off; namely, to the deſtructions which followed afterwards. We may alſo referre it to the neerenes of neighbourhood, which being ruinated and deſtroyed amongſt them, it could not bee auoyded, but that the citie ſhould feele great loſſe thereby. But as I take it, the true meaning of the Prophet is, that the euils whereof he ſpeakes, ſhould come euen to the citie it ſelfe, ſo as it beeing conſumed, ruinated, and brought to nothing, and into deriſion, ſhould become like a *cottage*. Now he calles *Ieruſalem, the daughter of Zion*, by a phraſe of ſpeech vſuall in the Scriptures, which intitleth ſome people by the name of daughter, as the daughter of *Babylon*, and *Tyre*, for the Babylonians, and Tyrians themſelues. Alſo hee rather mentioneth *Zion*, then *Ieruſalem*; becauſe of the dignitie of the Temple: and this manner of ſpeech alſo is very frequent thorowout the whole Scriptures.

Verſ. 9. *Except the Lord of hoſts had reſerued vnto vs, euen a ſmall remnant, we ſhould haue been as Sodom, and ſhould haue been as Gomorah.*

HEre he concludes that which he had pronounced before touching the ſcourges of God: to wit, that there ſhould be ſuch a ruin; or rather, that it is alreadie preſent, ſo as by the beholding of it, it might bee fitly reſembled to the deſtruction of Sodom: were it not that the Lord ſhould pull out a few remainders as out of the midſt of the fire. This verſe therefore confirmes that which I ſaid erewhile: where the Prophet hauing ſpoken of the calamities which were alreadie happened, did in briefe manner conioyne therewith the euent which ſhould ſhortly enſue: as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, Suffer not your ſelues to be beguiled with faire words: For looke what deſtruction hapned to *Sodom* and *Gomorah*, the ſame ſhould fall vpon you, vnleſſe the Lord in hauing compaſſion vpon you, ſhould reſerue ſome few. And vnto this agrees that which is ſaid in *Ieremiah*, *It is the Lords mercies that wee are not conſumed*, &c. Lament. 3. 22.

Now from hence we are to note two things: 1
Firſt, that he here denounceth an extreame ruin: yet for as much as God hath to doe with his Church and elect people, therefore this iudgement ſhall be mitigated by a particular and ſpeciall fauour; to the end the faithfull (whom hee here rightly compares to *ſmall remnant*) may bee deliuered from the generall deſtruction of the whole nation. Now if God hath puniſhed the iniquities of the Iewes by ſuch horrible chaſtiſements, doe we thinke the like will not befall vnto vs if we partake with them in their rebellions? for the Lord had conſecrated this people to himſelfe, and had exempted them from the common condition of others. And wherefore ſhould he rather ſpare vs if we continue hardned in our impietie and diſloyaltie? But which more is, what iſſue can wee expect in the midſt of ſuch an heape and puddle of vices whereinto men plunge themſelues euery way thorowout the whole world? Truly euen the ſame that befell to *Sodom* and *Gomorah*: namely, if we ſhould be brought to nothing, did not the reſpect which God hath to his free couenant (wherein hee hath promiſed that his Church ſhall neuer periſh) withhold his vengeance from vs. This threatning alſo which is very terrible and fearefull, appertaines to all thoſe that are obſtinate and deſperate, whoſe manners cannot bee reformed by any ſtrokes of God his roddes.

On the other ſide, wee are to note that which I haue alreadie touched out of *Ieremiah*; namely, that we ought to attribute it to the only mercie of God that we are not al vtterly conſumed and brought to nothing. For if we ſhall behold how great the iniquities are which do reigne in euery place, and amongſt all ſorts of men, we ought to admire Gods mercie that we ſee ſo much as one man aliue, and that all haue not been cleane ſwept away from off the earth. Thus it pleaſeth the Lord to keepe his hand in; to the end he may ſtill continue a Church in the world. And S. *Paul* alſo who is the beſt expoſitor of this place yeeldes the ſame reaſon: for alledging it in the Epiſtle to the Romans, chap. 9. 29. he beates downe the inſolencie of the Iewes, to the end they ſhould not bragge of that naked title which they bare, as if it had been enough for them that they were deſcended from the ancient fathers, in regard of the fleſh. For he admoniſheth them

that God could deale with them as hee had done in old time with their fathers: but that he is ſtill minded for his mercies ſake to reſerue a Church to himſelfe: and to what end? euen that it ſhould not vtterly periſh. For it is for the loue and fauour which hee beares toward it, that the Lord *reſerueth* ſome little ſeede, when in regard of our rebellion hee is conſtrained to exerciſe his rigorous iudgements. Which ſentence ought greatly to comfort vs in our extreameſt calamities; yea, euen then when we ſhall thinke the Church as good as forlorne: that when we ſee the ſtate of things turned vpſide downe, ſo as to our ſeeming heauen and earth goeth together (as they ſay) yet that we euen then continue firme and inuincible touching our truſt in God his mercie notwithſtanding, reſoluing our ſelues that God will neuer ceaſe to haue care of his Church howſoeuer the world goe.

Euen a ſmall remnant.] This particle *ſmall*, may be referred as well to that which went before as to that which followes. And therefore ſome tranſlate, We had been almoſt as *Sodom*. Notwithſtanding, I had rather referre it to the former ſpeech: to declare that the number which God reſerued from the common deſtruction, was very ſmall. But ſome rather thinke that this is taken affirmatiuely, and was therefore put to expreſſe the matter the more liuely: which I reiect not; although it may be taken in his true and natiue ſenſe, as if it had been ſaid, There ſhall but a ſmall number of the people remaine. Now we are to note this ſentence diligently: for, vnles the Church haue faire and large dominions, men are wont to deſpiſe her. And from thence it comes that hypocrits bragge ſo much of their multitudes; and that the weake alſo ſtagger, as being dazled with their pompe and glorie. It therfore appeares by this place, that wee muſt not meaſure the Church by the hugenes of the multitude, vnleſſe we meane to eſteeme more of the chaffe, then of the wheate; becauſe the quantitie therof is greater. But it ought to ſuffice vs that although the number of the faithful be verie ſmall, yet that God notwithſtanding acknowledgeth them for his elect people. And with this alſo ſhould that conſolation of Chriſt come into our minds: Feare not *little flocke*, for it is your fathers pleaſure to giue you the kingdome, Luk.12.31.

Verſ.10. *Heare the word of the Lord O princes of Sodome: hearken vnto the law of our God O people of Gomorah.*

HE confirmes that which he had ſaid before; to wit, that God his vengeance is not crueltie: why ſo? Becauſe they had deſerued a farre greater puniſhment. And howſoeuer there was ſome difference betweene them and the Sodomites, in regard of the puniſhment; yet the fault was alike: ſo as if the Lord had not pardoned them, hee might euen iuſtly haue plagued them with the like iudgement. In a word, he telles them, that if God doe ſpare, it is not to the end they ſhould conclude with themſelues, that their ſinnes were leſſe then thoſe of the Sodomites; but that they were to attribute it rather vnto the mercie of God. Now there is no great diuerſitie in that he attributes the name of the citie of *Sodom* to the *Princes*, and the name of *Gomorah* to the *people*: but it rather ſhewes their condition to be both alike. But whereas hee repeates one thing twice; this diuerſitie of names hath the greater elegancie. As if he ſhoud ſay, The Princes and people differ no more one from another, then *Sodom* differed from *Gomorah*. True it is that hee alludes to the diuers degrees of men, when he attributes two cities to them as it were apart: but in regard that *Sodom* equals *Gomorah* in value, wee ſee hee binds them vp both together as it were in one fardle. The ſumme then is; If any man wil iudge of the *Princes* and *people*, he ſhall find them agreeing as well together in one, euen as Sodom and Gomorah did. That is to ſay, there was neuer a barrell better hearing: but they were as like, as one egge is to another. For there was no more vprightnes in the princes, then in the people. The Prophet begins now therfore to vnmaske the Iewes, and that very iuſtly: for as it is a common thing with all hypocrites to ſhroud themſelues vnder 1
mercifull pretences, to the ende they may not bee eſpied: euen ſo ſtood the caſe with this people, who were ſtained with this vice aboue any other. And therefore the Prophets had no ſharper conflicts with them, then about this matter. Pride alſo (with this 2
bragging of fained holines) reigned amongſt them; and they gloried no leſſe in the nobleneſſe and excellencie of their nation, then of their outward ceremonies and ſeruice: by reaſon whereof this ſeueritie of the Prophet did greatly gall them. But in as much as it was needefull to draw out their villanies into light, the more they ſet vp their briſtles, the more liuely doth the Prophet thunder againſt them. And thus muſt all hypocrites be ſerued.

The word of the Lord.] The Prophet takes the *word of the Lord* and the *law*, for one and the ſame thing. And yet notwithſtanding I doubt not but hee vſed this word *law* of ſet purpoſe, to the end he might taxe their ſottiſh opinion: For whileſt they imagined to appeaſe God with ſacrifices which they offered without faith or repentance, they interpreted the law of God after their owne fantaſies. By which words then he admoniſheth them, that in alledging the authoritie of *Moſes*, he brings in no new deuice of his owne, neither addes he any thing to the *law*; but that in hearing him, they ſhould only heare the will of God, whereof hee faithfully enformeth them. Alſo that the law of God doth in no ſort fauour or allow of their dealings in this point: to the end they ſhould not thinke to beguile the Lord with a falſe perſwaſion of their owne righteouſnes.

Verſ.11.

Verſ. 11. *What haue I to doe with the multitude of your ſacrifices, ſaith the Lord? I am full of the burnt offerings of Rammes, and the fat of fed beaſts: and I deſire not the blood of Bullocks, nor of Lambs, nor of Goates.*

NOw *Iſaiah* brings in God ſpeaking, who interprets his owne meaning himſelfe. For it is not enough that the Lawgiuer doe command onely, but that he alſo ſhould adde a natiue expoſition to the lawes, that they be not corrupted. Now it is not to be doubted, but that the former ſharpe reprehenſion was very ill taken: For what could one haue ſpoken more boldly or roundly againſt them? They gloried in the name of *Abraham*, bragging in the title of his children, and proudly vaunting themſelues thereof. For which cauſe the Prophet thus armes himſelfe with the authoritie of God againſt them. As if he ſhould ſay, Know you, that you haue not ſo much to doe with me, as with God himſelfe. Next he ſhewes what it is that God reſpects, and what his meaning is in demanding ſacrifices of them: namely, not that hee doth ſo much eſteeme of the ſacrificing of brute beaſts; but that they ſhould ſerue, as outward props and helpes of godlines. And therefore that the Iewes greatly deceiued themſelues, who put their chiefeſt holineſſe in ſuch outward ceremonies. For they thought they had diſcharged their duties very well, when they ſacrificed and offered their offerings: and when the Prophets required any thing more of them, then they complained as it they had been ouer hardly dealt withall. But the Lord telles them that hee abhors and reiects their offerings. Now it may ſeeme that this is too ſtrict a courſe: for were they not the things which God himſelfe had inſtituted and commanded? But wee muſt note that as touching the commandements of God ſome ought to be obeyed ſimplie, and others for another end: as for example; The law commands, 1 firſt, that we ſerue and honor God: 2 ſecondly, that wee ſeeke our neighbours profit. *Deut.6.5.* These things are of themſelues pleaſing vnto God, and are abſolutely required of vs. 1 But it is otherwiſe in regard of *ceremonies*, for *Leuit.19.18* they are exerciſes which are not ſimplie required in reſpect of themſelues, but for another end. 2 And the like we may ſay of faſting. *Rom.14.17.* For the Kingdom of God ſtands not in abſtinence from meats and drinkes: faſting therfore hath reſpect to an higher end.

God therefore hath not ſo inſtituted ceremonies as if hee would bee appeaſed by the worke wrought; but that the people ſhould by them exerciſe themſelues vnto godlines: and ſhould thereby bee the more ſtirred and trained vp in faith, and in his pure worſhip and ſeruice. But hypocrits are onely forward and carefull in obſeruing theſe, as if the principall matter of religion conſiſted in them: and thinke themſelues the moſt deuout people in the world, whilſt they wearie and tire themſelues a long time in the obſeruation thereof. And that they might yet appeare the more holy; they euer lightly ad ſomething of their owne, and inuent ſome noueltie from day to day: but in the meane time they wickedly abuſe the holy ordinances of God, in that they refer them not to their right ends. All their ceremonies therefore are nothing elſe in God his account, but prophanations of his holy worſhip and ſeruice. For whilſt they reſt fettered as it were in the bare and naked outward action only, what difference is there betweene their ſacrifices, and thoſe of the Gentiles? which wee know are ſtuffed full of ſacrileage, becauſe they are not referto a right and lawfull end. This then is the reaſon why the Lord reiects all ſuch ceremonies notwithſtanding himſelfe had inſtituted them: to wit, becauſe the people looked not to the right end and vſe, for which they were ordained. Herein then ſtode the continuall conflict which the Prophets had with the people; namely, in plucking off theſe vizzards from their faces: and in ſhewing them that the Lord did not content himſelfe with outward ſeruices, neither could be appeaſed with ſuch faire ſhewes.

And the faithfull ſeruants of the Lord haue euery where experience of the ſame combats euen at this day. For men doe alwaies meaſure God by their owne ell; and thinke to appeaſe him with outward appearances, and will not be brought by any meanes to offer vp vnto him a pure and vpright heart. But *Ieremiah* will eaſily diſſolue all the difficultie of this place. For in the 7. chapter, he ſaith out of the mouth of the Lord: *When I redeemed your fathers out of the land of Egypt, I did not command them to ſacrifice to me: only I commanded them that they ſhould heare my voyce and keepe my commandements.* Wherein he ſhewes, that all the obſeruation of the ceremonies did depend vpon the word; and that they are vaine and vnprofitable, if they be ſeparated from it, euen as if one ſhould diuide the ſoule from the bodie. Hereunto alſo belongs the argument of the fiftieth Pſalme: *Will I eate the fleſh of fat Bulles, or will I drinke the blood of Goates? Offer vnto God praiſe, and pay thy vowes vnto the moſt high.* *Ieremiah* alſo in another place ſaith: *Truſt not in lying words ſaying, The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord, but rather amend your waies,* &c. Alſo *Micheah*: *Doth the Lord delight in thouſands of Rammes, or in ten thouſands of fat beaſts of the Valleies?* By and by after he addes: *I will ſhew thee O man what is good: and what it is that the Lord thy God requireth of thee,* to wit, *To doe iudgement, to loue mercie, and to humble thy ſelfe to walke with thy God:* Mich.6. By which places it appeares, that God reiects ceremonies, becauſe they were ſeparate from the word, as from their ſoule or life. Whereby we may ſee how great the blindnes of men is, who cannot bee perſwaded that all the paines they take this way in the ſeruice of God is vnprofitable vnleſſe the integritie of the heart goe before.

And this vice is not onely rooted in the common people, but almoſt in all men; yea, euen in thoſe who in their owne opinion thinke they excell moſt. From hence it is at this

this day that this goodly deuice of * *the worke wrought* cannot bee pulled out of the minds of many; which the doctors of the Papists haue found out. But it is not man which speakes here, but God himselfe: who by an immutable decree, declares that men sacrifice vnto him in vaine: and that whatsoeuer they doe else, is without fruite, vnlesse they call vpon him by a true faith.

* That is to say, a worke which they esteeme good in it selfe: albeit the heart of him which doth it be neuer so bad.

Vers. 12. *When yee come to appeare before mee, who required this of your hands to tread in my courts?*

BEhold here a most excellent refutation of counterfeit worship; when God affirmes they came not before him as hee commanded them: pronouncing in generall that it is but lost labour when men offer him that which he *requires not*: because he will be no otherwise serued then according to his commandement. Whence is it then that men doe so please themselues in such inuentions, but because they vnderstand not that all their seruing of God is vnprofitable and odious in his eies? For otherwise they would by and by thinke thus with themselues, Surely, God requires obedience as the principall: neither would they with such ouerweening extoll their owne workes; which hee on the other side scornes and derides: not onely for that he receiues no profit at all there by; but because hee would not haue men to attribute that vnto him, which they haue rashly inuented of their owne heads without his commandement: and also because hee cannot endure that men should establish their owne fantasies, in stead of his law. Although to the end he may yet touch them neerer to the quicke, he by and by addes, That it is a *seruice* falsely so called; which he esteemes to be but lost labour: namely, that in assembling themselues in the Temple, they did nothing else but weare the pauements thereof with their feete: as if he should say, You must needes thinke that I am much bound to you, for beating mine eares thus with your feined prayers.

1. Sam. 15. 22.

Vers. 13. *Bring no moe oblations in vaine: incense is an abomination vnto me: I cannot suffer your new moones nor sabbaths, nor solemne daies (it is iniquitie) nor solemne assemblies.*

THis is a very profitable admonition to represse y inordinate appetite of those who ceased not obstinately to follow their vaine and feined seruices, that at least being warned of God, they might repent, if at any hand they would be admonished. But it appeares by this place, how obstinate hypocrits are in their false confidence, being once hardned therein, because they cannot possiblie heare the Lord, although hee manifestly warne them that they should cease to lose their labour as they doe. *Incense is an abomination*] &c. That he might pricke them vnto the quicke indeede, he passeth yet further, and tels them that such seruice is not only vnprofitable, but that he also detests it, as abominable vnto him: and very iustly; for it is an high sacrilege to prophane the seruice of God; vnder which they falsely shrouded themselues. For euen as God esteemes nothing more deare and precious vnto him thē his glory; so is nothing lesse tolerable vnto him, then to see it trodden vnder feete by any corruption whatsoeuer: which yet is then done, when euery vaine thing is set vp in stead of his true worship. Some are deceiued in vnderstanding this place, thinking that the Prophet speakes of the abolishing of the law; for that is not his meaning: but he rather brings the people of his time to the true obseruation of the ceremonies; and shewes wherefore, and to what end they were instituted. The seruice of God was spirituall euen from the beginning of the world. And whereas there were other exercises diuers from ours in the old Testament, it was in regard of men, and not of God; for there is no changing with him; but he applied himselfe to the weakenes of man. This gouernment then was fit for the Iewes, as an Abce for children. Therefore he shewes to what end this gouernment was established, and what was the true vse of ceremonies.

Iames 1. 17.

Vers. 14. *My soule hateth your new moones and your appointed feasts: they are a burthen vnto me: I am wearie to beare them.*

THe Prophet addes nothing different from the former doctrine, but in generall pronounceth of al ceremonies, where there is not spirituall trueth ioyned but onely a false pretence appeareth, that they are not onely things vnprofitable, but wicked. From hence we must obserue, that we labour but in vaine vnlesse we worship God aright as it is meete, and himselfe prescribeth: For if trueth be it indeede which pleaseth God in all things, then much more doth he looke for it in the worship which is done to his Maiestie. Moreouer our labour is not only lost (as hath been said heretofore) but the worship of God is hereby perverted, which is the greatest villanie that can be committed. Now all superstitions are so many corruptions of the pure worship of God: and therefore it followes that they are wicked and detestable. Superstition then is to be esteemed either by the thing it selfe, or by the affection of the heart from whence it proceedes. By the thing it selfe; when men dare bring in of their owne heades, that which God hath not commanded. As all those things are which superstition (commonly called deuotion) hath begotten. One will set vp and Idoll; another will build a chappel; the third will found yeerely pensions to haue Masses said daily for him; others, such like paltrie stuffe without end or measure. Now when men take vpon them to be so malepert as to forge new ser-

" Viz. In the performer; as after appeareth by M. Caluins owne words. "i. As he performeth them, that is, an hypocrits his action is vnprofitable to himselfe and impious.

uices:

uices, there hath ſuperſtition the full ſwinge. It may alſo be in the affection of the heart, when men doe vſe the ceremonies (which God hath allowed and commanded) in outward appearance: who in the meane while ſticke faſt there; neuer aiming at the marke, and trueth of them. As for example, the Iewes hold the ceremonies ordained by *Moſes* with tooth and naile, but yet they leaue that which is the principall behind them. For they regard a good conſcience nothing at all; a man ſhall not heare them ſpeake of faith, or of repentance; they haue no knowledge of their ſpirituall miſerie: and (which is worſt of all) they ſeparate Chriſt from their ſacrifices, giuing no place at all to the trueth. Wherein we cleerely ſee the trueth of that which wee haue taught heretofore; to wit, that it was a baſtardly & painted ſhew which they made: ſo as their ſacrifices differed in nothing from the ſacrifices of the heathen. We needе not wonder then if the Lord call them an abomination. I will not ſtand to ſcan the phraſes of ſpeech which the Prophet here vſeth; they are diuers: and yet notwithſtanding they are not to be lightly paſſed ouer. For the Lord well diſcernes how great the rage of man is to forge new ſeruices, and therefore he vſeth amplifications to depreſſe this vice the more; and againe pronounceth, that hee hates them. Beſides, for as much as men doe flatter themſelues and are perſwaded that the Lord will make ſome account of their dreames and ſtore of deuices, he on the contrarie ſaith that he abhorres and deteſts them.

Verſ. 15. *And when you ſhall ſtretch out your hands I will hide mine eies from you: and though you make many prayers, I will not heare: for your hands are full of blood.*

IT came not from any ſuperſtition that the people in old time vſed to *ſtretch out their hands in prayer*: neither came this geſture of any vaine or friuolous luſt, as many others haue done: But in regard that nature her ſelfe thruſteth forth her hands to ſeeke for that which ſhe deſireth: teſtifying euen by outward ſignes that ſhe hath her recourſe vnto God. Therefore in as much as we cannot flie vp vnto him, wee lift vp our ſelues as it were vnto him by this ſigne or geſture. True it is that the fathers had no commandement to doe it: notwithſtanding they vſed it as being inſpired of God. And by this very ſigne are all idolaters conuinced euen of ſottiſh blindnes: for they proteſt by this outward geſture that they haue their refuge in God, and yet notwithſtanding in effect they withdraw their hearts from him to idoles. Alſo to the end the ſuperſtitious might be the more conuinced, the Lord was pleaſed that this cuſtome ſhould alwaies continue in vſe amongſt them. The Prophet then condemnes not the lifting vp of the hands ſimplie, but their hypocriſie, whereby in appearance they made ſhew to call vpon God, but in their hearts they were farre from him, as in the 29. chapter he doth more fully charge them. The Lord confeſſeth indeed that he is neere; but it is to thoſe that call vpon him in truth, Pſalm. 145. 18. For where hypocriſie reigneth, there can be no true inuocation. That therfore which is ſaid in another place is not contrarie to this; namely, when they ſhall ſtretch forth their hands vnto me, I wil heare them. For the Lord there ſpeakes of that inuocation which proceedes of faith. For faith is the mother of prayer: but if faith bee abſent, prayer is a meere mocking of God. This he yet amplifies further when hee tels them that he will not heare their cries, although they ſhould *multiplie their prayers:* As if hee ſhould ſay; Be it that you neuer ceaſe praying, yet this your diligence ſhall profit you nothing: For hypocrites haue this vice alſo peculiar vnto them, that they imagine the more they babble, & more holy they are, and that they can the more eaſily obtaine the thing they aske. But he refels their babling here, as we ſee. *Rom. 10. 14.*

For your hands.] Now he begins to declare more plainly why he abhors, yea, reiects their prayers, as alſo their ſacrifices with diſdain; namely, becauſe they preſented themſelues before his face with a brauerie full of diſſimulation: and in the meane while were cruell, bloudy and giuen to euery kind of iniquitie. Now howſoeuer he by and by addes other ſorts of iniquities, he yet ſpeakes thus notwithſtanding in regard that he had mentioned the lifting vp of the hands: and ſaith, that euen *in them*, they bare a ſigne and marke of their impieties, ſo as they need not to marueile why they be ſo ſharpely beatē back. For otherwiſe this manner of ſpeech, To lift vp pure hands, was not only in vſe among the Prophets and Apoſtles, but alſo euen amongſt prophane authors, who were pricked forward by the very inſtinct of nature, to exerciſe themſelues in reprouing the ſottiſhnes of mē: or rather it may be the Lord plucked this confeſſiō or ceremonie from them, to the end that at the leaſt wiſe there might alwaies be ſome appearance of true religiō amongſt thē. *1. Tim. 2. 8.*

Notwithſtanding the Prophet meant not to charge the Iewes to bee ſuch theeues or *murtherers* as rob and kill by the high waies ſide: but hee ſtrikes at their priuie deceits and opreſſions whereby they got other mens goods into their owne hands. For God iudgeth otherwiſe then man doth: man eſpieth not the priuie iuglings and wilie practiſes of the wicked by which they are accuſtomed ſmoothly and cunningly to beguile the ſimple ones; or if ſo be they chaunce to come to light, they are extenuated, and not examined according to the weights of the Sanctuarie: But God pulling out theſe gallants by the poll into light, who were wont to ſhroud their robberies vnder honeſt titles, pronounceth before all men that they are *murtherers*. For if thou kill a man, be it after what manner thou wilt, then art thou a murtherer, whether thou cutteſt his throate, or takeſt away his maintenance, and that which is conuenient for him. He ſpeakes not of them then which were openly

openly wicked, being deteſted of all for their diſhoneſt dealing: but of ſuch as caried two faces vnder one hood; profeſſing themſelues good men in outward ſhew, and kept their credit with the world. And this is a circumſtance well worthie our obſeruation. For thus muſt wee proceede at this day againſt thoſe lanke and emptie fellowes who will cloake their villanies vnder vizzards of honeſtie, and in the meane while, what by deceit, violence, or ſome ſuch other iniurie, they oppreſſe the poore and needie. Although then they impudently crie out that we doe them wrong to compare them to theeues and murtherers, yet muſt they be reprehended with ſuch ſeueritie, as the Prophet vſed here to their fellowes. For when wee ſpeake in the name of God, we muſt not iudge according to the reaſon and opinion of men: but muſt with all boldnes pronounce that which the Lord his iudgement approueth.

Verſ. 16. *Waſh you, make you cleane: take away the euill of your workes from before mine eies: ceaſe to doe euill.*

NOw hee exhortes the Iewes to repentance, and ſhewes the true way to come thereto, if ſo be they meant by their ſeruices ſhould be allowed of God. Whence wee gather, that nothing can pleaſe God, vnleſſe it come from a pure conſcience. For God is not like a man, that he ſhould eſteeme our works by the outſide of them. Men do many times praiſe the worke which a wicked man hath done, but in God his ſight (who chiefly reſpects the heart) the polluted conſcience defiles all the reſt of the vertues. And that is it which the Prophet *Haggie* teacheth, ſetting
Hag. 1.14.15 an example of the ancient ceremonie before them: namely, that whatſoeuer a polluted man had touched was vncleane: whence he concludes, that no cleane thing can proceed from the wicked. Our Prophet hath alreadie affirmed, that it is in vaine to offer ſacrifices vnto God, in vaine to make vowes, in vaine to cal vpon him, if the integritie of the heart do not ſanctifie the outward ſeruice. Wherefore to the ende the Iewes ſhould not labour any longer for nothing, he requires this *cleannes*: and begins with a generall reformation, to the end they ſhould not think they had bleared the eies of God by doing their duties in ſome one or two things only. And thus muſt they be handled who haue eſtranged themſelues from God. Wee muſt not touch a diſeaſe or two of a ſicke infected body: but if care be had to heale it truely and ſoundly, we muſt de forced to call them backe, and to begin all anew: yea the contagion of the diſeaſe muſt be purged wholly from within; that ſo they may begin to pleaſe God, whereas before they were deteſtable and abominable in his ſight. And no doubt alſo by this Similitude of *waſhing*, hee exhortes them to purge themſelues from their inward vncleanneſſes. But vnto this hee will by and by ad outward workes.

Now in that he commands them *to waſh themſelues*, it is not becauſe men come to repentance by their owne proper mouing, and free will; but he ſhewes that no other remedie will ſerue the turne, vnleſſe they appeare pure and cleane before God. Now we know that the Spirit of God is wont to attribute that to men, which himſelfe workes in them, who therefore is called *cleane water*, Ezech. 36.25. becauſe repentance is a worke proceeding from him.

Take away.] Now the Prophet deſcends to the fruites of repentance. For he not onelie declares in plaine termes that they ought to be cleanſed and waſhed; but he commands them to ſhew a teſtimonie of their change in their whole life, and in all their actions. Notwithſtanding hee confirmes the former ſentence; namely, that the filthines of the people is before the Lord, which defiling and ſtayning all their works takes away all the goodnes which might ſeeme to be in them. He makes expreſſe mention of *the eies of God*, to the end that whilſt he beholds them, they ſhould not thinke to depriue him of ſeeing, and ſo make him a companion with them of their blindnes. *Ceaſe from euill.* He goes on ſtill to blame their life. Some expound this place, as if by *euill doing*, the Prophet ſhould vnderſtand euill liuing: But it ought properly to be vnderſtood of thoſe miſdoings wherby a mans neighbour is offended. Seeing in the next verſe following, it is ſaid, *Learne to doe well*: where the clauſe, To your neighbour, ſhould be ſupplied. For he ſpeakes of the iniuries, and good turnes which our neighbour receiues of vs. Now becauſe repentance hath his ſeate in the heart, therfore he ſets it forth by theſe kinds, whereby men may come ſomewhat neere to the knowledge of it. For euery man would bee taken for a good man: but the outward works ſhew what euery man is within. He brings them then to externall workes, that by them they ſhould ſhew forth the truth of their repentance. Now hee comprehends the fruits of repentance vnder two members, to wit, a *ceaſing to doe euill*; *and a learning to doe well*. For firſt wee muſt abſtaine from doing all wrong: yet ſo, as wee deale not like thoſe prodigall ones who would be eſteemed liberall, when they take from one to giue to another: neither yet like thoſe pinchpennies who thinke they haue quit themſelues well when they are carefull in keeping their own, doing others no harme; and yet in the meane while will doe good to none at all. His meaning is then, to comprehend both the one and the other: for the obſeruation of the ſecond table conſiſteth in theſe two points.

Verſ. 17. *Learne to doe well: ſeeke iudgement, relieue the oppreſſed*: iudge the fatherleſſe, and defend the widdowes.*

* Or, him who is trampled vnder foote.

EVen as immediatly before, where he commanded them to abſtaine from euill, hee therein comprehended a continuall exerciſe thereof: as if hee ſhould ſay, Hitherto your whole life hath been nothing but a committing

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ting of euill: now on the otherſide he teacheth them to bee meeke and curteous; and drawes them to *learne* what it is: euen as if he had had to doe with new apprentiſes, and raw ſchollers. And firſt he commands them *to ſeeke iudgement*: others tranſlate, Examine your ſelues; which I approue not. For by the word *ſeeke*, hee ſignifies a further thing, namely, an actuall ſtudie, as they call it. Alſo by the word *iudgement* he comprehends whatſoeuer is good and right, as if he ſhould ſay, Study to be vpright.

Relieue the oppreſſed.] The Prophet after his accuſtomed manner comes to particulars, after he hath ſpoken of things in generall: and howſoeuer he had alreadie exhorted them to weldoing and equitie in ſpeciall manner; yet now willing to preſſe them more neerely, he reckons vp ſome particular kindes thereof in plaine words, by which hee comes to a more ample and full declaration of the generall. For otherwiſe men would alwaies goe for iuſt and vpright; and hardly ſhould you ſtirre or mooue them with generall doctrine. But when one comes once to particulars, euen as if one ſhould bring them out by the polles into open view, then they are conſtrained to ſubmit themſelues; or at the leaſt to become more tractable: whereof we haue daily experience.

Iudge.] The Prophet makes choice here of two particulars, which do beſt of all lay open and diſcouer the wickednes of men. For they very ſeldom take the cauſes of the *widow* and *fatherleſſe* in hand, becauſe they looke not for the reward. And hence it is then that poore creatures are expoſed to infinite ſorts of iniuries; namely, becauſe no man is haſtie to ſuccour them: for who will ſerue in the place of iuſtice for nothing? nay are there not many who giue themſelues to poll and pill the poore and needie? And doth not this manifeſtly ſhew, how few make conſcience of executing iudgement? Indeed it is no wonder if the rich and mightie haue friends to maintain and vphold their cauſes, ſeeing they are drawne and allured thereunto, not of conſcience, but for hope of gaine. But the Lord here ſhewes that he takes care for the fatherleſſe and widowes; and that he will iudge and reuenge their cauſe, if any haue offered them violence. And as much he ſaith of all other diſtreſſed, who being held down by violence and tyrannicall cruelty, do ſigh and grone vnder the oppreſſion of them who are more mightie then they.

This ought to miniſter a ſoueraigne conſolation to all the children of God: whoſe condition it is to poſſeſſe their ſoules by patience. For how proudly ſoeuer the wicked aduance themſelues, yet ſhall not that hinder the faithfull to triumph in their anguiſhes. Let this ſentence therefore bee alwaies ingrauen vpon their hearts, *The Lord will ſuccour vs*: and, *Although men deſpiſe vs, yet will he care for vs: He will helpe the helpleſſe, and will defend their cauſe.*

Verſ. 18. *Come now and let vs reaſon together, ſaith the Lord: though your ſinnes were as crimſin, they ſhall bee made white as ſnow: though they were red as skarlet, they ſhall be as wooll.*

COME NOW.] The Expoſitors haue beene wont to tranſlate, I pray you, or Then: but me thinks the aſſurance of a good cauſe is here noted; ſo as the Hebrew particle *now*, ſerueth for an exhortatiõ. For he ſhewes that the Iewes ſhould be able to make no replies, and that they would remaine ſtarke dumbe; although long time ſhould be giuen them to iuſtifie themſelues. And ſurely ſo muſt hypocrites be dealt withall: for they are skilfull to pleade boldly with God, and will bee ſeeking out ſtarting holes. Therefore he ſaith if they bee minded to plead, he is as readie as they.

But ſome may demand what reaſon the Prophet hath to ſtand chiefly vpon the duties of the ſecond Table, rather thẽ vpon the duties of the firſt. For we know that in diuiding of the law, it is not without cauſe that God hath placed the firſt Table formoſt, as in the chiefe ranke. Neither is it to be doubted, but as it is firſt in order, ſo is it alſo formoſt in dignitie. I anſwere, that the Prophets haue ſpoken diuerſlie in reproouing the hypocriſie of men. For ſometimes they complaine that the Sabbath is violated: otherwhiles that prayer is neglected: but chiefly and principally they crie out againſt idolatry and ſuperſtitions. But our Prophet complaines here, that men made none account of their duties towards their neighbours. Yet ſo it is, that all tends to one end: namely, that our workes are vaine before God, when they come not frõ a pure conſcience: and that we haue no feare of him at all before our eyes. Now they are wont to ſet forth the feare of God, one while by the calling vpon his name; another while by the obſeruation of the Sabbath; and ſometimes by other workes. But in regard that a man beſt knowes the certaine difference which is betweene the true ſeruice of God and hypocriſie, by workes of charitie; the Prophet keeps a very direct courſe in mentioning of them. For hypocrites are very diligent in outward ſeruices and ceremonies: and yet are full of enuie within. They burſt with pride and contempt of their brethren; they burne with auarice and ambition: neither can they eaſily be vnmasked whilſt they couer themſelues vnder the performance of outward ceremonies. Such then muſt be examined by this rule, euen as by a touchſtone, and thereby bee tried whether they haue the true feare of God in them or not. We may well bee deceiued indeede if we will iudge of the godlines of a man by the ſecond Table onlie: but if any man ſhall exerciſe himſelfe in the duties of the commandements of the firſt Table, which are teſtimonies of godlines and of the ſeruice of God, then muſt he be brought to this triall: to wit, whether hee walke without deceit with his brethren: whether he abſtaine from wrong and violence: whether he be true in his word and promiſes: and whether hee carrie himſelfe

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selfe louingly towards his brethren. And this is the cause why Iesus Christ saith, that Mercy, Iudgement, and Truth are the principal parts of the law, (when he reprocheth the Pharisies for laying aside the care of true iustice, in that they pleased themselues onely in pettie things, tithing Mint, Anis, & Cumin, Mat. 23. 23. By faith in that place he vnderstands fidelity, which we commonly call loyaltie: and by *Iudgement* all vprightnes when wee render to our neighbour that which to him appertaineth: not suffring him to bee wronged by others, but helping him as farre as we are able.

Obiect. But if these be the principall parts of the law, in what degree shall we place the commandements of the first Table?

Ans. I answer, that they still keepe their order and dignitie: but by these of the second, which Christ straightly requireth, whereupon hee also insistes, the hypocrisie of hypocrits is chiefly discouered, so as a man may more plainly discerne thereby whether the true feare of God be in any one in truth or not. And in the same sense must that be taken where it is said, I wil haue mercie, and not sacrifice: Hosea 6.6. 1.Sam. 15.22. Matth. 9.13. & 12.7. For *mercie* is a declaration and proofe of true pietie. Moreouer because it is a true demonstration of loue, it pleaseth God of it selfe: but *sacrifices*, please him for another end. Now it appeares sufficiently, as I thinke, why *Isaiah* rather mentioneth here the doing of good to our neighbours, then faith, or calling vpon God his name: as also why the Prophets doe speake so diuersly when they meane to bring hypocrits backe to the true seruice of God, and to shew it forth by the outward fruits.

Though your sinnes] &c. This is as much as if he should haue said, I accuse not innocent persons, neither take I pleasure to pleade thus with you; but know, that the cause is great that makes me thus vrge and accuse you. For hypocrits are wont to quarrel with God, as though he dealt too sharplie with them, or as though he were vnappeaseable. Yea in their obstinacie they find out this excuse, That it is in vaine for them to endeuor to returne into fauour with God. And if all excuses faile them, yet notwithstanding they haue this shift, That they ought not to be pressed so neere: and that men must be borne withall in some things, yea euen the best of all. Therfore the Prophet preuents them, and brings in the Lord speaking thus; For my part if neede require, I refuse not to pleade with you; for thereby it shall appeare that your obstinacie is the cause why we are not at vnitie together: bring with you therfore *cleannes of heart*, and then all our strife shall cease. I would not stand to pleade with you, if you would offer me the sacrifices of an vpright heart. Now from hence wee may gather a wonderfull consolation, namely, that God pleades not with vs, as if he meant to pursue vs with rigor. For if we would earnestly conuert and turne to him, hee would by and by receiue vs into fauor & blot out the remembrance of all our offences, so as he would not call one of them into account. For he is not like men, of whom one cannot obtaine pardon for the least offence, that shall bee committed against them. Nay, on the contrarie, he is readie to cleanse and pardon vs: so farre off is it that we haue any cause to complaine of his ouer great rigorousnes. For he contēts himselfe with the cleannes of the heart; and if there be any sinne that breakes out, besides our purpose, he forgiues it, by pardoning such as haue prouoked him.

Vers. 19. *If yee will consent and obey, yee shall eate the good things of the land.*

Isaiah still pleades the cause of God against the people: and in briefe affirmes, that all the calamities which the people susteined ought to be imputed to their owne default: and that they were to blame themselues for not recouering a more happie and comfortable estate. Why so? Because God for his part is alwaies readie to pardon their sinnes, if they harden not their owne hearts against him. But for as much as it seemes, that the Prophet placeth felicitie here, in the will and power of man, the Papists contend with Obiect. open mouth that men haue power of their owne free mouing to doe good or euill. Is it so? As if God discourſed here how great the Ans. abilitie of men is; when hee accuseth their obstinacie. But he should then say in vaine, Obiect. *if yee will consent*, if so be it were not in their power. I answere, that howsoeuer the choice Ans. bee not in our owne power, as they would make vs beleeue it is, yet God iustly chargeth sinners to be the voluntarie authors of their euils, because they pull downe the wrath of God vpon their owne heads willingly, and without constraint. I grant then, that it is a speciall gift of God for a man to endeuour to doe good: but it is also as true, that the wickednes of reprobates hindreth them from applying themselues thereunto: and therefore that al the fault of their hardning abides and remaines in themselues. And hereupon dependes this reproach, namely, That the people might haue had an happie issue, and a comfortable life, if they would haue become teachable and obedient to God. For seeing that of his owne nature hee desires nothing more then to doe good, we may iustly impute it vnto our owne malice, and vnthankfulnes, that this liberalitie which hee daily offereth, comes not vnto vs.

On the contrarie, he addes a terrible and grieuous threatning, to wit, that the vengeance of God is readie to seaze vpon them, to the end they might feele that the contemners of God shall not remaine vnpunished. We must also note that there is but one only rule of well liuing; that is, the obedience which wee yeeld vnto God, and to his word. Also in these words, there is a trāsported sentence by a figure which wee call Hypallage, because the speech should be resolued thus, If you be of a readie mind, and haue full consent of will to obey; or else thus, and yet in the same sense: If ye hearken and obey me, and my word. Seing then that God placeth the felicitie of men in obedience, it followes that

that our life is then well ordered when wee heare God ſpeaking, and that we obey him in all things. Now wee may ſee how great the wickednes of men is when they vouchſafe not to lend their eare to God, but reiect the felicitie which hee offereth and prepareth for them. Truely their froward affections ought to bee tamed, to the end that whilſt theſe poore wretches draw the wrath of God vpon their owne heads, they might not wittingly and willingly caſt themſelues headlong vpon the edge of the ſword. Wee muſt note alſo, that in the verſe following, which is the concluſion, he threatens them with extreame ruine, if ſo be they ſtill continue to rebell obſtinately againſt God.

The good things of the earth.] He meanes the fruites which the earth brings forth for the neceſſitie of our life. For the earth ſeemes to bee ſomewhat vnkind when it brings not forth her fruites, but keeps them as it were in her boſome. Although I make no queſtion but hee alludes to the promiſes of the law, where God promiſeth that he will bleſſe the ground of ſuch as walke in his commandements, that they may haue abundance of all good things. And yet hee offereth not the commodities of this life vnto vs to the end he would ſtay vs in an earthly felicity, which hypocrits indeed only gape after, wholly imploying all their wits thereabouts: but that by the contemplation thereof, we ſhould lift vp our minds to the heauenly and ſpirituall felicity: as alſo that by the taſte of his ſo great goodnes he might accuſtome vs to reliſh the eſtate of eternall happines. Now the ancient people were inured rather to be called by ſuch ſhadowes and reſemblances to the heauenly inheritance, namely, by the taſte of earthly benefits. And this difference is well to be noted, that we may applie this doctrine to our vſe according to that degree whereunto God hath been pleaſed to exalt vs. Now the Prophet would teach vs that true felicity, with the complements thereof, conſiſts in the obedience of God: alſo, that the wicked, in rebelling againſt him, doe draw vpon themſelues all manner of calamities: and that we therfore ought to impute all the euils which we endure, to our ſinnes and rebellions, as to the proper cauſe thereof.

Verſ. 20. *But if yee refuſe and be rebellious, yee ſhall be deuoured with the ſword: for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.*

THe wicked alwaies thinke the puniſhments which they ſuffer are farre greater then their fault, although God deale mercifully and fauourably with them. And howſoeuer they dare not wholly iuſtifie themſelues; yet notwithſtanding they ceaſe not (as we haue ſaid heretofore) to accuſe him of too great ſeueritie. But the Prophet ſhewes how there ſhall bee no end of their plagues which they often ſuffer, till they bee wholly conſumed: as alſo that there are yet more heauie chaſtiſements prepared for them of God, that they ſhould not imagine to eſcape with thoſe light fillips wherewith they were hitherto ſmitten. The Papiſts wreſt this place to eſtabliſh their free will. And thus they reaſon: If men be happie when they will obey God, then it followes that it is in their owne power to will. Behold a childiſh argument. For the Lord by the mouth of his Prophet diſputes not what or how great our power of will is to good or euill: but admoniſheth, that it is by our owne default that we enioy not the abundance of all good things: and further that the neceſſities wherewith wee bee pinched, are the iuſt rewards of our diſobedience and rebellion. Now there is great ods betwixt demanding, whether a man bee able to make his will which is euill, good; and, whether by his wicked will (which is his owne by nature) hee drawes vpon himſelfe all the plagues which he endureth. Theſe ſubtile and craftie doctors therfore do vniuſtly and falſelie ground their doctrine of free choice of good and euill vpon this place.

For the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.] Becauſe threatnings ordinarily doe not much moue ſuch as are carried away with their inordinate deſires and luſts, the Prophet to the end he might awaken them from out of their ſo great drouſines, admoniſheth them that this ſentence proceeds not from the mouth of a mortall man, but that it is come out of the mouth of the eternall God, who is not mutable as men are, but is alwaies as good as his word. He ſets the authoritie of God before them then to feare and terrifie them; to the end that ſuch among them as were fallen into a dead ſleepe in their vices, might earneſtly giue themſelues to hearken to his threatnings.

Verſ. 21. *How is the faithfull citie become an harlot! It was full of iudgement and iuſtice lodged therein, but now they are murtherers.*

TO the end the reprehenſion might be the more forcible, and that their wickednes might be ye more deteſtable, in that this people were thus reuolted from God and from all integritie and vprightnes, he cries out as if he ſaw ſome ſtrange and vnwonted thing. And ſurely it was an horrible change, that the people whom the Lord had choſen and ſet apart to bee a royall prieſthood to himſelfe, ſhould thus fal from ſo ſoueraigne pietie and godlines, into the gulfe and ſincke of all ſinne and wickednes. But he ſpeakes chiefly of the *citie of Ieruſalem*, which was the royall ſeate of the Sanctuarie of God: hee complaines that ſhe which heretofore was a *faithfull gardian of iuſtice*, is now become a denne of theeues: and that of an holy and chaſt virgin, ſhe is become an *harlot*. To the ende therefore hee might make the baſtard Iewes (who were farre from the integritie of the holy Patriarks) the more aſhamed, hee takes vnto himſelfe the perſon of a man aſtoniſhed, who wondreth and reaſoneth with himſelfe

ſelfe how ſuch a thing could come to paſſe. Alſo in this word *faithfull*, hee alludes, as I thinke, to the faith in mariage which the wife ought to keepe to her husband. I graunt that the ſignification of the word reacheth further: but waying the circumſtance narrowly, I thinke it not amiſſe to take the word *faithfull*, for chaſte. For a little after he oppoſeth the contrarie member; calling her harlot. So as being in times paſt a loyall wife keeping faith to her husband, ſhee is now become an harlot paſt ſhame, and bluſheth not at her villanie. Now it is an vſuall thing in the Scriptures to call the Church of God by the name of his wife: which degree of honour Ieruſalem kept whilſt ſhee retained her ſpirituall ſhamefaſtnes and perſeuered in the lawfull and pure worſhip of God: but as ſoone as ſhe gaue ouer that, then ſhe became an harlot.

Now it is not to be doubted but this aſtoniſhment of the Prophet was ioyned with great ſorrow. For it ought to make our haire to ſtand an end, to ſee men reuolt and ſlide backe from God; and forſake the faith and allegeance which once they promiſed him. Neither can it be but men of any good heart, will be deeply touched with extreame ſorrow at ỹ beholding of ſuch a wofull ſpectacle. We reade, Luk. 15. 10. how the Angels reioyce at the conuerſion of a ſinner, and therefore they are much grieued at the perdition of any one of them. But how much more heauie and ſorrowfull are they when they behold the ruine and deſtruction of a whole citie and Church?

Now this admiration carries with it a complaint: as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid to *Ieruſalem*; From what an excellent and flouriſhing eſtate art thou fallen? into what miſerie haſt thou plunged thy ſelfe? What ſhame and diſhonour haſt thou laid thy ſelfe open vnto? For in making mention of her former eſtate, in which ſhee had flouriſhed and had been honourablie accounted of, hee thereby prouokes her to bee ſo much the more moued; ſo as ſhe who in times paſt had been an honeſt mother of a family, ſhould haue much more care of her honour and reputation, then ſuch a one as hath paſſed her whole life in all kind of wicked and leude behauiour.

She was full of Iudgement.] He ſhewes what the fruites of this loyaltie was in times paſt. We may take *iudgement* for vprightnes only, or, if any will, he may take *Iuſtice* for giuing to euery one that which to him belongeth: and *Iudgement* for taking the cauſe of the innocent in hand; and reuenging the poore and needie: For ſo the Scripture indeede vſeth them, when theſe two words are ioyned together. But becauſe they are not wholly ioyned together in this place, I take iudgement ſimplie for vprightnes; as being one, and the ſame thing twiſe ſpoken, to manifeſt it the more clearely.

But now they are murtherers] Here hee ſhewes how *Ieruſalem* is become an harlot. For whereas iuſtice and equitie were in times paſt highly in eſtimation in her eyes: now on the contrarie ſhee is full of *murthers*. Now he meanes not murtherers and theeues onely, as hath been ſaid: but thoſe who vnder colour of iuſtice drew other mens goods to themſelues by deceit, and violence: and laſtly thoſe who walked not plainely and ſimplie with their neighbours, in what eſtimation ſoeuer they were: as ſometimes, nay very often it falles out, that the moſt wicked are the moſt praiſed. Now from this eſtate whereunto *Ieruſalem* was come, let vs conſider after what manner Satan for the moſt part exerciſeth his tyrannie ouer the Church of God, euen as if the bridle were laid in his necke. For if euer there were a Church, it was in *Ieruſalem*; and yet notwithſtanding *Iſaiah* ſaith, that it was become a denne of theeues, or as a caue wherein men were deuoured and ſwallowed vp. But if Satan had his ſwinge ſo there; let vs not meruaile if the caſe bee now alike with vs; but let vs rather giue order that we be not corrupted by ſo wicked examples.

Verſ. 22. *Thy ſiluer is become droſſe: thy wine is mixt with water.*

THe Prophet ſpeaks by a figure: and vnder two ſimilitudes, ſhewes here, how that although things were not wholly ouerturned in appearance, yet that their eſtate notwithſtanding was changed and corrupted in ſuch wiſe, as it was far from that which it was wont to be. For he ſaith, that *droſſe* ſhined in ſtead of Siluer: and that there was nothing in their wine but colour, without any ſauour: as if he ſhould haue ſaid, Howſoeuer thou makeſt a faire ſhew of goodnes, yet there is nothing that is pure to bee found in thee. Thy wine which was wont to be of it ſelfe, is now mixed; and howſoeuer it deceiues them that looke vpon it, yet by the taſte one may know it is corrupted. Now all this is to none other end, but that the Iewes, hauing once purged themſelues from all diſſimulation, ſhould begin to confeſſe their ſinnes, and not to pleaſe themſelues any longer in them, as hypocrites are wont to doe. To which purpoſe theſe Similitudes which he here vſeth, are very apt and fitting: for the *droſſe* of ſiluer hath ſome reſemblance with ſiluer; alſo the water that is mixed with the wine, hath ſome ſhew of the colour of the wine it ſelfe: and yet notwithſtanding they are farre off from the puritie of the things, which they reſemble. So the hypocrits paint themſelues with the colour of falſe ſiluer, although indeed they deſerue no more commendations then droſſe: yea they are more deteſtable therein, then if they were openly wicked. Yet notwithſtanding, they oppoſe themſelues againſt God and men, and no leſſe diſloyally then wickedlie paint ouer themſelues with vanitie and vaine ſhewes to couer their malice withall.

Verſ. 23. *Thy Princes are rebellions and companions of theeues: euery one loueth gifts, and followeth after rewards, they iudge not the fatherles, neither doth the*

doth the widowes cauſe come before them.

THere is an alluſion and meeting together of wordes in this place, which hath a verie good grace; as if hee ſhould ſay, Thy Princes are pincers. Neither ſpeakes he ſo of the princes as if the people were holy and blameleſſe, but hee toucheth the welſpring of the miſchiefe: for euen as no euill is more hurtfull, then that which comes from the head, and diſperſeth it ſelfe into all the members; ſo alſo is there nothing more pernicious in a commonwealth, then a corrupt and wicked *Prince*, who ſpreadeth abroad his corruptions ouer all the body, as well by example, as by giuing libertie thereunto: Prou.29.12. From whence alſo came the prouerb, *Such a maſter ſuch a man.* It is all one then as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid, that it was no particular vice that reigned among the common people, but that the Princes and great Lords had let looſe the raines to al wickednes. Alſo there is a cloſe amplificatiõ in the word *Princes*; becauſe it is a thing much to be lamented, that the euill ſhould come from thence, where remedie ſhould be ſought. He ioynes one particular, which is, that they are *companions of theeues*: by which words he ſignifies, that they were ſo farre off from endeuoring themſelues to repreſſe theeueries and wrongs, that on the contrarie, they drew gaine and profit from thence: and he calles them theeues iuſtly, who in taking part of the pray, gaue licence to others to ſteale. Neither can it be auoided when a Iudge ſuffereth himſelfe to bee corrupted by bribes, that diſorders ſhould not raigne: for it is all one, as if hee himſelfe ſhould conſent with theeues.

Euery one loueth gifts.] Hee alſo ſhewes the cauſe wherefore the Princes had ſocietie with the theeues, and by a wicked conſpiracie had coupled themſelues with them, to foſter and maintaine all iniuſtice: to wit, couetouſnes. For iuſtice is gone when Iudges are giuen to the loue of monie: for if accepting of perſons be ſuch a corruption in iudgment, that where it reignes, equitie hath no place at all; truely, whoſoeuer he be that is poſſeſſed with couetouſnes, ſuch a one hath more reſpect to the perſon then to the cauſe. And therefore he cannot ſee the right: but will practiſe that which one ſaith, to wit, hee will make lawes, and vnmake them againe.

By this we are aduertiſed, what a vertue it is in a Magiſtrate to know how to contemne gifts: for if he cannot curbe his deſires, his hands and eyes, he will neuer iudge iuſtlie. It is therefore but a tale when ſome ſay, they can keepe a good conſcience, though they receiue *rewards*, ſeeing that which the Lord ſaith, remaines euer true; namely, that gifts doe blind the eyes of the wiſe, and peruert the words of the iuſt: Deut.16.29. There is no man then ſo perfect, nor ſo wiſe and learned, whoſe eyes & vnderſtanding may not be blinded with gifts. Whence it is that he iuſtly chargeth ỹ Iudges to be *cõpanions with theeues*, becauſe being carried away with a blind deſire of monie, there was no law neither of God nor of man which they peruerted not, and that there remained amongſt them no reſpect either of ſhame or equitie.

Exod.23.1.

Wee muſt alſo note, that for the conuiction of hypocrites, the Prophet ſets their workes, which were notorious, before them; which were alſo apparent to all the world: becauſe otherwiſe they would neuer bee brought vnder. And yet no doubt but there were many at that time which winced when they were thus tenned by ỹ name of *theeues*: as alſo at this day, many crie out impudently, and obſtinately that they are not theeues for taking thoſe bribes and giftes which are offered them, and that it will hinder them nothing at all from iudging iuſtly. Now becauſe ſuch anſwers are friuolous, the Prophet hauing diſcouered their wickednes, and contenting himſelfe thus to haue reprooued them, he pleades no more with them. And verily nature it ſelfe teacheth vs, that it is vnpoſſible to giue right iudgemẽt, when Iudges are ſo greedie of recompence and reward: for it cannot bee but that thereby they muſt needes ſet both their faithfulnes and eſtimation to ſale.

They iudge not the fatherleſſe.] Euen as the Lord doth ſpecially recommend vnto vs the cauſes of the widowes and of the fatherleſſe, becauſe they are deſtitute of mens ſuccour and helpe; ſo alſo it is no meruaile if hee be offended when hee ſeeth the Iudges neglect them, in ſtead of being mouth, eyes, eares and hands for them. For when no man puts forth himſelfe to ſuccour ſuch as are deſtiture of counſell, forecaſt, and meanes, they muſt of neceſſitie bee laid open to iniuries, and all manner of violences, without hope of redreſſe. Now when no man takes their cauſe to heart, it is a ſigne that couetouſnes and briberie haue the chiefeſt ſway there, and not equitie.

Verſ.24. *Therefore ſaith the Lord the God of hoſts, the mightie one of Iſrael, ah, I will* * *eaſe me of mine aduerſaries, and auenge me on mine enemies.*

* Or, comfort me, &c.

THe word *Adon*, which is put in the firſt place, ſignifies properly Lord, and is to bee referred to the word that is oppoſite, to wit, Seruant. The name *Iehouah*, by which the eternall eſſence and Maieſtie of God is expreſſed, is added conſequently. After then that the Prophet *Iſaiah* had recited ſome particular ſinnes by the which he made it manifeſt to euery one, that all things were corrupted amongſt this people, minding now to vſe ſome threatnings, and to ſet God his iudgement before them; hee not onelie adornes the Lord with the office, and power of a Iudge, but alſo hee admoniſheth them, that the children of *Abraham* are a peculiar people vnto him; and in this ſenſe, *the mightie one of Iſrael*, is added: although there may be here a priuie and cloſe kind of deriding, wherewith hee galleth the Iewes; as if hee ſhould ſay, that they did fooliſhly bragge of the name of God, ſeeing they are ſuch wret-

ched and wicked ſeruants: and that they truſt in his ſtrength in vaine: which ſtrength he is forthwith readie to diſplay againſt them. Hauing thus then begun to ſpeake, he addes, *Ah, I wil comfort me.* By which words he meanes that God will not bee appeaſed till firſt hee hath had his fill in chaſtiſing of them. He takes the word *comfort*, after the manner of men. For euen as wrath is nothing elſe but a deſire of reuenge: ſo reuenge it ſelfe alſo is a kind of contentment: for when any is reuenged, he is glad, and ſatisfied. Thus the Lord ſaith that hee will ſatisfie himſelfe in chaſtiſing his enemies, as if it were a kind of recompence.

It is true that this place is diuerſly expounded, and I meane not to trouble my ſelfe ſo farre as to examine all interpretations, neither will I ſtand to refute thoſe which ſute not with the text: it ſufficeth for this time, that wee haue the true ſenſe of the Prophet. He ſpeakes not here of the Chaldeans, or Aſſiryans, as many thinke; but of the Iewes; againſt whom he proclaimes open warre in the name of God, whoſe herauld he is: which threatning was very harſh and vnpleaſant vnto their eares, in regard they thought themſelues ſo linked to God, that hee would bee an enemie to their enemies. But God contrariwiſe ſhewes that he is become their enemie, becauſe they haue prouoked him by their naughtines. And after this manner muſt we awaken the hypocrits, who continually fighting againſt God, notwithſtanding bluſh not ſtill to claime his protection for their ſafegard. Therefore let vs not maruaile, if the Prophet doth ſharpely terme them *the enemies of God*, who hauing broken the couenant, were thus combined togeather to make warre againſt him.

And yet notwithſtanding, to the end hee may ſhew that God is as it were conſtrained and enforced to chaſtiſe his people, he threatens them, as it were, with a kind of inward ſorrowing. For as nothing is more agreeable to his nature, then to doe good: euen ſo as oft as his anger is ſtirred vp againſt vs, and that hee handles vs ſeuerely, it is certaine that our owne frowardnes hath conſtrained him ſo to doe, becauſe we will not ſuffer him to beſtow his benefits vpon vs; but eſpecially he is inclined to deale thus louingly with his owne children: & albeit he ſeeth that his louing kindnes and gentlenes can nothing preuaile with them, yet is it in ſorrow of hart that hee ſtrikes them. But paraduenture ſome had rather expound the particle *Hoi*, as if God ſhould crie out as one being enflamed with wrath. For mine owne part I take it, that in this place there is a voyce of griefe and ſorrow: becauſe the Lord in thinking often vpon his couenant, would willingly pardon his choſen people, were it not ſ they their owne obſtinacie they did altogether reiect it. In the ſecond member, *and auenge me of mine enemies*, there is a figure very vſuall with the Hebrewes, who repeate in one and the ſame verſe many times one ſelfeſame thing: whence we alſo gather, that this ſentence hath this drift, namely, that God could not quite himſelfe, vntill he were reuenged vpon this traiterous and diſloyall people.

Note.

Verſ. 25. *Then I will turne mine hand vpon thee, and burne out thy droſſe, till it be pure, and take away al thy tinne.*

THis is a moderation of the former threatning. For howſoeuer hee purſues that which he hath begun to ſpeake of touching his ſeueritie, notwithſtanding he addes therwithall, that the Church ſhall remaine ſafe ſtill in the midſt of all calamities, wherewith the people ſhould be ſmitten: neuertheleſſe his principall drift is to comfort the faithfull, to the end they ſhould not thinke the Church ſhould be brought to ruine, although God was conſtrained to deale more ſharpelie with it then he hath been wont to doe. For the holy Ghoſt alwaies prouides in the miniſtrie of the Prophets for the vpholding of the faith of Gods children (who continually tremble at his words) that they ſhould not bee diſcouraged, being humbled with feares and threatnings; becauſe ſo much the more as the wicked ouerflow the bankes, and ſcoffe at all threatnings, ſo much the more doe they which are touched with the true feare of God, tremble thereat.

Moreouer, *the turning of the hand of God*, generally ſignifies the witneſſe of his preſence: as if he ſhould ſay, I will lift vp mine hand: which he is wont to doe after two ſortes, either when he chaſtiſeth the wicked, or when he pulles the faithfull out of their miſeries. Seeing then it eaſily appeares by the circumſtance of the place, that God would aſſwage the ſharpenes of the correction by mingling ſome conſolation; *The turning of his hand*, ought to be referred here to the reſtauration of the Church. For although he pronounceth in generall that they are all his enemies: yet now he moderates & reſtraines this ſpeech, in calling *Ieruſalem* or *Zion* by his own name. 1 2

When he addes, *I will burne out thy droſſe*; although he notes the fruit of the correction, to the end it ſhould not be grieuous and burthenſome to the faithfull beyond meaſure: notwithſtanding, wee gather from thence that the reſtauration of the Church, is a ſpeciall worke of God. He euermore *lifts vp his hands* to the end he may puniſh ſinne and bring thoſe that erre into the right way: but yet his roddes ſhould auaile little or nothing, if he himſelfe did not make them profitable, by touching their hearts inwardly. And becauſe hee here makes mention of a ſpeciall fauour which hee communicates to his choſen: from thence it followes that repentance is a true and peculiar worke of the holy Ghoſt: becauſe otherwiſe the ſinner would harden himſelfe more and more vnder the blowes, rather then profit thereby any thing at all. Further we are not to vnderſtand this *cleane purging*, in ſuch wiſe, ſ there ſhould remaine no droſſe, as if God would wholly purge his Church in this world from all filthines: but this manner of ſpeech is rather to be referred to the common faſhion of

Gods outward corrections profit vs nothing at all vnleſſe he teach vs inwardly by his holy ſpirit.

of mens actions, as if he ſhould ſay, The eſtate of the Church, ſhall be ſuch, that the beautie thereof ſhall ſhine like ſiluer. The true *poſitio* then is ſignified by theſe words, becauſe the Iewes had too much pleaſed themſelues in their filthines before. Now this ſimilitude is very fit, for by it the Prophet ſhewes, that although the Church of God was then ſo ſtuffed with multitudes of corruptions: yet notwithſtanding there ſhould remaine a remnant which ſhould recouer their brightnes, after that the droſſe and corruption ſhould be conſumed. And thus he now ioynes both members together, becauſe hauing ſpoken in ver. 22. of their offences, hee ſaid, that their ſiluer was become droſſe.

Verſ. 26. *And I will reſtore thy Iudges as at the firſt, and thy Counſellers as at the beginning: afterward thou ſhalt be called a citie of righteouſnes, and a faithfull citie.*

NOw he ſpeakes plainely without any figure. And becauſe hee had ſaid that the ſpring and beginning of all euils was in the princes; thus hee teacheth, that their offices and places ſhall be purged by the Lord, when he begins to reſtore the perfect health and welfarre of the Church againe vnto her. And from thence it is alſo that iuſtice in the politicall gouernment comes; to wit, when the gouernors that rule are vertuous, and fearing God: becauſe all things goe to hauock, when thoſe which gouerne, are wicked. It is plaine enough, that by *Iudges* and *Counſellers* he meanes all Magiſtrates of what ſort ſoeuer. In that hee promiſeth they ſhall bee ſuch as they were at the *beginning*, he puts them in mind of the ſingular benefit of God, whereof they had been depriued. God by his direction had exalted the throne of *Dauid*, and commanded that in this gouernmẽt there ſhould ſhine an Image of his fatherly loue. Now although they had corrupted the ſame by wicked tyrannie; yet notwithſtanding, they ceaſed not to make their bragges of falſe titles: for they boaſted much of the kingdome of *Dauid*, euen as the Papiſts glorie at this day vnder a falſe pretence of the Church. Therefore the people are iuſtly admoniſhed from what an happie eſtate they were fallen by their owne default, that ſo they ſhould not be diſpleaſed to haue their multitudes of mẽ diminiſhed, but might rather be mooued to recouer againe the good order which God had ordained.

Afterward thou ſhalt be called.] He extends the fruite of this reformation, whereof he hath ſpoken, to the whole bodie. For the Prophet hauing ſaid that *Ieruſalem* was a faithfull Citie, and full of iudgement before ſhe reuolted from God; now he ſaith, that after ſhe ſhall be chaſtiſed, theſe vertues here ſpoken of ſhall be ſeene to ſhine in her. The ſumme alſo of true repentance is ſet forth in this place: for by *Iuſtice*, is vnderſtood integritie, wherein euery man obtaines of another that which to him belongeth, and that one man liues with another without oppreſſion. The word *faithfull* extends it ſelfe further: becauſe we call that a *faithfull Citie*, not onely where equitie and mutuall Iuſtice ruleth among men, but alſo where God is purely ſerued. And thus vnder this word, the puritie and chaſtitie of the vnderſtanding is comprehended. Yet we muſt note that Iuſtice deſcends from this faithfulnes, becauſe that when we carrie our ſelues vprightly one towards another; there Iuſtice will eaſily beare the ſway. And ſurely by examining the whole a little more narrowly; it ſeemes the Prophet takes not the word *fidelitie* in ſo ample a ſignification as heretofore. Alſo that hee ſo ioynes theſe two vertues together, as if they tended both to one end: ſo as *truth* ſhould be the firſt in order as being the cauſe; then that *Iuſtice* ſhould be the effect of it.

Moreouer *Iſaiah* not onely promiſeth that ſhe ſhall be iuſt and faithfull, but alſo that by theſe badges and markes ſhe ſhall become excellent and renoumed: thereby further ſignifying, that her righteouſnes ſhal be ſuch that the knowledge and renoune therof ſhall be ſpread abroad euery where. We know alſo that hypocrits obtaine great and honorable titles: but becauſe *Iſaiah* brings in the Lord ſpeaking, hee holds it as a ſure concluſion that the citie ſhall bee iuſt according as hee hath foretold. In the meane while, as I haue ſaid, he ſets before vs the fruit of a true conuerſion, as if he ſhould ſay; When *Ieruſalem* ſhall bee once brought to true godlines, then others ſhall ſee the fruites of her renouation alſo.

Verſ. 27. *Zion ſhall be redeemed in iudgement, and they that returne in her, in iuſtice.*

HE confirmes the ſame doctrine: and becauſe the reſtitution of the Church was a thing hard to bee beleeued, hee ſhewes that it hangs not vpon the will of men, but that it is grounded vpon the *Iudgement* and *Iuſtice* of God: as if he ſhould ſay, God will by no means endure that the Church ſhould wholly be deſtroyed, becauſe he is *iuſt*. The meaning of the Prophet then is, to withdraw the minds of the faithfull, from all earthly cogitations, to the end, that when the hope of the ſaluation of the Church is in queſtion, they ſhould depend vpon God, and not be diſcouraged, although in ſtead of helpe and ſuccour they ſhould ſee lets and hinderances on all ſides. For thoſe that referre theſe words of Iudgement and Iuſtice to men, are deceiued; as if *Iſaiah* ſhould ſpeake now of the well ordred eſtate of a city: and therefore that ſenſe which I haue giuen is according to the true meaning of the Prophet, to wit, that although no ſuccour appeare vnto them from men, yet that the iuſtice of the Lord notwithſtanding is more then ſufficient to redeeme his Church. And truely whilſt wee looke into our owne ſtrength, what hope of helpe can we conceiue? Nay, how many rockes doe there by and by rather appeare, to daſh our

faith all to peeces? It is in God only then that we shal finde a perpetuall firmenes of trust. In the second member, *and they that returne*, the means of the redemption is expressed, to wit, that those which were banished and scattered farre off, shall be gathered together againe.

Vers. 28. *And the destruction of the transgressers, and of the sinners shall bee together, and they that forsake the Lord, shall be consumed.*

TO the end hypocrits should not thinke that any fruit of these promises did appertaine vnto them, and lest they should boast in vaine, he threatens that they shall perish, although God redeeme his Church. For hypocrites are alwaies mingled amongst the faithfull: and which more is, they thrust themselues into the chiefest places, valuing the Church according to the outward forme and shew thereof, audaciously drawing whatsoeuer God hath promised, vnto themselues. But the Prophet pluckes this trust (if it may be so called) from them, because it proceedes from nothing else but pride of heart, and a vaine perswasion. Here therefore is diligently to be considered, with what wisedome and discretion the faithfull Teachers haue neede to be endued withall, for the comfort of the good, that they may refresh their minds with some consolation; and preserue them from fainting, and from being discouraged, whilst they terrifie the wicked with the iudgements of God. On the contrarie also the faithfull being stayed by the promise of God, and that the wicked seeke to wrest it to themselues, and lift vp their crests with a vaine confidence, we must then keepe this order and meane, that we giue the wicked no occasion to become proud and insolent: as also that the faithfull be no whit out of heart, nor discouraged: as *Isaiah* doth here in this place. For hauing spoken of the redemption of the Church, hee threatens the obstinate and wicked, and denounceth their ruin, to the end they might not thinke, these benefits of God did any thing at all belong vnto them. Now although he iudgeth ϒ wicked to perdition, yet by this comparison he amplifies the grace of God towards the faithfull: the which should then be the better perceiued, when God should heale those that were his, whilest the wicked in the meane while should perish, as it is said in the 91. Psalme, vers. 7. Againe, he also moderates the sorrow which might disquiet the hearts of the faithfull, for the wast of the Church; for he admonisheth them that the whole bodie could not otherwise be healed vnlesse the corruption which was in it, were cut off.

* Or, to wit. Vers. 29. * *For they shall be confounded for the Oakes which yee haue desired, and yee shall bee ashamed of the gardens that yee haue chosen.*

THe particle, *Ci*, is put in the Hebrew, which shewes the cause: but it is often also vsed for an exposition. Now because the Prophet addes no new matter here, but only manifests vnto them the cause of the ruine, which hung ouer the heads of the wicked, the Hebrew word, which wee haue translated, *to wit*, hath seemed to agree very well; as if the Prophet should haue said, There was no plague more hurtfull to them then superstition; the idols, saith hee, which you doe so heape together to procure your welfare, shall rather turne to your ruine. Now whereas some haue heretofore translated *gods*, for the word *trees* is refuted by the text it selfe: for he by and by makes mention of *gardens*. Moreouer he reprooues all false, and new found seruices vnder the names of trees and gardens, by a figure called Synecdoche, when a part is taken for the whole. For howsoeuer there were all sorts of Idolatrie among the Iewes, yet this particular kind, namely, to chuse *woods and forrests*, to offer sacrifices, was specially the most vsuall amongst others. Now be it that one would reade *woods* or *gardens* in the second place, yet no doubt, but he meant to point at their Altars, and Chapels, where they performed their diuelliſh worships: and although it was not their meaning, wholly to reuolt from the true God, yet notwithstanding they forged new seruices: and as if one place had been more acceptable to God then another, they consecrated and dedicated them to their deuotions, as wee see it is come to passe in the Papacie. But by and by there followes a change of the person: for to the ende the reproofe might bee the more sharpe, he speakes euen to the wicked themselues, of whom he spake before in the third person.

Afterward by the word, *to cover*, he taxeth the furious affection wherewith the wicked are set on fire in their superstitions. God requires that the whole heart be dedicated vnto him: but they violently plunged themselues in a blind pursuing of their new deuised seruices, as if they were carried away with a beastly and brutish affection. And to say the trueth, this sicknes is rooted almost in the vnderstandings of all men, that hauing once forsaken the true God, they runne a madding after their Idols. Therefore it is, that the Scripture often compares this fury to ϒ loues of harlots, who not only cast off al reason, but likewise all shame. Although it further appeares by the second member, that hee not onely taxeth their intemperancie, but also their boldnes to violate the seruice of God, when he saith they *chose gardens*: which word is opposed to that which was commanded in the law. For with what flourishes soeuer the vnbeleeuers seeke to shadow their superstitions withal, yet notwithstanding this sentence remaines sure, that obedience is better then sacrifice, 1. Sam. 15. 22. And therefore S. *Paul* Col. 2. 23. vnder the word superstition, comprehends all those corrupt worships, which men forge to themselues without the commandement of God. God then complaines, that the Iewes hauing despised his word, pleased themselues in their owne inuentions: as if he should say, It was your duties to haue

Note.

obeyed

obeyed me, but you haue liked better to follow your owne fantaſie, or rather a franticke libertie.

And this is ſufficient to condemne all the inuentions of men, to wit, that it is not lawfull in any ſort, to chuſe a way how to ſerue God, becauſe the right of preſcribing that appertaines vnto himſelfe. God had then commanded that no ſacrifices ſhould be offe-
Deut. 12. 13 vnto him but in *Ieruſalem*; the Iewes thought to pleaſe him in other places: which falſe imagination alſo deceiued the prophane nations. And I would to God that it had onely reſted there; but we ſee how the Papiſts are wrapped euen in the ſame error. Laſtly, experience it ſelfe teacheth, that this diſeaſe is common to euery age.

Obiect. If any obiect that the matter is not ſo great in reſpect of the place, that God ſhould therefore abhorre the ſacrifices which were euery where offered him. *Anſ.* Firſt we muſt note the cauſe why God as then would haue but one onely altar, namely, to the end it might be a band of holy vnitie to this rude people, and that by this meanes Religion might continue ſound and immutable. Now although that this ſpeciall cauſe ceaſeth, yet muſt we holde this principle, that commaundements were giuen of God, euen touching the leaſt things; to the end the Iewes might inure themſelues the better to obedience. For in regard that ſuperſtition paints her face with the colour of deuotion, it is impoſſible, but men ſhould flatter themſelues in their inuentions. Notwithſtanding ſeeing that obedience is the mother of true religion, it followes thereupon, that the fantaſies of men, on the contrarie, are euen fountaines of ſuperſtition.

Obedience the mother of true religion.

Mens fancies, the fountaines of ſuperſtition.

This alſo muſt be added, that euen as *Iſaiah* did a little before reproue the wickednes of the people, which raigned amongſt them againſt the breach of the ſecond Table of the law, which is loue; now alſo he makes his complaint, that they haue tranſgreſſed the firſt table. For in as much as all perfection of righteouſnes conſiſts in the obedience of the law, the Prophets when they would reproue the ſinnes of men, one while they ſpeake of the firſt, and then of the ſecond table. We muſt alſo alwaies obſerue this figuratiue manner of ſpeech, when vnder one kind the Prophets do comprehend the whole in generall.

Verſ. 30. *For yee ſhall be as an Oke, whoſe leafe fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.*

THe Hebrew particle may bee taken affirmatiuely, as I haue turned it: and it ſeemes that the Prophet alludes to thoſe gardens vnto which they had falſely tied the ſeruice of God; for becauſe he had made mention of theſe gardens, he threatens them with drought, caſting in their teeth the confidence, which they repoſed in them. You pleaſe your ſelues very much, in yoour gardens, and in your trees (ſaith he) but you ſhall be as trees dried, and ſubiect to fall. The Lord then ſcornes the fooliſh bragging of the idolaters who pleaſe themſelues maruelouſlie in their inuentions: and thinke that heauen muſt needs be opened to them, when they are in the midſt of their ceremonies. As at this day when the Papiſts haue lighted vp their lampes, and decked their temples; when they ſhine with gold and pretious ſtones; when they heare the melodie of their Organes, and the ſound of their bels, they thinke themſelues the moſt happie people vnder the ſunne, as if God being infinitelie beholding vnto them, and ſatisfied with ſuch baggage, they were freed from feare of any danger.

Verſ. 31. *And the ſtrong ſhall bee as tow, and the maker thereof as a ſparke: and they ſhall burne both together, and none ſhall quench them.*

THe Hebrew word *Chaſan* ſignifies ſtrong; now it is here attributed to God: and yet notwithſtanding it retaines ſtill his ſignification, as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, That god whom you made your ſtrength, ſhal be turned into *tow*. *And the maker thereof:* hee meanes the caruer: but becauſe mention is made of the idole, it muſt bee referred to the thing in queſtion. Some thinke that the Prophet doth here note out the repentance of the idolaters, who ſhould acknowledge their follie, and with ſhame ſhould burne their idols: but me thinkes, the Prophets meaning is otherwiſe. For euen as fire is made of drie ſtuffe, as tow and ſuch like: ſo ſaith the Prophet, God ſhall gather you and your idols together vpon an heape (as when one pileth vp a ſtacke of wood) to the end you may bee conſumed together. So as the idols ſhall be as *tow*, and the men as the fire; to the end the flame may conſume them both together.

And there ſhall be none to quench them.] Wee muſt note that when the Prophets ſpeake of the wrath of God, they repreſent it by externall ſignes, becauſe it cannot be perceiued by our eyes, or other ſenſes. Thus the wrath of the Lord, by which the wicked are deſtroyed, is compared to fire, that conſumes all things. Now it ſufficiently appeares by this, what the Prophet meant to ſay, namely, that al the wicked ſhall periſh, let their confidence be what it will; yea which more is, their ruine ſhall be ſo much the greater, by how much they ſhall haue placed their truſt in falſe and deceitfull things: and that in the place from whence they hoped and looked for ſaluation, euen there ſhall perdition fall vpon them. For the idols and puppets are but matches to kindle the wrath of God withall; and that in ſuch wiſe, as it can neuer be quenched.

THE

THE II. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *The word that Isaiah the sonne of Amos saw vpon Iudah and Ierusalem.*

THis propheſie is a confirmation of the doctrine which we haue had a little before, as touching the reſtauration of the Church. For in as much as it is a very hard matter to expect the ſaluation of the Church in the middeſt of the ruine of it, when as the wrath of God being once kindled doth begin to conſume all things round about; then are the bare and naked promiſes very hardly thought to bee ſufficient for vs to reſt and ſtay our ſelues vpon. For this cauſe the Lord would haue this ſpeciall *viſion* conioyned in ſtead of a confirmation with the conſolation, which was propoſed heretofore; the more aſſuredly to confirme our faith, that the Church ſhould not periſh, no not in all the calamities that could poſſiblie befall it. Thus I doubt not but this viſion hath affinitie with that which we haue ſeene in the 26. and 27. verſes of the former chapter. And by this we may know what was the vſe and end of viſions. For in as much as the bare doctrine is of no ſufficient authority at all with vs; therefore the Lord addeth viſions, by which he ſeales vp in vs the trueth of his word. Seeing then that this viſion is ioyned with the former promiſe, from thence we gather a very profitable doctrine: to wit, that all the viſions which the Lord reuealed to his Prophets in times paſt, ought to be ioyned with the promiſes, and to be as ſeales annexed vnto them. Herein alſo we haue greatly to magnifie, and extoll from time to time the wonderfull goodnes of God, who is not contented to giue vs his word alone, but doth alſo vouchſafe to ſet the view of the things promiſed euen as it were before our eyes.

Now he addes a confirmation, becauſe the reſtauration of the Church is a thing of wonderfull importance: which alſo ought neceſſarily to be knowne. For what ſhall become of the trueth of God; what ſhall become of faith, if there be no Church? And if there be no Church, it would follow, that God were a lier, and that all which his word containes, were falſe. But euen as he ſhewes by memorable ſignes, that it is he alone, who without the aide of men, and by meanes vnknowne, conſerues his Church: ſo here now by an excellent propheſie, he promiſeth to doe the like.

The vſe of this propheſie then is double: for in as much as *Iſaiah* and others after him were without ceaſing to terrifie and feare this people (ſo full of obſtinate malice) til ſuch time as they ſhould be carried away captiues; the Temple burnt, and the citie deſtroyed: it was very needfull in regard of the faithfull, that ſuch rigour ſhould be aſſwaged by ſome conſolation of hope. Moreouer, in regard that they ſhould languiſh long in captiuitie, and that after their returne many calamities would breake in vpon them to ſhake their minds; and in the end ſhould bee wrapped, and as it were ouerwhelmed with a ſea of an horrible ruine, and almoſt a deſperate confuſion: if they had not bin comforted againſt ſo many terrors, they would haue periſhed an hundred times. But the promiſe of the reſtauration of the Church did comfort and ſtrengthen thoſe who were alreadie fallen, to the end that at the leaſt the calling vpon the name of God (which againſt al dangers is the onely and chiefe remedie) might haue it force amongſt them. *The word*, ſome tranſlate, The thing; becauſe the ſignification of this word is generall: but it is rather to be taken for decree, or ordinance. *Iſaiah* ſaith then, that this was reuealed to him by a ſpeciall viſion.

Vers. 2. *It ſhall bee in the laſt daies that the mountaine of the houſe of the Lord ſhall be prepared in the toppe of the mountaines, and ſhall be exalted aboue the hilles, and all nations ſhall flow vnto it.*

WHen he makes mention of the terme or full end of daies, let vs remember that he ſpeaks of the kingdome of Chriſt. We muſt alſo vnderſtand the reaſon why he calles this kingdome ſo. Vntill this time all things did hang in ſuſpence, to the end the people ſhould not reſt in the eſtate of that time, which was but a ſhadow; but in the Redeemer, who was to declare vnto them the ſubſtance. After Chriſt came then, if wee will compare that time with ours, we are indeede come to the verie terme of thoſe *daies*. But it was needfull that the fathers which liued then, ſhould with armes ſtretched forth endeuour to come vnto Chriſt. And becauſe the reſtauration of all things depended vpon his comming, it was for good cauſe that they are commanded to enlarge their hope euen vnto that day. For it was alwaies profitable vnto them, to know that the eſtate of the Church ſhould bee more perfect vnder our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: eſpecially ſeeing they were held vnder ſhadowes and figures; and yet in the meane while were ſubiect to diuers changes. Alſo the Lord did terrifie them many waies of ſet purpoſe, that hee might hold them in ſuſpence. But the circumſtance of this propheſie had 4 particular reſpect: for they might haue very well haue fainted in the ſpace of foure hundred yeers, or thereabouts, if this fulnes of time ſhould not haue come in

in their minds, wherein the Church should be restored to her perfection. Therefore as the Church was euer and anon almost ouerwhelmed with diuers tempests, so euery one of the faithfull laid fast hold in these dangers vpon this sentence as vpon a board or planck to bring them safe to the hauen. In the meane while we must note, that the perfection of *daies*, did so begin at the first comming of Christ, that it runnes on still with a continuall course, vntill hee appeares the second time againe for our saluation.

Shall be prepared.] This vision in appearance might almost haue seemed rediculous: not only because *Zion* was a little hill of no great height: (as if comparison had bin made of a heape of dust, with great mountaines) but also in regard that a little before he had foretold her ruine. How could one haue then beleeued, that *Zion* which had lost all her dignitie, should againe bee thus honoured with so great an excellencie, that she should turne the eies of all the Gentiles to the beholding of her beautie? yet is shee so aduanced notwithstanding, as if shee should bee mounted higher then the Mount *Olympus*. Let the Gentiles bragge of their mountaines, as long as they will; yet shall they be nothing in comparison of this *little* hill (saith the Prophet) although it be low and small in appearance. To naturall reason indeede this is verie vnlike. What? shall *Zion* hang in the cloudes? And therefore no question but the wicked scorned this promise. Wee know well enough that impietie hath alwaies ouerflowed her bankes against God. Yea, the circumstance which I haue touched alreadie, was enough at the first push to haue ouerthrowne this prophesie. How is it then that this little hil could be so soone exalted, being fallen after the destruction of the Temple into vtter dishonour? But doubtlesse *Isaiah* foretold not these things in vaine. For in the end, this little hill was truely exalted *aboue the mountaines*: because that from thence the voyce of the Lord was heard; which sounded forth thorowout all the world euen to lift vs vp into the heauens; from thence the Maiestie of God shined. Lastly, because it was the sanctuarie of God, it surmounted aboue all the world in height of excellencie.

Now we must note the vse of this prophesie, namely, that *Isaiah* meant to set before them a consolation, whereupon they were to stay themselues in their captiuitie: that howsoeuer the Temple should be destroyed, and that the sacrifices should cease, yea and all things should fall to the ground: yet notwithstanding this hope should encourage the faithfull; and that in this horrible confusion they should thus thinke: True it is that the *mountaine* of the Lord is now desolate; but yet shall shee haue her seate there againe, so as the glorie of this mountaine shall surpasse the glorie of all others. To the end then that they should not doubt of the euent hereof, the Prophet hath pictured it forth here as in a tablet, wherein they might behold the glorie of God. For although the mountaine continued then safe, yet was it in a manner detestable, because it was brought to a miserable desolation, hauing lost all her glorie, in regard that God himselfe had forsaken it. But the faithfull were to behold, not these ruines, but this vision. It also sufficiently appeares by that which followes, why hee speakes so highly of the *exaltation* of this mountaine of *Zion*, because from thence came forth the Gospell, wherein the Image of God shined. Other mountaines might surmount it in height: but because the glorie of God did appeare vpon it in an higher degree, therfore it was also necessarie that the mountaine in which he manifesteth himselfe, should bee exalted *aboue* others. He doth not praise the mountaine of *Zion* then in regard of it selfe, but in respect of her ornament or glorie, wherewith also all the world was to be beautified.

Vers. 3. *And many people shall go and say, Come, and let vs goe vp to the mountaine of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Iacob, and hee will teach vs his waies, and we will walke in his paths: for the law shall goe forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Ierusalem.*

IN the former verse he had briefly touched the cause from whence such an excellencie should come vnto the mountaine of *Zion*, to wit, because all nations should flow vnto it, as if the riuers should ouerflow with ouermuch abundance of waters: now he declares the same thing, adding also the reason of it. For one might demand vpon what occasion so many sorts of people should flow thither by bands from countries so farre off. He saith then that they shall come thither for no other end but to *serue God*. But in the word *Many*, there is an antithesis, for he signifies that there should not be one nation onely, as before; which should yeeld obedience vnto the true worship of God: but that those which were altogether strangers, should come to consent with like agreement in religion with them: as if he should say, The Church which before was shut vp as in a corner, shall now be gathered out of all parts. Hee hath put *many* then, for diuers. For it is certaine that he meant not to lessen [illegible] which he had said ere while of *all nations*. Further, although this was neuer fulfilled, to wit, that all the people of the whole world hauing left their countrie should assemble to Ierusalem; notwithstanding because the doctrine of the Gospell (by which God did there gather to himselfe a Church indifferently from out of al the world) came forth of this mountaine of *Zion*; hee well affirmes that those who embraced the couenant of saluation, with one consent of faith, and ioyned themselues to one only Church, should come thither. The agreement also which is betweene the figures of the *law*, and the spirituall worship, is to be noted; such as it began to be after the comming of Christ.

And they shall come.] First hee signifies by these

theſe words that the faithfull ſhall bee filled with ſuch affection, and zeale to enlarge and ſpread abroad the doctrine of ſaluation, that none of them ſhall content himſelfe with his particular knowledge, and vocation, but ſhall deſire to draw on others with them. And queſtionleſſe there is nothing more remote from the true nature of faith, then that deadnes of heart, by which men caſting aſide all care of their brethrens good, doe ſhut vp in themſelues, all the light of knowledge they haue receiued: ſo as it comes to bee ſmothered and choked within them. Therefore by how much the more any hath receiued abundance of grace from God, by ſo much the more ought he diligently endeuor to lighten others by his light. Behold here then the true means how to gather a Church together; to wit, by the externall voyce of men. For although the Lord might draw euery man to his knowledge by his ſecret inſpiration: yet notwithſtanding he will bee ſerued by the miniſtrie and labour of men, to the end hee may exerciſe them in a mutuall care about the ſaluation of one another. And by this meanes alſo he knits them the better together, and takes triall of their teachablenes, to wit, when one of them will ſuffer himſelfe to be taught by another.

Moreouer, *Iſaiah* ſhewes that all thoſe which haue charge to teach and exhort, ſhould not reſt themſelues, onely in commanding of others: but rather to ioyne themſelues vnto them, and to walke together as companions with them. For wee ſee ſome that will command with authoritie, and prick men ſtoutly forward with exceeding great ſeuerity, when as they themſelues in the meane while will not mooue a foote. But the faithful here content not themſelues, in commanding their brethren ſaying, *goe vp*; but rather leading them the way in going firſt, they ſet their owne example before them. This therfore is the right manner of teaching, when by putting that in execution our ſelues firſt, which wee require of others, wee make it knowne before all men that we ſpeake truely, and in good earneſt.

1 *And he will teach vs his waies.*] In the firſt place he ſhewes, that wee cannot ſerue God rightly and as we ought, vnleſſe the light of
2 the holy doctrine goe before. Secondly, that God is the onely teacher of his Church; vpon whoſe mouth we ought to hang: whence
3 alſo it follows, that he takes no delight in the fooliſh, and vnſtable deuotion of mens inuentions. And laſtly, that howſoeuer he vſeth
4 the miniſtrie of men to teach vs by, yet that he reſerues this notwithſtanding as proper to himſelfe, to wit, that they preach nothing but his pure word. And if all thoſe which call themſelues doctors of the Church had followed this rule, religion had not been ſo fouly corrupted, with an endles, and confuſed diuerſitie of ſuperſtitions. Neither can it be auoided that we ſhould not fal by heaps into multitudes of errors, when men turne and wind vs thus after their owne fantaſies. *Iſaias* then in attributing the authoritie and office of teaching the Church to *God onely*, by good right he ſtoppes al the mouthes of mortall men: ſo as the very office of teaching is not committed to the Paſtors of the Church, but vpon this condition, that Gods voyce be onely heard there. Let ſuch then as would be eſteemed his ſeruants, ſuffer themſelues to be ruled in their duties by this ſentence, to the end they may in no ſort diminiſh the leaſt iot of his authoritie.

There is in the member following, word for word, *He will teach vs his waies*: which is thus much in effect, That hee will teach vs what his waies are; or hee will ſet his waies before vs for a perfect inſtruction. Then he ads vnto it obedience, *And we will walke in his paths*. Wherein he ſhewes both the fruit & the end: for the doctrine which is giuen vs by the mouth of God conſiſts not in idle ſpeculations, but directs the whole courſe of our liues, and frames vs to his obedience. But we muſt note againe, that the waies and *paths* of God are called his *commandements*, to the end we ſhould know that they erre miſerablie which turne aſide from them, bee it neuer ſo little. And thus all licentious libertie is here reſtrained, and the rule of inſtruction is in this place giuen vnto all, euen from the greateſt to the leaſt, namely, that they containe themſelues within the compaſſe of Gods word.

For the law ſhall goe out of Zion] This is an expoſition of the verſe going before, in which he ſaid that the mountaine of *Zion* ſhould be exalted aboue all other mountaines, to wit, that it ſhould be exalted into an high degree of honour, when it ſhould bee the fountaine of the doctrine of ſaluation, which ſhould ſpread thorowout the whole world. Hee cales it the *law*. But wee haue elſewhere *Chap.1.10.* ſpoken of the originall and proper ſignification of this word. The word *Torah*, which is here interpreted law, ſignifies doctrine, becauſe the law containes ſo perfect a doctrine in it, that nothing is to bee added or taken away. And ſo he ſpeakes after the manner of the Prophets. For in as much as the rule of all pietie is comprehended in the *law*, they are wont vnder this word to comprehend the whole word of God: as alſo vnder this word Altar, they comprehend the ſeruice of the Lord. Moreouer, ſeeing wee know that this propheſie was fulfilled, when the preaching of the Goſpell began in this verie place (for Chriſt firſt taught in *Ieruſalem*; and afterward frō thence the doctrine ſpread thorowout the world) this word *law*, is not to be taken ſtrictly, which then was rather aboliſhed, as touching the yoke and bondage of it. Whence we gather, that this word without reſtraint, is to bee taken generally for the word of God. And whereas the Prophets ſay that the waters ſhal flow frō out of the Temple, which ſhal water the whole world; by a ſi- *Ezek.47.1.* militude they ſhew thoſe things which *Iſaiah* in plaine words here teacheth; to wit, that the beginning and welſpring of the doctrine of ſaluation ſhould come from this place. For from thence the Apoſtles, and other Teachers did ſpread the glad tidings of ſaluation thorowout the whole world.

But

But the reaſon why the Prophet thus ſpeakes, is to be noted: namely, to confirme the faithfull againſt all the changes, which otherwiſe vpon euery occaſion might haue quailed their courage. And therefore it was needefull to preuent offences, and to furniſh the conſciences of the faithfull with comforts againſt all ſtormes, in what condition ſoeuer they ſhould be; as if he ſhould haue ſaid, Let your affaires proſper how they will, yet in the midſt of the calamities and afflictions which oppreſſe you, wait notwithſtanding; and be you certainely perſwaded, that *the Law ſhall come forth of Zion, and the word of God from Ieruſalem.* For it is a decree of God, which cannot be falſified nor ouerthrowne by any chance or change of time.

We may gather by the courſe of the times which followed, how needfull this conſolation was for the faithfull. For when *Iuda* was forſaken and deſolate, the temple deſtroyed, and the gouernement of the Church wholly defaced, and that tyrannie increaſed more and more; it was an eaſie matter to quench all hope, and to haue become deſperate altogether. On the other ſide, when the Iewes were come home out of captiuitie from *Babylon*, when horrible ſuperſtitions by little and little increaſed, and that the Prieſts had vſurped a wicked tyrannie, in ſtead of excercising their office as became them; if this promiſe had not comforted the faithfull, what might they haue elſe imagined, but that Religion was aboliſhed, and that the ſeruice of God was quite and cleane extinct? And no doubt but this temptation, which happened by meanes of the vices which were in the middeſt of them, was more troubleſome for them to beare than their exile in *Babylon*. In their baniſhment they had Prophets, by whoſe doctrine they were put in hope; but in this corrupted eſtate all fruit of doctrine was taken from them, Religion and godlines was deſpiſed: but the Lord ſuſtained them at a pinch by the onely ſtay of this propheſie. For whenas the law was ſo vilely prophaned and contemned, and as it ſeemed caſt downe from his proper ſeate, which the Lord had conſecrated and appointed for it; would any man haue thought, that not onely it ſhould haue had his place there, but that it ſhould alſo raigne ouer all ſtrange countries that were farre off? Contrariwiſe, the Propher not onely ſaith that the Law ſhall be eſtabliſhed in his throne, but alſo that it ſhall goe a great deale further off: whereby hee ſignifies, that it ſhall bee no longer ſhut vp within his firſt bounds, becauſe it ſhould be indifferently publiſhed among the Gentiles.

And queſtionles this carried great waight and authoritie with the Apoſtles, when they vnderſtoode that they were ordained to doe
1 thoſe things which are here promiſed. Otherwiſe they neuer durſt to haue aduentured
2 the taking of that charge vpon them, they
3 would neuer haue had courage enough to
4 haue finiſhed it. Laſtly, they could neuer haue borne ſo weightie a burthen: eſpecially if you adde, that they had the rage of the whole world inflamed againſt them. But they were ſurely perſwaded that hee which had made this promiſe, and giuen them in charge to beare his meſſage, would eaſilie ouercome all theſe difficulties. We muſt alſo note, that from hence we may gather a great confirmation of our faith, by conſidering that the doctrine of the Goſpell came forth of *Zion*: for from thence we conclude, that it is
1 not new, nor lately ſprung vp; but that it is the eternall trueth of God, the teſtimonie whereof appeared a long time before it came to light. We alſo gather it was neceſſarie
2 that all the ancient ceremonies ſhould bee aboliſhed, and that a new manner of teaching ſhould be brought in; although the very ſame doctrine in ſubſtance ſhould ſtill remaine. For at the firſt the law came out of mount *Sinai*: but now it came out of mount *Zion*, and therefore it tooke a new forme. *Exod.19.20*
Two things then are to be noted: Firſt, that
1 the word of God is alwaies one, and like vnto it ſelfe: that no man ſhould reproue God of changeablenes, as if he were variable. Alſo, that howſoeuer at this preſent, the law of the Lord, is the ſame which it was; yet notwithſtanding that it came out of *Zion*, as it were with a new garment put vpon it. Secondly, that the ceremonies and ſhadowes
2 are aboliſhed, becauſe Chriſt is made manifeſt, in whom we finde the trueth and ſubſtance of them.

Verſ. 4. *And he ſhall iudge among the nations, and rebuke many people: they ſhall breake their ſwords alſo into mattocks, and their ſpeares into ſithes: nation ſhall not lift vp a ſworde againſt nation, neither ſhall they learne to fight any more.*

HIs meaning is, that the doctrine ſhall be as a Royall ſceepter, to the end God may rule and gouerne among all nations. For the word, *to iudge*, among the Hebrewes, ſignifies to rule, or gouerne by a figure called *Synecdoche*. Becauſe then, that God had held one people onely vnder his gouernement, the Prophet here teacheth, that the bounds of this kingdome ſhall be enlarged, becauſe it ſhall haue dominion ouer diuers nations. He alſo cloſely notes the difference betweene the kingdome of *Dauid*, and this other which ſhall become much more excellent: that of *Dauid* being but a figure of it. For from that time God gouerned his choſen people by the hand of *Dauid*; but at the comming of Ieſus Chriſt, he began to raigne by himſelfe, to wit, in the perſon of his onely Sonne; who is very God manifeſted in the fleſh. The Pro- *1.Tim.3.16.*
phets alſo doe ſometimes expreſſe the name *Ier.30.9.*
of the Prophet *Dauid*, when they ſpeake of *Ezech.34.*
the kingdome of Chriſt; and that very fitlie: *23.& 37.*
for it is in regard of the humane nature, be- *24.*
cauſe the promiſed Redeemer ſhould come out of that familie: but in this place hee exalts the Maieſty of his diuine nature: whereby it appeares how much more excellent the

condition of the new Church is aboue the old: becauſe in it God appeares to be King in the perſon of his Sonne. Againe, hee alſo confirmes the vocation of the Gentiles: for Chriſt was not ſent to the Iewes onely to raigne amongſt them, but alſo to haue iuriſdiction ouer the whole world.

Rebuke the people.] The word *Iacach* doth ſometimes ſignifie to expoſtulate, ſometimes to correct, alſo to prepare, or make readie. But in this place the receiued interpretation doth very well agree, whereas the Prophet doth ſpeake concerning the reformation of the Church. For there is neede of correction, that we may learne to ſubmit our ſelues vnto God. For by reaſon of that rebellious nature which is inbred in vs, wee ſhall neuer profit in the word of God, vnleſſe we be brought vnder by violence. Therefore Chriſt alſo, Ioh. 16.8. from hence takes the beginning of the Goſpell: namely, that the world might be reproued of ſin. Now that the doctrine might not want increaſe, *Iſaiah* ſhews, that ỹ ſtubburnnes of our fleſh muſt be broken: and therefore hee aſſignes vnto God, the part of a Iudge *rebuking*, that hee might examine our life; and by condemning our vices, might reforme our manners for the better. And truely we ſee that the Goſpell is of ſmall force, but where the iuriſdiction of the holy Spirit beares rule; which doth bring men vnto repentance.

They ſhall breake their ſwords.] Now hee addes the fruit which ſhould come from thence, when Chriſt ſhall gather the people and nations together vnder his gouernment. There is nothing more deſireable, then peace: but although all ſeeme to deſire it, yet euery one troubleth it by his fooliſh luſt; pride, couetouſnes, and ambition is the cauſe that ſome do cruelly riſe vp againſt others. Becauſe then that men are naturally carried away by their euill affections, to trouble and ouerthrow all things, the Prophet promiſeth here that ſuch a miſchiefe ſhould bee redreſſed. For as the Goſpell is the doctrine of reconciliation, which takes away the diſcord betweene God and man, ſo alſo it pacifies, and brings men to vnitie one with another. The ſumme is, that Chriſt his people ſhall be meeke, and hauing trodden crueltie vnder their feete, ſhall ſtudie to liue peaceablie.

The Goſpell not only ſets God and man at peace together, but man with man alſo.

But they haue done vnfitly, which would reſtraine this to the time wherein Chriſt was borne, becauſe that after the battaile *Actiaque*, the Temple of *Ianus* was ſhut vp: as it appeares by the hiſtories. I confeſſe indeed that this peace which was vniuerſall in the Romane Empire, was, as it were, a ſigne of that eternal peace which we enioy in Chriſt. But the Prophet meant to ſay more: to wit, that Chriſt ſo reconcileth men to God, that all deadly warres being thereby appeaſed, there ſhould thereupon follow a healthfull peace among them. For if Ieſus Chriſt bee taken away, we are not onely eſtranged from God, but wee haue open warre continually with him, which will iuſtly returne vpon our owne heads: from whence it is, that all things are out of courſe in the world.

Furthermore, *Iſaiah* promiſeth, that when the Goſpell ſhall be publiſhed, there ſhall be an excellent remedie in the world to appeaſe all diſſenſions: and not onely that, but all hatreds being aboliſhed, men ſhall be inclined to helpe one another. For he ſaith not ſimplie that the ſwords ſhall be broken; but that they ſhall bee conuerted into *mattocks*. In which hee ſhewes there ſhall bee ſuch a change, that whereas they were wont before to vexe one another, and did commit manie iniuries to the hurt of their neighbours; afterwards they ſhould entertaine peace and loue amongſt themſelues, and ſhould lend one another the hand, for the common profit of all: for *mattocks* and *ſithes*, are inſtruments fit for labour, and are neceſſarie and profitable for the life of man. He ſhews then, that when Ieſus Chriſt ſhal reigne, thoſe who in former time were carried away with a deſire of doing hurt by all meanes whatſoeuer, ſhould now be helpful to others by al meanes poſſible.

Neither ſhal they learne to fight any more.] The word which the Prophet vſeth, ſignifies eyther to accuſtome, or to learne: but the ſenſe is cleare; namely, that they ſhould not exerciſe themſelues any more in thoſe Arts that ſhould doe hurt, neither ſhould they giue themſelues, to the doing of wrongs nor of wicked practiſes, as they had been wont to doe. From hence we gather, that they haue profited very little in the Goſpel, whoſe harts are not brought to meeknes: amongſt whom charitie hath taken ſo little place that they take no delight in ſhewing kindnes one towards another. But this can neuer bee brought about vnleſſe the conſciences of men be firſt appeaſed by God; for there we muſt begin, to the end wee may alſo haue peace with men.

There are ſome brainſicke bedlems which turne this place to the maintaining of a carnall libertie, thereby to take away whollie from the Church the vſe of the ſword: and from this place doe exceedingly condemne all manner of warre. For example, If a prince defend the people committed to him, and ſee that none offer them wrong; it is not lawfull, ſay they, for Chriſtians to vſe the ſword. But the anſwere is eaſie. For the Prophet vnder a ſimilitude ſpeaks of the kingdome of Chriſt, ſhewing that it is a kingdome of peace to reconcile men one with another through a mutuall good will. And it is a ſimilitude much vſed in the Scripture, where the thing ſignified is ſhewed by the ſigne: as in Luk. 22.36. it is ſaid, Let him that hath no ſword buy one. It was not the purpoſe of Ieſus Chriſt to prouoke his ſeruants to fighting: but he ſignified thereby, that the time of war drew neere. So on the other ſide it is ſaid that ſwords ſhall ceaſe, or ſhall be applied to diuers ends, when hatreds and debates ſhall ceaſe: and that thoſe who were enemies before, ſhould be reconciled. But ſome may replie, that in the time of peace and tranquillitie there is no vſe of the ſword. I anſwere, that peace hath ſo much ſtrength amongſt vs;

Obiect.

Anſ.

vs; as the kingdome of Chriſt beares ſway and doth flouriſh: and that in theſe two things, there is a mutuall proportion. And would to God that Chriſt might raigne wholly amonſt vs; for then peace alſo ſhould bee in his full ſtrength. But in regard that wee are yet farre off from the perfection of this peaceable kingdome, wee muſt alwaies thinke of the goings forward of it. They are therefore too fond, which conſider not that the kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath but his beginning here. Moreouer, God gathers not his Church together, that is to ſay, a companie of the faithfull, to the end they ſhould bee ſeparated from others, but the good are alwaies mingled with the bad, and which more is; the good are not yet come to the marke, and are farre off from the perfection which is required of them. Wee muſt not ſeeke then the full accompliſhment of this propheſie here on earth: it is enough if we taſt the beginnings of it, and that being reconciled to God in Ieſus Chriſt, we keepe amitie together, and abſtaine from all doing of wrong.

Verſ. 5. *O houſe of Iacob, come yee,*
* Or, we wil. *and* * *let vs walke in the light of the Lord.*

HE ſharpely prickes forward the Iewes by ſetting before them the example of the Gentiles. For ſeeing that in publiſhing the Goſpell God meant to iudge all nations from the mountaine of *Zion*, that he might ingraft them into the bodie of his choſen people, it was a very ſtrange thing, that the houſe of *Iacob* ſhould reuolt from him: and that whileſt ſtrangers ſhould draw neere, the houſehold ſeruants ſhould withdraw themſelues, who of right ought to haue held the firſt place, and ſhould haue led others by their example. This exhortation therefore is not onely full of vehemencie, but it is both a graue, and a biting complaint. And therefore he calles them by an honourable name; *O ye houſe of Iacob*, ſaith he, *come*: which is the more to amplifie their ingratitude, that being the firſt borne in the Church of God, they ſhould yet notwithſtanding, renounce the right of the heritage which was common to them.

Here is a cloſe compariſon then, as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, Behold the nations which runne to the mountaine of *Zion*, euery one exhorting, and pricking forward his neighbour; and they ſubiect themſelues to the word of God, and ſuffer it to iudge them: and the whileſt you Iſraelites that are the heritage of God, what meane you to draw backe? Shall the nations ſubmit themſelues vnto God, and doe you refuſe to haue him reigne ouer you? Yea is there ſo great a light ſprung vp thorowout all the parts of the world, and will not you in the meane while bee enlightened? Are there ſo many ſweete waters running forth; and will not you drinke? what a madnes is this? doe the Gentiles runne to them with ſuch haſte, and doe you ſit ſtill? When he addes, *and we will walke*; hee ſignifies that the light is put before their feete, which with cloſed eyes they reiect; yea they quench it as much in them is: and yet the brightnes thereof notwithſtanding ſhould bee ſuch, as it ſhould draw all nations vnto it.

Verſ. 6. *Surely thou haſt forſaken thy people, the houſe of Iacob, becauſe they*
* Or, anticquitie. *are full of the* * *Eaſt-manners, and are ſorcerers as the Philiſtines, and* * *abound*
* Or, tooke their delight in. *with ſtrange children.*

HE openly accuſeth this people of the peruerſitie of their nature; and not only in plaine termes, but as one carried away in an admiratiõ, he ſuddenly breaks off his ſpeech, and turning himſelfe to God hee cries out; Wherfore then ſhould I ſpeake to this ſo deſperate a people, whom thou haſt iuſtly forſaken? For in giuing themſelues to idolatries, they haue moſt diſloyally turned away from thy word. It may be alſo a propheſie of ỹ calamitie which ſhould come vpon them, which the Prophet foreſaw by the Spirit: as if hee ſhould ſay, Wonder not to ſee the mount of *Zion* laid waſt and ſpoiled for ſo many ſins of the people. Yet is it not made ſuch a lamentable ſpectacle that any ſhould bee brought to deſpaire, but that all thoſe in whom there is any hope of health, being touched with true repentance might conuert vnto God before ſuch a thunderclap come vpon them.

For the Prophets were as Herauldes to publiſh the iudgement and vengeance of God to the wicked, that ſo by all meanes they might endeuour, to bring all that they poſſiblie could to repentance. And the ſeruants of God muſt neuer put off this affection, namely, euen to ſtudy how they may profit the verie reprobate; if by any meanes it could bee brought to paſſe. This place therefore may bring a merueilous conſolation to all faithfull Paſtors: for when it ſeemes to vs that we ſpeake to deafe eares, we ſtagger and begin to forſake all; What ſhall I doe? I doe nothing but beate the aire. And yet notwithſtanding, the Prophet ceaſeth not, to exhort thoſe in whom hee ſaw no hope of amendment. An howſoeuer he be as a man aſtoniſhed at their ruine, yet doth hee not ceaſe for all that to admoniſh them ſtil. Let vs note alſo, that alchough the wicked bee obſtinate, yet the iudgements of God muſt be denounced againſt them; let them recoyle, and gnaw the bit as much as they will, yet muſt they ſtil be ſummoned before the iudgement ſeate of God, to the end they may be left without excuſe.

I take the Hebrew word כי, for *ſurely*: for this ſignification agrees beſt, becauſe it breakes off the exhortation which he had begun; and now ſpeakes to God. Alſo when he againe calles them *the houſe of Iacob*, it is added for the greater vehemencie of ſpeech, which men in a matter of great importance are wont to doe: as if he ſhould ſay, This holie nation which God hath choſen, is now left and forſaken.

For they are filled.] Because the word *Kedem* signifies sometime the East, and sometime antiquitie, we may interpret it, that they were filled with the manners of the ancient, because they had brought the superstitions in vse wherewithall the land of Canaan was in times past infected. For wee know that the Prophets did often reproch the children of Israel, that they were liker to the Cananites, then to *Abraham*, and the other holy Patriarkes. And questionlesse it was a double vnthankfulnes not to change their peruerse manners, seeing the old inhabitants being driuen out, they were brought in to possesse this land, to the end it being purged from all their filthines, it might afterwards be dedicated to holines. Yet because the other sense is more receiued, I had rather hold that; although the expositors themselues doe not here agree: For some take the letter *Mem* comparatiuely; as if the Prophet should say, Before, or, Rather then them of the East: others take it more simple, and better also in mine opinion; in saying, *that they were full of the East*: that is to say, of the vices which they had drawne from thence; imitation being a merueilous contagion: so as nothing is more vsual then to see corruptions glide from one land to another a farre off.

That which by and by followeth opens it yet more cleerely, when he saith, *of the forceries of the Philistins*. For vnder diuinations by a figure which they call Seneedoche, hee comprehends the deceits of Satan: to which the prophane nations were giuen. The Prophet then meanes that they differ in nothing from the Philistins; from whom God notwithstanding had separated them by the priueledge of his adoption. And this was sufficient to condemne them vtterly, in that hauing forgotten their vocation, they defiled themselues in the corrupt and wicked waies of the Gentiles. Whence it appeares that to sinne by the example of another, doth serue nothing at all to make the fault the lesse.

The latter part of the verse is diuersly expounded: for some draw *strange children*, by a similitude, to the lawes and customes: others referre it to mariages. Because that in taking of strange wiues without discretion, they had so mingled their seede that there were manie children bastards. The exposition of S. *Ierome* is more grosse, who thinks that they defiled themselues in wicked lusts contrarie to nature. For mine owne part, I doubt not, but by *strange children* he meanes strange nations; and not by a figure, the lawes. The Prophet then accuseth them, that in desiring to please the Gentiles, they wrapped themselues together with them in their wickednesses: and thus had not only mortall men but wicked men also in greater account, then God himselfe. Now he saith, that *they tooke their delights*: because the affection and delectation of a wicked imitation, had raced the true loue of God, and of his holesome doctrine out of their hearts.

Vers. 7. *Their land also was ful of siluer and gold, and there was none end of their treasure: and their land was full of horses, and their chariots were infinite.*

WE must take good heede to the order which the Prophet keepes here. For he now shewes the causes wherfore the Lord reiected his people. In the former verse hee began with diuinations, and strange manners; now hee descends to the gold and siluer; and afterward he will speake of their horses and chariots. No doubt then but hauing first of all condemned their idolatrie, he here in the second place, reprooues their auarice; and in the third, that wicked confidence which men haue, when by forging vaine succours vnto themselues, they depart farre off from God. It is not a thing to bee condemned as vnlawfull in it selfe to haue abundance of gold and siluer; but because this people burned with an insatiable couetousnes, and trusted in horses, and in Chariots, therefore they are iustly reprooued. 1 2 3

Some take the Hebrew particle by way of opposition, as if the sense were thus; And yet they abounded in siluer: thereby to make the ingratitude of this people the greater; because hauing abundance of all things, yet they ran after their idols and enchantments, as if al things had been in a desperate estate. Which is much lesse excusable then if they had gone after them in aduersitie: whereas they shooke off the yoke of God from their necks, being fed with good things in all abundance. Thus by this sense then he should amplifie the wickednes of this people running voluntarily and for no cause to idols, whilest they ouerflowed in their delights: but yet I receiue not this interpretation, because I thinke it too much constrained. For hee rather reckons vp with one breath, as it were, the vices, wherewith the people had spotted themselues: that is to say, *couetousnesse, false confidence, and idolatrie*. And howsoeuer their opinion be true which expound it by way of opposition, yet notwithstanding it agrees not with the sense of this place.

A little after *Isaiah* confirmes the same also more clearely. For howsoeuer it bee not wicked, nor a thing to bee condemned in it selfe (as I said before) for a man to haue gold or siluer, if so be hee vse it as he ought: yet the Prophet iustly sets himselfe against that wicked desire and insatiable greedines in heaping vp siluer; which indeede is a detestable vice. Hee saith, there was *no end*, because their lust was insatiable and without measure. As much is to be said of *horses*, and *chariots*: for in this place he condemnes their peruerse confidence. Now for to preuent this mischiefe, the Lord had forbidden their Kings to gather great multitudes of chariots and horses together, lest by resting vpon such things, they might bring the people backe againe into Egypt. Because then that it is hard for men who haue meanes at command, not to be puffed vp with pride; the Lord would that his people should bee destitute of them, or at least should content themselues with a mediocritie. Deut. 17. 16.

Vers. 8.

Verſ. 8. *Their land alſo was full of idols:* * *they worſhipped the workes of their owne hands, before that which their owne fingers had made.*

* Or, bowed before.

HE repeates y which he earewhile touched concerning idolatrie; but more clearely. And in the firſt place he ſets downe the matter: afterwards the vſe, which in a manner is wont alwaies to follow thereupon. For it is a very rare thing to entertaine idols amongſt vs; but we ſhall by and by abuſe our ſelues with them. Becauſe it is all one, as if a man ſhould pile vp wood, and another ſhould put fire to it: will there not bee a fire by and by? it is vnpoſſible it ſhould bee otherwiſe, the fire is not more readie to burne the wood, then we are inclined to ſuperſtitious, and idolatrie. Therefore the word *Elilim*, which the Prophet here vſeth, is very fitly impoſed vpon the idols by the Hebrews: becauſe they are things of nothing; and but vanitie. Neither is it to bee doubted, but the holy Ghoſt by this word would reproue the rage of men, who by meanes of ſuch vanities thought to draw the neerer vnto God: as the Papiſts at this day; who to the end they might the more eaſily ſnare men with their idols: brag that they are lay mens bookes. But it is more ſafe for vs to giue credit to that which the holy Ghoſt ſpeakes. The triall it ſelfe alſo ſhewes clearely what fruit the people gather by theſe bookes. For being deceiued by ſuch groſſe imaginations, they frame vnto themſelues earthly and fleſhly gods: of whom *Ieremiah* iuſtly ſaith, that the idoll is not onely a vaine thing, but alſo a teacher of falſehood and lies: Ier. 10. 8.

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Beware of entertaining idols.

We are further to note this deſcription where the Prophet ſaith, that the people *bowed downe before the works of their owne hands*. For what a blockiſhnes is it that men ſhould not thinke it enough to worſhip wood and ſtone in ſtead of God, but ſhould alſo attribute diuinitie to that which *they haue framed*; which yet they cannot giue to themſelus! truely it is a monſtrous thing that a ſtocke of baſe and contemptible wood ſhould be by and by worſhipped as ſoone as a mortall man ſhall haue put his hand thereto: as if he had made it a God. But howſoeuer the Prophet ſpeakes to the ancient people; we may notwithſtanding applie the ſame thing to the Papiſts, who acknowledge no maieſtie of God, but in the works of their owne hands.

The repetition he addes, *Which their fingers haue made*: carries a great ſignification with it: the more plainely to ſhew their beaſtlie liues. Wee are alſo to marke the phraſe of ſpeech by which the outward geſture of adoration is expreſſed, not that it is vnlawfull to *bow the knee*, or the head by way of ciuilitie, or humilitie: but becauſe hee which bowes himſelfe before an idoll, makes profeſſion thereby of the ſeruice of God: whence it appeares how childiſh a ſhift it is which the Papiſts haue gotten of that adoration, which they call *dulia*. Seeing here in the matter of Gods ſeruice; the Prophet generally condemnes all ſigne of reuerence whatſoeuer.

Verſ. 9. * *And a man bowed himſelfe, and a man humbled himſelfe: therefore* * *ſpare them not.*

* Or, as ſome reade: The common ſort tand, them of the better ſort.
* Or, put not them not.

SOme of the expoſitors do reade this ſentence together with the former, as if the Prophet ſhould ſtill go on in aggrauating of their fault in many words. If we receiue this ſenſe, wee muſt vnderſtand by theſe words *perſon* and *man*, all the Iſraelits: as if he ſhould ſay, there is neither one nor other exempt, or innocent from this filthines. But others are of a better iudgement, which thinke the Prophet repeates that in other words, which he had ſaid before; as touching the chaſtiſement: and that hereby he expreſſeth what a deſtruction ſhould come vpon this people forſaken of God. And thus the tenure of the ſpeech ſhould agree very fitly: to wit, that the ruine of all both great and ſmall, which ſhould conſume the whole people, drawes neere: becauſe that in ſuch an ouerflowing of vngodlines there was no hope of any releaſe from Gods reuenging hand to bee looked for. Moreouer in theſe two verbes, *To bow*, and to *humble*, there is an elegant alluding to the bowing of themſelues, whereof he ſpake in the eight verſe: as if hee ſhould ſay, They haue bowed downe themſelues to their idols: God will therefore cauſe them to be humbled and bowed downe vnder a verie heauie and great burthen of calamities and ruines. And withall, no doubt but hee alſo corrects their arrogancie: becauſe it was hard for them to beleeue that a people furniſhed in ſuch ſort with ſo much riches, could ſo quickly be ouerwhelmed with miſeries.

The latter part of the verſe is expounded two waies, although in reſpect of the ſubſtance there is no great choice which of them ſoeuer we take. For the meaning of the Prophet is to teach, that God cannot be appeaſed towards ſo obſtinate a people. If we read it in the time to come, Thou wilt not pardon them, the ſenſe will be the more eaſie; yet notwithſtanding, the imprecation wil alwaies hold: to wit, *pardon them not*. For wee know that as oft as the Prophets (who were inflamed with the zeale of God) did wiſh that ſome iudgement might come, they threatned the iuſt puniſhment which the wicked were to receiue: as being the inſtruments of the holy Ghoſt; and no otherwiſe. And it is no meruaile, if the Prophet being offended with ſo many abominable crimes, was in this manner kindled with zeale, that he appoints out his countrie to deſtruction, becauſe nothing was more precious vnto him, then the ſacred honour of God.

But we muſt alwaies vnderſtand that the remainder and remnant of the Elect is to be excepted: for the Prophet ſpeakes not here of all, one by one; but of the bodie of the people, which was almoſt rotted in their vices, ſo as there was no hope of health to bee

looked for: for otherwise it had been to no purpose to haue exhorted desperate and obstinate men to repentance, or to set the hope of pardon before such. The summe then is, that the restauration of a new Church is not to be looked for, till God haue first executed his iudgements, and destroyed the Temple.

Vers. 10. *Enter into the rocke, and hide thee in the dust from before the feare of the Lord, and from the glorie of his Maiestie.*

BEcause the wicked gaue themselues too much libertie, and were too secure vnder Gods threatnings, it is an vsual custome with the Prophets when they threaten obstinate sinners to adde such lively descriptions, whereby to terrifie them: euen as if they should set the thing in present view before their eies. This is the reason why the Prophet now commands the contemners of God to *enter into the rocks*, and holes, to hide them vnder the earth. Wherein hee first shewes them that the iudgement of God is more terrible then an hundred deaths: seeing to escape the same, the graue is to bee wished for. But when hee forceth them thus into their holes, he doth with the greater emphasis manifest the heauy waight of the vengance of God. Although then that by *the feare of the Lord*, he meanes the scourges wherwith God should smite this wicked people; yet notwithstanding it is not in vaine that he by and by speakes of *the glorie of his Maiestie*: as if he should say, God is terrible to the wicked, according to the measure of his glorie, in whose destruction he will manifest his infinite power. And moreouer, although the wicked cannot bee bowed nor humbled by any chastisement whatsoeuer, yet are they constrained to feare, when they feele Gods wrath to approch. But as touching the Elect, they are taught of God to feare vnder his chastising hand after another sort: for being smitten with the strokes of his rods, they willingly bend themselues to beare the yoke. *Isaiah* then testifies, that the glory of Gods Maiesty shal shine most clearelie, after hee hath shewed himselfe as a iust Iudge. For whilst he lets men alone, it seemes all is well, and men thinke that hee hath hid himselfe.

How Gods chosen ought to feare his correcting hand.

Let the Pastors of the word then learne from hence how they ought to behaue themselues, when they haue to deale with benummed consciences; to wit, that being well awakened by the iudgements of God, they learne to feare this iudgement seate in good earnest. And howsoeuer it often seemes that we lose our labour in singing thus to deafe eares, yet will this terror of Gods iudgement pearce euen into hearts of iron: at the least to leaue them without excuse. And oft times also it comes to passe that some are healed, and the faithfull in like manner do profit by it, when they vnderstand what shal befall the wicked and reprobate by executing such horrible iudgements vpon them.

Vers. 11. *The hie looke of man shall be humbled, and the loftines of men shall bee abased, and the Lord onely shall be exalted in that day.*

BEcause whilst the wicked are glutted with present riches, and rest, all things falling out to their wish, they put these threatnings of the Prophet farre off from them, and by this meanes hardned their hearts against God: in this place therefore hee now sets downe a courle (as hath been said) how to pull downe this pride of theirs: as if he should say, The time will come, wherein your great arrogancie, which makes you thus in vaine to set vp your bristles, yea, and that with an incredible rage against the most high, shall cease. For howsoeuer the wicked seeme to be religious, yet you shall perceiue by their pride notwithstanding, that they will not sticke to iustle euen against the Lord himselfe, so as it seemes they are greater then he. In that God thus thundreth against them, it is to the end that he might pul downe their pride and hautines; and himself onely might be knowne to bee the chiefest. And therefore, as we haue said heretofore, the impunitie of sinne is as it were a cloud cast before our eies, which hinders vs that wee cannot see the glorie of the Lord. For when he reuengeth himselfe vpon the rebellions of men, his glorie doth so much the more appeare. And that is the cause also why *Salomon* saith, That the hearts of the children of men are set in them to doe euill, because in this world they see themselues more happie then the godly, and so blinded more and more. But here hee shewes that after the proud shall be brought vnder in spite of their teeth; then nothing shall hinder, that God should not be knowne to be such a one as he is. Surely there was great reason that the people should willingly haue submitted themselues vnder God, and haue cast their eies vpon his greatnes, in respect that vnder his shadow they were in safetie: and besides the stocke of *Abraham* was adorned so excellently with such varietie of benefits, to the end they should haue bin as ỹ mirror of the holines, and glorie of the Lord. But because the Iewes are now risen vp in rebellion against this so good a God, *Isaiah* denounceth against them, that God will deuise a new way how to exalt his glorie; to wit, euen in their destruction. *Eccles. 8. 11.*

In naming, *The hie lookes and loftines*, hee notes the inward pride of the mind and hart, by their outward countenance and behauiour. For a wicked conscience will discouer it selfe in the contempt of God and man, euen by the outward gesture and looke. It is in the same sense that *Dauid* notes out loftie eies, and high lookes: Psalm. 131. 1. &c. 101. 5. *Isaiah* also doth better confirme this, in the verse following. Now by heaping vp of so many words with such great vehemency, we may easily gather how notorious their rebellion was. Moreouer, we are not to maruaile that he

he inſiſts ſo much vpon the taming of mens arrogancie, if we doe but conſider how hard a thing it is to bow the hearts of thoſe who reſting vpon their riches, are afraid of nothing: imagining that they are aduanced to none other end, but to doe whatſoeuer they liſt without checke or controlement. For we our ſelues haue experience at this day how tender and delicate, yea and how eaſily ſuch take pepper in the noſe, who attribute to themſelues more then there is cauſe why, and in the end how obſtinately they reiect all holſome admonitions. For this cauſe it is that the Prophet doth thus ſitly ſharpen his ſtile againſt ſuch iolly fellowes in particular, rather then to threaten ỹ vengeance of God againſt the whole people in generall. And yet he ſets not himſelfe againſt the Princes onely who were placed in great dignitie aboue others: for not onely they, but thoſe alſo of baſer condition are readie enough to burſt with pride oftentimes; according to the common prouerbe, Euery one hath the heart of a king: ſo as wee ſee euery day, that if wee touch the ſores of wretched and beggerly fellowes but euen with the tip of the finger, you ſhall ſee them vomit forth inſupportable poyſoned ſpeeches. Seeing then that this vice was very common, *Iſaiah* toucheth as well the ſmall as the great that were tainted therewith, ſignifying, that by how much the more the Lord had dealt gentlie with them, by ſo much the more they were to looke for a greater iudgement: for their hearts were ſwollen with rebellion, becauſe of their too great abundance. Furthermore although the letter *Lamed*, which is put in the datiue caſe, be ſometime ſuperfluous, yet notwithſtanding in this place it holds his proprietie: becauſe it ſeemes *Iſaiah* aſſignes out a *certaine day*, as men are woont to doe, when iudgements or aſſiſes are held. I expound it then, that the *day* is appointed by God himſelfe, wherein the proud muſt make their appearance before his iudiciall throne to receiue ſentence of condemnation.

Moreouer we may gather by theſe words, that God ſhewes himſelfe an enemie to all the proud; and therefore this day of aſſignation is as much as if God had ſaid; I can no longer endure that men ſhould thus wickedly exalt themſelues againſt me: and therfore all ſuch as lift vp themſelues aboue meaſure, ſhall be broken in peeces with my hand. Now if this were well rooted in our hearts, who is it that would not abhorre and deteſt pride, by which we thus prouoke the wrath of God againſt vs? If any will reade, Proud and loftie, in the Neuter gender, it muſt be referred to the fortreſſes, bulwarkes, and munitions: but the rules of Grammar cannot beare it, that wee ſhould expound it otherwiſe then of mens perſons.

Verſ. 12. *For the day of the Lord of hoſts is vpon all the proud and hauty, and vpon all that is exalted, and it ſhall bee made low.*

This verſe is expounded together with the eleuenth.

Verſ. 13. *Euen vpon all the Cedars of Lebanon, that are high and exalted, and vpon all the Okes of Baſhan,*

14. *And vpon all the mountaines, and vpon all the hilles that are lifted vp,*

15. *And vpon euery hie tower, and vpon euery ſtrong wall.*

ALl theſe allegories which are here inſerted of *Libanus*, and of the *high mountaines*, are ſo far off from darkning the matter, that they do rather giue light vnto it. For let mortall man exalt himſelfe as high as he will, yet ſhal he neuer be able to match ỹ mountaines, and higheſt trees in height: which the Lord will as eaſily beate downe, as it is eaſie for the winde with a puffe to ſcatter the light chaffe here and there. *Iſaiah* then ſhewes the proud here, as it were in a glaſſe, how vaine and fooliſh they were to think ỹ their hautines could keepe them that God ſhould not ouertop them. There is alſo here an exceſſiue manner of ſpeech, which was of great weight, in reſpect of amplifying the threatning. For it is not like that God was angrie with the mountaines and trees; or as if hauing changed his purpoſe hee ſhould now bring to nought, that which himſelfe had eſtabliſhed and ſetled: but *Iſaiah* ſets the iudgement of God before their eies in the guiltles creatures, to the end they might the more aſſuredly perſwade themſelues that their preſumptions and bold wickednes ſhould not remaine vnpuniſhed. We ſee then wherfore he intermingles theſe figures of *Cedars, Okes* and *mountaines*.

That which is added of the *walles*, is not ſpoken by way of allegorie or figure. Wee know that whileſt men feele themſelues well fortified they flatter themſelues as if they ſtood in no great neede of Gods helpe. *Iſaiah* then mentioneth the matter of their falſe confidence vnder the names of towers and walles. For if anyplace ſeeme to be vnable to be vanquiſhed, there will the prophane ones build their neſts; from which they deſpite both heauen and earth, becauſe they thinke they are there ſafe from all dangers. *Iſaiah* threatens then, that when it ſhall pleaſe the Lord to bring men downe, he can quicklie ouerthrow their fortreſſes vpon which they in a falſe confidence leaned. And howſoeuer they are things, which in themſelues are not to be miſliked; yet notwithſtanding becauſe they do too much occupie our braines, it is for very iuſt cauſe that the Prophet ſharpeneth his ſtile againſt them.

And hereunto belonged that which hee ſpake before as touching the Chariots and horſes, verſe 7. For as it is ſaid in *Micheæ*: that becauſe men doe reſt themſelues beyond meaſure, vpon the riches of this world, therefore it is neceſſary that they be wholly bereft of them, that ſo they may truſt to be ſaued by the onely hand of God, and not hang their hope vpon the ſonnes of *Adam*. So hauing a little before reproued them for the multitude of their horſes, now he denounceth the *Micheæ.* 5. 10

iudgement of God; and withall admoniſheth them that it is vnpoſſible to returne into fauour againe with him, till he hath bereft them wholly of thoſe things, to the end they ſhould not reſt anie more vpon the falſe ſuccours of this world.

Verſ. 16. *And vpon all the ſhips of Tarſhiſh, and vpon all pleaſant pictures.*

BY *Tarſhiſh* the Hebrewes do ſurely meane *Cilicia*: and becauſe the Iewes had great trafficke with this nation, the Scripture often makes mention of the ſhips of *Tarſhiſh*; which were ſo called, becauſe they frequented that ſea. Nauigation certainly is not to be condemned, becauſe it bringes great profit and commoditie to men: as well to carrie forth as to bring home marchandiſe. This kinde of trafficke alſo cannot be hurtfull; ſeeing it is the will of God that all mankinde ſhould be helpfull one to another by mutuall duties: but becauſe pride and crueltie is aboue al things ingendred by abundãce; therfore *Iſaiah* reproues this kind of merchandiſe, by which the land had been greatly enriched. Adde hereunto, that oft times it comes to paſſe that the merchandiſe and trafficke which is vſed with nations farre off; is full of deceit and pillage, and there is no meaſure amongſt men in this behalfe touching exceſſiue gaine. Firſt then the Prophets meaning is, that the Iewes ſhall be ſtripped of their riches; to the end they may learne to ſubiect themſelues vnder God. Secondly, he ſets forth their couetouſnes and vnlawfull gaines by ſignes: as if one ſhould deſcribe murther by ſhewing a ſword all bloodie.

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The ſecond part of the verſe ſhewes that the Prophet condemnes that nauigation, by which the land was much infected with corruptions. It is a thing too frequent and common, that delicacie, wantonnes, and abundance of voluptuouſneſſe, doe eaſily follow great wealth and riches, which is verie often ſeene in wealthie countries, and cities of merchandiſe. For thoſe that trade into farre countries, contenting themſelues nothing at all with things which are in their houſes, do bring home with them new ſumptuous and rich ſtuffes; which in former time were vtterly vnknown. Now becauſe wealth, is for the moſt part the mother of ſuperfluitie and diſſolution, the Prophet makes mention here of rich furniture; as if he ſhould haue ſaid, The Iewes haue decked their houſes ſo ſumptuouſlie, that they haue drawne the iudgement of God vpon them. For vnder the *pleaſant pictures*, by a figure called Synecdoche hee comprehends as well rich hangings, as the worke of *Phrygia*, and the veſſels made by exquiſite Arte.

Wealth the mother of ſuperfluitie and diſſolutions.

Now it is certaine that mens manners are corrupted when they giue their luſts the bridle thus to ſeeke here and there for ſuch vnneceſſarie ſupefluities. And we ſee that ſuch deliciouſnes was the ruine of the Empire of *Rome*. For before the Romans trauelled into *Greece*, they were very chaſte, continent and moderate. But in the ende hauing ouercome *Aſia*, they began to wax delicate, and to become more and more effeminate. But after their eyes were once dazelled with golden pictures, veſſels, pretious ſtones and tapiſtry, and that their noſtrils were perfumed with ointments and odors, by the ſame meanes they became beſotted in all their ſenſes; and in following the diſſolutenes of the Eaſterne partes as a more gentlemanlike faſhion of liuing, they began to ouerflow more and more in all diſordered diſſolutenes.

Note.

Verſ. 17. *And the hautines of men ſhall be brought low, and the loftines of man ſhall be abaſed, and the Lord ſhall be onely exalted in that day.*

THe Phophet in naming ſo many kindes of heights in the former verſes, declares that he ſpake of men. For the high mountaines and great Cedars diſpleaſed not God, as they were his creatures: but he ſignifies that all the miſchiefe reſts in the hearts and liues of men, who do too much truſt in high and great things. But ſome may obiect; It oft times fals out that the wicked are ſo farre off from comming to amendment or being humbled by the afflictions which they ſuffer, that they rather become the more obſtinate and rebellious: as it appeares in *Pharaoh*, whoſe hardnes could not be ſoftened by any plagues whatſoeuer. Wherefore it ſeemes that that which the Prophet ſaith heere, comes not alwaies to paſſe. I anſwere, that the effect of the chaſtiſment is not expreſſed: as if God ſhould bow rebels to his obedięce. But the ſenſe of the place is this, to wit, that although the reprobates be hardned, that the Lord will not therefore finiſh his chaſtiſments, wherewith he will chaſtiſe them, till ſuch time as their pride and hautines be brought to the ground. For whileſt they reſt vpon their riches and fortifications, thinking (as they ſay) to be ſafe there; they neither feare nor honour God. But although they be fortified neuer ſo much, the Lord will ſubdue and bring them downe eaſilie; not by a plague or two, but ſo manie waies, that being brought low, and ſhut vp, they ſhall ceaſe to lift vp their hornes againſt him, and ſhall prooue by experience that it is in vaine for them to be obſtinate and rebellious. That which is added, *and the Lord onely ſhall be exalted*, hath been expounded before.

Obiect.

Exod.8.15. & 9.34.

Anſ.

Verſ. 18. *And the Idols will he vtterly deſtroy.*

AS heretofore in his reprehenſion hee ioyned idolatrie with ſuperfluities, couetouſnes and other vices; ſo he now ioynes them againe together in denouncing the puniſhment.

Verſ. 19. *They ſhall goe into the holes of the rocks, and into the caues of the earth from before the feare of the Lord and*

and from the glorie of his Maieſty when he ſhall ariſe to deſtroy the earth.

BEfore he vſed other words: to wit, in conſtraining and compelling them, ſaying, Enter into the rocks; to the end hee might the more liuely pricke their conſciences: but now he ſhewes what they ſhall doe: and telles them that they muſt enter. And hereby it appeares that that ſentence was not an exhortation, but a terrible denunciation of the heauie wrath of God, to feare the wicked and obſtinate, who deſperately deſpiſe all admonitions, and threatnings. That which is added of the *feare of the Lord*, is to be vnderſtood, of the feare which ỹ Chaldeans and Aſſyrians put them in; whoſe hand hee called before (as hee doth here againe) the glorie of God: becauſe hee ſerued himſelfe by them to chaſtiſe his people. Although then that they were diſloyall and wicked, yet they ſerued to the glorie of God: ſeeing euen the diuell himſelfe ſerues ſomewhat to that end in deſpite of his teeth. Thus he ſpeakes of the Chaldeans, and Aſſyrians, becauſe the glorie of God might be perceiued in the chaſtiſements which hee executed vpon the people by their hand.

Hee confirmes the ſame thing by the word *Ariſe*, which ſignifies as much as to go vp into the iudgement ſeate to giue ſentence. In the particle, which by & by followeth, *to ſtrike the earth*, there is a goodly alluſion or meeting of words, which can ſcarcely be expreſſed in another language, as if hee ſhould ſay, To ſmite downe to the ground. Now hee ſaith that the Lord will *ariſe*, becauſe it ſeemes that he ſleepes, when he deferres his iudgements: he ariſeth then, when he goes vp as iudge, to inflict puniſhments vpon the wicked: in ſuch ſort, as men ſhall well perceiue that nothing can ſcape his knowledge, nor be hidden from his eies: from him (I ſay) who leaues not any wickednes vnpuniſhed.

Verſ. 20. *And at that day ſhall man caſt away his ſiluer Idols, and his golden Idols (which they had made themſelues to worſhip them) to* * *the moules, and to the backs.*

* Or, Into the holes of the, &c.

IDolaters doe pleaſe themſelues wonderfully in their ſuperſtitions and wicked ſeruice. For although they bee full of crimes, and naughtines, yet behold their refuge, namely, they thinke to appeaſe God by their goodly ſeruices. As if we at this day ſhould ſet forth the wickednes, and villanies wherewith the Papiſts ouerflow, they were not able to denie them: but will flatter themſelues vnder this pretext forſooth, that they performe a goodly ſeruice vnto God, and will thinke that all their vices ſhould bee ſufficiently couered vnder this cloake. The Prophet therefore pluckes away this vizard from Idolaters, and denounceth againſt them that they ſhall no more haue ought wherewith to couer their filthines. For the Lord will conſtraine them to caſt away their idols, to the end they may know it was in vaine for them to haue put their truſt in them. Laſtly, they ſhould be aſhamed of their vanitie. Becauſe in proſperitie they thought that God was fauorable vnto them, as if he had taken delight in their ſeruice: and could not otherwiſe perſwade themſelues, til ſuch time as it was manifeſted vnto them by effect, that he abhorred them. It is in aduerſitie then that they began to acknowledge their filthines as the Prophet *Heſeas* verie well teacheth, when he compares them to harlots, who perceiue not their vncleannes all the while they gaine well; and inioy their pleaſures. But when they haue loſt theſe things and are forſaken of their louers, then they begin to bethinke themſelues of their pouertie and ſhame, and to enter into the waie of repentance; of the which they would neuer once haue thought, whileſt they were lulled aſleepe in their wantonnes. And ſo falles it out with all idolaters who are neuer ſo aſhamed of their beaſtlines as to caſt awaie their Idoles from them, till being preſſed with extreame calamitie, they thinke themſelues ſomewhat low brought. *Hoſ. 2. 7.*

Which they had made themſelues &c. That is to ſay, which they had made by the helpe of the workeman. Neither is this added for nothing; becauſe hee ſignifies that the counterfeit and falſe gods are falſely worſhipped. For what good can gods framed by mans hands doe, ſeeing God hath his being of himſelfe, and is without beginning? It is a thing then that goes quite backward, and againſt all reaſon, that men ſhould worſhip that, which *themſelues* haue deuiſed. By this ſpeech therefore he deſcribes their wickednes; in that although their idols were made of gold or ſiluer, or of other corruptible matter, and that they were framed by men; yet neuertheleſſe that they were worſhipped in ſtead of God: withall, he expreſſeth the cauſe why they are diſpleaſing to God, to wit, for that they were honored. With what pretext now I pray you, will the Papiſts couer their impieties? For they cannot denie but they worſhip Images and puppets. Now where ſuch adoration and honor hath place, there is a manifeſt and plaine ſacriledge, which cannot be diſguiſed. By the *holes of the mouks*, he here vnderſtands all filthy and vncleane corners whatſoeuer, wherein they ſhould be hid with infamie.

Verſ. 21. *To goe into the holes of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, from before the feare of the Lord, and from the glorie of his maieſtie, when he ſhall riſe to deſtroy the earth.*

THis is no ſuperfluous repetitiõ, although *Iſaiah* repeates the ſame things whereof hee ſpake but erewhile. For is there any thing more difficult then to pricke, & wound men to the quicke, and to prouoke them to the true feare of God? We perceiue this, not onely in hypocrits, but euen in our ſelues, if we looke narrowly into it. For how many things

things are set before vs, by which our minds ought to bee rauished; and yet notwithstanding wee are scarce once mooued therewith? It was chiefly necessary that this iudgement of God should be repeated to the hypocrits, who pleased themselues in their wickednes. Now the seueritie of Gods vengeance is therein manifested, namely, that the wicked chose rather to be swallowed vp into the deepest gulfes that may be, then to come neere into his sight. From this place it seemes that Christ borrowed that wherewith he threatens the Iewes; *in that day they shall say to the mountaines couer vs, and to the hills, hide vs.* Luk. 23. 30.

Vers. 22. *Cease you from the man whose breath is in his nostrilles: for wherein is he to be esteemed?*

THese things are conioyned with the former, and haue bin ill diuided from them by some. For after he hath with threatnings proclamed the iudgements of God, he exhortes the wicked to cease from beguiling themselues by a vaine confidence: as if he should say, I see you are blinded and drunke with vaine hope, so as there is no reason at all which can preuaile with you; which coms to passe, because you ascribe too much to your selues; and yet *man* is nothing: for you haue to doe with God, who with his onely looke is able to bring the whole world to confusion. This place is expounded diuersly: For some interpret it of Christ, & take *breath*, for consuming; as also the Scripture is wont elsewhere to vse this similitude. They take *nostrill* for wrath, because the signe of anger appeares in the nostrils: and so gather this sense; Take heede you moue not Christ to wrath against you. But if all be well waighed, we shall find this exposition to be far off from the scope of the text. Others, although they expound it of men in generall, yet notwithstanding they referre it to this sentence; Feare not them that can kill the bodie, Mat. 10. 28. But this opinion is no more fitting with the text then the other. For it should be from the purpose and would not agree to the time: because there was then no occasion to dissuade them from the feare of men. But as I haue said, the coherence of the text, cleares vs easilie from all doubts. For the beginning of the chapter following expounds this plainly, and confirmes it: and he which diuided these things did ill to separate that which should haue beene ioyned together: for he will there adde; The Lord will take from you the things which so much puffes vp your hearts, and begets such high spirits in you: This confidence which you haue is vaine and foolish. And thereupon dependeth that which hee now saith, *Cease from man* then

1. *King.* 19. 11.

chap. 3. 1.

But it is necessary first to see what *the breath of the nostrill* signifies. He thereby sets forth the fragilitie of mankinde: namely, that the life of man is but a *breath* which forthwith vanisheth away; and as *Dauid* saith, If the Lord withdraw the spirit, man returnes to his dust: Also, His spirit departs, and he returnes to his earth. Psal. 104. 29. Againe, They are flesh, a breath which passeth away and returnes not. Psal. 146. 4. and 78. 39. Seeing then there is nothing so feeble and weake as our life, what meanes this confidence, forsooth, as if the rootes of our stabilitie were profound and strong? We must then *cease from man*; that is to say, we must leaue this vaine confidence: for *man* hath his *breath in his nostrils*: for if his soule once depart, he vanisheth forthwith away as water. Now we speake here, of that breath by which man liues, which is the weakest of all things.

Moreouer, when the Lord forbids vs to put our trust in *man*, let vs beginne at our selues; that is to wit, let vs not in any case trust in our wisdome, or industrie. In the second place, let vs depend neither vpon the helpe of men, nor vpon any creature else: but let vs place our whole trust in the Lord. Cursed is he, saith *Ieremiah*, which trusteth in man, and puts his strength in the arme of flesh, that is to say, in outward meanes and helpes. Ier. 17. 5.

For wherein is he to be esteemed?] Behold here the right way how to beate downe all pride, namely when nothing is left to men wherein they may please themselues. For this is as much as if the Prophet had said, Al the glorie of the flesh is nothing worth. We must also obserue, that this is said by comparison, to the ende wee may learne, that if so be there bee any excellencie in vs, it comes not by nature, but wee hold it all by borrowing the same from without vs. We know that mankind was adorned of God with giftes which ought not to be despised; we know also that some are more excellent then others: but because the most part hauing reiected the Lord, do please themselues in their own forme and shape beyond measure; yea euen prophane men esteeme so much of themselues, as if they were gods: *Isaiah* therefore wisely separates *man* from God, as also the Holy ghost doth thorowout y whole Scripture. For when men are considered in themselues, it better appeares how fraile their condition is, yea how transitorie, and inconstant. As soone therefore as men shall once beginne to attribute vnto themselues but the least strength whatsoeuer, then must their vanitie be made knowen, and discouered vnto them, to the ende they may acknowledge themselues to be nothing. By this onely word all the glorious titles of free will and mans merits doe fall to the ground, wherein the Papists glorie against the grace of God: and all that fond and foolish loue, which prophane men haue of themselues, is also plucked away from them. Lastly we are all called home to God, the author of al good things: to the end wee should not think any thing excellent either in heauen or earth, out of him. For his praise is forthwith eclipsed, if so be the whole world be not stripped of all wisedome, strength and iustice; in a word, of all praise, that so it may be giuen to God alone.

THE

THE III. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *For loe, the Lord God of hoſts will take away from Ieruſalem and from Iudah the ſtay and the ſtrength, euen all the ſtay of bread and all the ſtay of water.*

WE haue ſaid a little before that the Prophet goes on ſtill with the ſame matter which he began in the ende of the former chapter. For hee admoniſheth the Iewes, that how great riches ſoeuer they poſſeſſe; yet notwithſtanding they ſhall not bee able by any meanes whatſoeuer to hinder the wrath of God (being once inflamed againſt them) to conſume all their preparations. Whence it appeares, that they too much ouerſhoote themſelues, who, to put farre away from them all feares, doe heape & gather together weapons, power, ſtrength of warre, counſels, great ſtore of victuals, and ſuch like. The particle demonſtratiue *Hinneh*, which wee haue tranſlated, *Behold*, or Loe, is not put here for the more certentie of the matter; but to ſet forth the ſhortnes of the time, as if *Iſaiah* ſhould euen ſet the thing it ſelfe before the eyes of the wicked. For it often comes to paſſe, that thoſe who dare not openly contemne the iudgements of God, do yet notwithſtanding reiect them, as if they touched them neuer a whit; or elſe as if they were farre off from them. What is that to vs, ſay they? or, if afflictions come, wherefore ſhould wee make our ſelues miſerable before the time? when the calamitie comes vpon vs, will it not then be time enough to thinke vpon it? Becauſe then the wicked digge themſelues ſuch hiding places, and ſecurely take their eaſe in deſpiſing the iudgements of God, the Prophet doth the more neerely preſſe them home, to the end they ſhould not imagine that the hand of God ſhould bee farre off; alſo that all their ſtaies, which they promiſed to themſelues, ſhould be but in vaine. To this appertaines that where he calles God, *the Lord God of hoſts*, that ſo his Maieſtie might the more daunt their ſleepie and benummed conſciences. For God hath no need of titles: but it is neceſſary that our blockiſhnes and drouſines ſhould be awakened by the ſenſe and feeling of his glorie. Now the Prophet in the firſt place threatens, that the Iewes ſhall be ſtripped of all abundance of victuals, ſo as they ſhall be forced to die for want. And by and by he will adde the ſame thing as touching their ſuccours of warre, and all helps of politicke order and gouernment. From hence we may gather, that the Iewes were ſo lifted vp with the proſperous ſucceſſe which their affaires then had, that they fooliſhly ſecured themſelues, as if they had been vtterly exempt from all damage or decay. But *Iſaiah* lets them know, that not onely all the region ſhall bee ſmitten with the rods of God, but that *Ieruſalem* in like manner, which was as it were the inuincible fortreſſe of the whole nation, ſhould be ſmitten alſo: as if he ſhould ſay, The wrath of God ſhall not onebe ſcattered vpon the bodie; but it ſhall pearce alſo euen vnto the very heart. As touching the words, *Maſhen* and *Maſhenah*, which he hath put in the maſculin, and in the feminine gender, I doubt not but by this diuerſitie, he would more certainlie expreſſe, that all kinds of ſtaies ſhould bee broken: and therfore I haue tranſlated, *ſtrength & ſtay*. For I approoue not of their expoſitions who referre this to men: becauſe it is rather to bee vnderſtoode of all helps, of all kinds.

Notwithſtanding ſome doubt whether the Prophet reſtraines this to victuals, or rather whether he referres it to the other helpes and ſtaies which doe follow a little after. But it is very likely that vnder theſe two words he generally comprehends all things whatſoeuer, which are neceſſarie for the ſuſtentation of the eſtate of a citie, or people: and alſo, that by way of explication, hee names ſome ſpecials.

The firſt member then hath this ſcope, to wit, that the Lord will tread vnder feete, all defences and riches, by meanes whereof they thought to continue ſafe; ſo as there ſhould be nothing left to ſuccour them. Secondlie, he addes, what the pouertie and want ſhall be: and as we haue ſaid, he begins with food, which, in the firſt place, is of al other the moſt neceſſarie helpe for ſuſtaining mans life. 1 2

Now the Lord takes the ſtrength of bread and of water away two waies: firſt, when hee takes them from vs altogether; or elſe when he takes away their ſtrength to nouriſh vs. For if God inſpires not a ſecret vertue into thē, they can profit vs nothing at all, though we ſhould haue them in neuer ſo great abundance: and that is the reaſon why it is ſaid elſewhere, that he breakes the ſtaffe of bread: Ezech. 4. 16. That is to ſay, Though the Bakers giue out bread by waight, and though it be eaten, yet it ſhall not ſatisfie them any thing at all. This ſimilitude ought to be diligently obſerued, to the end wee may know, that although the bellie bee filled neuer ſo full, yet we ſhal alwaies bee hungrie, becauſe the ſecret bleſſing of God, which nouriſheth and giueth ſtrength, is wanting. 1 2 *God takes away ſtrēgth from bread after two ſorts.* *Leuit. 26. 26.* *It is not bread, but God his ſecret bleſſing which nouriſheth.*

But although the want wherewith the Prophet threatens the people in this place may be vnderſtood of famine, becauſe God will depriue the Iewes of all kind of reliefe; notwithſtanding, becauſe the Prophets are wont for the moſt part to take theſe manners of ſpeech out of the law; this interpretation agrees very well. For hee might ſimplie haue ſaid, I will take away from you bread and

and wine: but he expresseth a thing more secret, in speaking of the *stay and staffe of bread and water*: as if he should say, Although the people bee not brought to pouertie for want of meate and drinke, yet God can so vse the matter, that they shall famish for hunger, euen whilest they swallow downe their morsels: because his blessing being taken away, all nourishment shall passe away as smoke. To be short, his meaning is, that the people shall haue no food that shall strengthen them, either because they shall haue no bread nor water; or if they haue them, yet they shall be able to get no nourishment out of them.

Vers. 2. *The strong man, and the man of warre, the Iudge, and the Prophet, the prudent, and the aged,*

3. *The Captaine of fiftie, and the Honorable, and the Counseller, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent man.*

HE mentions other helpes, by which the estate of nations or cities are vpheld in their perfection. He threatens that the Iewes shal be wholly depriued thereof, so as they shall be able to doe nothing in the house, by counsell or aduice; nor in the fields abroad by force of armes. Now he standes not to keepe any strict order, but in contenting himselfe with a briefe summe, he mingles one thing with an other. He beginnes with *men of warre*, by whose hand the countrie was defended. Sometimes God takes them away by death; and sometimes he makes them become faint hearted and effeminate. This last is the most vsuall, so that the successors doe degenerate from the valor of their ancestors: and those who before were stout hearted, in processe of time become fearfull, and are disabled for the warre. We see also that the first often falles out, to wit, that the most valiant haue their courage by and by quailed.

He addes the *Iudge, and the Prophet*. Wee know that amongst the Hebrewes, *Iudges* are taken for all gouernors whatsoeuer. Also it is not to be doubted but that all Teachers whatsoeuer, are to be vnderstood by the name of *Prophet*. He threatens the Iewes then, that after the ciuill gouernment shal be abolished, and teaching extinct, that then they shall be cut off. And to speake the truth, the Magistrates & Teachers haue the same place in the Common-wealth, that the eyes haue in a mans head. To the same ranke also I referre the word *ancients*, who are the fittest to gouerne: because age obtaines prudence, counsell and grauitie. As touching the name *diuine*, although it be taken in the euill part in the Scriptures, yet it should seeme to be taken in the good part here; seeing *Isaiah* reckons vp those things which are necessarie to defend, or conserue the estate of a kingdome or citie. We may well cal this man then, one that knowes wisely how to forecast matters, and who hath a deepe insight into dark & obscure things, which are necessarie; not by diuinations or superstitious Artes, but with a quick and prompt iudgement, and with great dexteritie of wit. Also in regard that God had forbidden them to go to aske counsell of Magicians, Inchaunters, Diuiners; and that *Balaam* himselfe testifies that there was no soothsaying in Israel; Numb. 23.23. If any had rather vnderstand this place of diuinations made by Inchantments, I do not gainsaie it: neither will there any absurditie follow, to reckon it among the number of their chastisements, to wit, that this people so full of wickednesse shall be also depriued euen of all vnlawfull succours: as in *Hosea*, the Idols are ioyned with the Altar and the sacrifices. *Hosea* 3.4.

Hee calles him the Duke or *Captaine of fifties*, according to the manner of speech then in vse. For the Captaines of fifties were among the Iewes, as they of hundreds were among the Romanes. The Greekes do call them by a name which signifies Princes of hundreds. And because such manner of principalitie was not in vse among the Latins, therefore the name also was vnknowne vnto them. The Hebrew word *Ioets*, which I haue translated *Senatour*, may be applied to particular persons, who are excellent in knowledge. But because they attribute it to Counsellors who exercise a publike charge, I would not depart from the common opinion.

Moreouer, because handicrafts men haue their good vse in the conseruation of the common good, and for supporting of an estate, aswell as other Arts, *Isaiah* saith, that they also being abolished, the downefall of the Iewes approcheth vpon them. The expositours expound that which is said in the last place diuersly; word for word it is, He which vnderstandeth low words, spoken betweene the teeth. Now because the pythonicall spirits do giue their answeres by mumblings and low voices, some thinke that he should speake heere of Inchantments. Others expound it better; who by the word *Lachat* vnderstand secret counsels. But for as much as by this word, we may vnderstand a graue oration as well as of things secret; I haue not been afraid to translate it *Oratours*. Notwithstanding if any had rather vnderstand it of those men who are prudent and learned, who being vnfit for oratorie in publike, doe yet giue counsell in secret, which also is a good thing; I do not say against it.

To conclude, we are to obserue this summarie description of a well ordered estate. For first *Isaiah* hath placed corne and other things necessarie for the maintenance of life in the forefront: secondly, force of warre: thirdly, knowledge how to gouerne ỹ people, and other parts of politicall gouernment: in the fourth place the propheticall function & charge: and lastly handicrafts. The Lord beautifies the people with these helpes whom he minds to keepe safe and sound: and on the contrarie, strippes those of them whom he means to bring to ruine. Let vs know thē, that all things which we finde profitable to maintaine vs in this life, flowes vnto vs from the free fauour of God. Whence it followes that we consider an other point; to wit, that we take diligēt heed that we by our vnthankfulnes

The Magistrecie and the Ministry that to the Common-wealth which the two eies are to the bodie.

fulnes doe not depriue our ſelues of ſo excellent gifts of God.

Verſ. 4. *And I will appoint children to be their Princes, and babes ſhall rule ouer them.*

TO the end the vengeance of God might be the more apparent, he now tels vs how wofull and miſerable this change ſhould be, to wit, when the faithfull & wiſe gouernours ſhould be cut off, and that God ſhould put baſtards & mecoks in their ſtead. By *Children* we muſt not onely vnderſtand them that are ſo in age; but alſo in vnderſtanding, and manners: ſuch as are delicate and effeminate perſons, who haue no ſtrength in them; neither are able to manage the ſword that is put into their hand. He hath not oppoſed all the members one againſt an other: he thought it enough to ſhew ỹ meane by which a Common-wealth might ſoone be brought to ruine; namely, if ſo be that fooles and ignorant ones do beare rule, who are as children, in whom there is no wiſdome nor grauitie to be found. We may therfore hold it for a ſure principle, that he is vnfit to gouerne a Common-wealth, that is not called thereunto of God, nor furniſhed with ſingular vertues: which thing *Plato* alſo did well perceiue; for howſoeuer hee were a prophane man, hauing no true knowledge of God, yet he well diſcerned that none was capable nor fit to ſway publike affaires, but he which was indued with diuine vertues. And as the adminiſtration of Common-wealths is of God onely; ſo alſo is it neceſſarie that it be vpheld by himſelfe in euery reſpect; and there remaines no more to thoſe whom the Lord gouerns not, but that they bee like to *children*, yea that they be twice children, to wit, deſtitute of all counſell, and wiſdome.

Plato.

Now the Lord exerciſeth his vengeance two waies: for ſometimes we thinke we haue men of grauitie and of experience in matters; but when they take it in hand, they ſtumble like blind beetles, and haue no more skill and wiſdome then little children; becauſe the Lord depriues them of this ſingular vertue, with which before they were indued: and puts them out of bias, as if he had ſmitten them with a thunderclap. Sometimes alſo the Lord proceedes more ſlowly and takes away excellent perſonages for iudgement, by little and little, and ſuch as were fit for gouernment: and tranſports the ſwaying of cauſes ouer to them which are not able to gouerne a familie, no not a fillie child. When theſe things come to paſſe, we may hold it for certaine, that deſtruction and ruine is not farre off.

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Moreouer, we haue to obſerue (as I touched not long ſince) that the eſtate of a Common-wealth well ordered, is an excellent gift of God: ſeeing all the orders of Iudges, Senators, Souldiers, Captaines, Teachers, and Handicrafts men, doe all of them helpe one another by mutuall community: and doe knit themſelues together for the common ſafetie of the people. For ſeeing the Prophet threatens and denounceth that theſe things ſhall be aboliſhed as a moſt heauie iudgement of God, he ſufficiently ſhewes, that theſe are rare and excellent gifts, which are neceſſarie for the conſeruation of the people.

The eſtate of a Common-wealth well ordered is an excellent gift of God.

The office of Magiſtrates, Captaines, and Souldiers is here commended vnto vs then; as alſo the office of Teachers. Which we are well to note, againſt thoſe franticke fellowes, who ſtriue to cut off from the world, the power of the ſword; and all other good politicke orders. Now the Prophet ſhewes that theſe things are not taken away but when God is diſpleaſed. It followes thereupon then, that ſuch folke who fight againſt ſuch benefits of God, reiecting and quenching all that in them lies the ſame, are wicked ones and enemies to the publike good. Alſo the Miniſtry of the word doth here receiue his commendation, without which a Common-wealth cannot long endure. For where no propheſie is (as *Salomon* ſaith) there the people periſh: Prou. 29.18. Moreouer, handicrafts, tillage, all occupations of what ſort ſoeuer they be, as Carpenters, Labourers, and ſuch like, which ſerue for the neceſſities and commodities of men, are here praiſed, as the miniſters and ſeruants of the Lord, and haue the ſame end, as the others before mentioned; to wit, to preſerue mankind. We may alſo ſay the ſame as touching them that profeſſe the arte militarie; for although a lawfull warre ought to be nothing elſe but a meanes of peace, yet notwithſtanding, it is neceſſarie ſometimes to come to ſtrokes: ſo as they who haue the adminiſtration of the ſword, doe vſe it in defending themſelues and theirs. Warre therefore muſt not be condemned in it ſelfe, becauſe it is a meanes to conſerue a Common-wealth. Eloquence alſo is a thing not to be deſpiſed: becauſe there is often neede of it, as well in publike, as in priuate, fully and plainely to ſhew a thing, and to make a trueth cleare and euident. For that alſo is reckoned amongſt the gifts and ſpeciall bleſſings of God, when a citie aboundeth with prudent and eloquent perſonages, who can debate with the aduerſaries, in the gate, or in the place where neede ſhall require to defend it ſelfe by counſell and reaſon.

1 Magiſtrates.

2 Miniſters.

3 Handicrafts men.

4 Souldiers. A lawfull warre, is nothing els but a manner of peace.

5 Rethoriciens.

Pſal. 128. 5.

Now the ſumme of this place is, that when the Lord takes away his gifts from a people, and changeth their eſtate, be it any way howſoeuer, either by altering the forme of gouernment, or that good gouernours be taken away; the wrath of God is to bee acknowledged, who takes away Kings in his wrath, as *Hoſea* ſaith, and giues others in his anger: Hoſea 13.11. We muſt not therefore attribute ſuch changes to fortune, or to other cauſes.

Note.

Verſ. 5. *The people ſhall bee oppreſſed one of another, & euery one by his neighbour: the children ſhall preſume againſt the auncient, and the vile againſt the honorable.*

HE here deſcribes an exceeding great perturbation which approched to fall vpon

the Iewes; all good order being broken and fallen to the ground, as it happens to all people as soone as good gouernment is ouerthrowne. We know how great the shameles malice of mans minde is where ambition carries euery one away thereunto. Lastly, how furious the lusts of the flesh are, where there is no bridle to restraine them. And therefore it is no maruaile if one doe proudly lift vp himselfe against another, that cruelty hath the swinge there; and that euerie one takes libertie to commit all manner of outrage, when Iustice is ouerthrowne, and laid in the dust. If we wisely consider this, we shall esteeme more highly of the blessings which God bestowes vpon vs, when he maintaines vs in a tolerable and good estate, and suffers vs not to bee miserablie wasted and scattered. Whence it appeares, that those who spend and imploy their wits to ouerthrow politicke gouernments, are the open enemies of mankind: yea, they differ nothing at all from brute beasts.

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But this confusion which the Prophet here describes is most odious, to wit, that the child shall presume against the auncient, that the people of *vile*, and those of base condition, shall rise vp against those that are *honorable*, and men of reputation. For there is nothing more strange then to see them shamefully intreated, who are worthy to be honoured. And yet notwithstanding these vnseemely and odious examples happen, when the politicke order is ouerthrowne. Whereas I haue translated the verbe *Niggesh*, To endeuour, or to doe their vtmost, it was by constraint: for otherwise the meaning of the Prophet had been imperfect.

Vers. 6. *When euery one shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, and say, thou hast clothing: thou shalt be our Prince, and let this* [a] *fall bee vnder thine hand.*

[a] Or, scattering.

FOr as much as this sentence is of affinitie with the former, and still continues to the words following, *He shall sweare*; it is certaine that the particle *Ci*, is taken as signifying a certaine time. For the Prophet intending to set forth an extreame miserie into which this people should fal, he saith, There shall be no man which will take the charge of gouernment vpon him, although he shall be entreated so to doe. Surely ambition hath the swinge so for the most part amongst men, that the greater part doe alwaies thirst and long for headship (and that with enuie) one ouer another, yea they aspire many times to get it with hazard of their liues: For euen in all times we shall see that the greedie lust to reigne and rule hath shaken the whole world: and there is not the meanest village in which some are not to bee found who would be right glad to haue power and authoritie giuen them to command the rest; so much is flesh and blood prone by nature to be couetous of honour. Whence wee may perceiue, that all things are brought to an extreame exigent, when such a dignitie is not onely contemned, but also reiected with a disdainefull refusall. For the calamitie is extreame, and past cure, when men begin to flee and auoid that which they were wont naturally to couet.

Things are come to a very low ebbe, when men refuse to beare rule.

But for the fuller amplification of the matter, the Prophet sets other circumstances before vs; to wit, that the Iewes shall rather cast off all sense and feeling of mercie and humanity, then to take vpon them the charge of gouernment. If any should refuse to rule in a strange countrie, it may bee it would not seeme strange at all: but when we speake of the preseruing of our brethren, it is too vncurteous a dealing to refuse so honorable a charge. It is a signe then of an extreame desperatenes, when he vpon whose faithfulnesse his brethren doe rest themselues, and whose aide and succour they wait for, and desire, reiects and casts all desire of rule and authoritie from him.

And therefore also they haue been wont to chuse those for Princes who are rich; or at the least, it is very seldome that gouernment is committed to any, but such as are of a competent sufficiencie, lest their pouerty should expose them to contempt and disdaine, or else draw them to vse vnlawfull shifts.

This circumstance is also added, to wit, that although they bee sufficient to beare the burthen, yet they shall not accept of it; as if hee should say, that not the meane and base people shall refuse the place of gouernment onely, but euen the greatest and best furnished also. Moreouer, the verbe, *shall take*, hath a great emphasis in it: for it is altogether as much in effect as to lay hands vpon him, to arrest him: as if *Isaiah* had said, Those who shall seeke a Prince, shall not proceede therein by allurements nor intreaties, but there shall bee a multitude full of tumult, where they shall endeuour to lay hands vpon some one or other by violence, and shall force him to take the charge of gouernment vpon him. And there is no lesse weight in the last circumstance when he addes, *This scattering shall be vnder thy hand*, that is to say, At the least if there be left in thee any sparke of mercie or humanity, put forth that strength thou hast to helpe vs in this our extreame misery. For when a troup of men are as a scattered flocke, asking succour at the hands of one of their brethren, as at their pastor and shepheard, yea, pitifully bewailing their scattering, their hearts are harder then iron or flint, who will not then lend their helping hand for their helpe. Some translate, Let thy hand be vnder this scattering; to wit, to susteine it: as if there were therein some amplification in the Prophets words.

Vers. 7. *In that day he shall sweare, saying, I cannot be an helper: for there is no bread in mine house nor clothing: therefore make me no Prince of the people.*

BY the word, *To sweare*, he expresseth a vehement refusall, and a resolute denial. For often

often it falles out, that he, who in the beginning excuſed himſelfe, and made ſhew to bee vnable to doe any thing, yet at the laſt being intreated, doth yeeld to that which is requeſted of him: but he who refuſeth any thing, and that by way of an oath, giues them that haue ſought his helpe no hope, that hee will euer fulfill their deſires: for he hath reſolued to continue his purpoſe. And it may be alſo that the particle, *in that day*, ſignifies as much as incontinently, that, is without pauſing any thing at all, or making any longer cõſultation about the matter. But becauſe it may alſo be taken to ſignifie a time full of calamitie, I do not gainesay this latter. There is no difficultie as touching the Prophets meaning, onelie he purpoſed to ſay thus much in effect, that there ſhall be no refuge nor fit remedie to reſtore this wofull diſſipation.

Although the expoſitors doe interpret this hebrew word *shobesh* diuerſly, yet I agree willingly with them, who thinke it ſhould be a ſimilitude taken from Surgeons: becauſe there is nothing more fitting thereunto. And it is all one as if ſome bodie being called to heale a ſicke man, he ſhould anſwere, I am no Phyſitian; or, the nature of the diſeaſe is ſo incurable, that it is impoſſible to heale it. The coniunction copulatiue *Vau*, which follows afterwards, is put to note out the cauſe of ſuch a deniall, as if he ſhould ſay, I aſſure you I haue no power to do it. His meaning is then, that the eſtate of this people ſhall bee ſo deſperate, that there ſhall not a man bee found, who dares giue order to redreſſe their wants; no not when things ſhall bee driuen to a narrow pinch.

Verſ. 8. *Doubtles Ieruſalem is fallen, and Iudah is fallen downe, becauſe their tongue and works, are againſt the Lord, to prouoke the eyes of his glorie.*

HEre the Prophet ſhewes the cauſe of this ruine; leſt it might ſeeme that God were cruell in chaſtiſing his people thus ſharply. Now it is as much as if he had ſaid, This people doe periſh moſt iuſtly, ſeeing they haue ſo many waies hardned their harts againſt the wrath of the Lord. And hereby he cuts off all complaints. For we know how audaciouſlie the world rageth when it is chaſtiſed more then ordinarily it is wont to be. Now he ſaith, they were readie both in *words* and *deeds*, to commit all ſorts of euils. Hee ſpeakes alſo of the deſtruction of the citie as of a thing preſently acted; albeit the time paſt, may bee taken for the time to come, as oftentimes it is.

To prouoke to wrath.] This manner of ſpeech amplifies the fault: ſhewing that of ſet purpoſe they meant to prouoke the Lord. For the things that are done before our eies doe very much offend vs, eſpecially if they be diſpleaſing vnto vs. Wicked men mocke with God, as if they could beguile him. But becauſe nothing can be hidden from him, be it neuer ſo ſecret, *Iſaiah* reprocheth them that in his preſence without bluſhing they ouerflowed in committing their wickedneſſes. The epithite *glory*, is alſo to be marked: for it is a ſigne of more then a furious brutiſhnes, not to be touched with any feare or reuerence, when the Maieſtie of God is preſent. Now God had wonderfully manifeſted his glorie to the people of Iſrael, ſo as they ought to haue been humbled in good earearneſt, if they had had any droppe of ſhame or modeſtie in them. Let the wicked then murmure againſt God as they will, and accuſe him of crueltie, yet ſhall the cauſe of all their calamities be found in their owne hands.

Verſ. 9. *The triall of their countenance * teſtifieth againſt them; yea, they declare their ſinnes as Sodome, they hide them not. Woe be vnto their ſoules: for they haue rewarded euill vnto themſelues.*

* Or, ſhall anſwere for them.

BEcauſe the Prophet had to deale with hypocrits, that were ſhameleſſe and impudent, who yet bragged that they were very holy men: hee ſaith, that their very *countenance teſtified againſt them*, what they were, and that there was no need to goe ſeeke out witneſſes a farre off to beare witnes againſt them to conuince them of their wickednes. For he takes the word, to *anſwer*, to beare witnes, or to confeſſe. Howſoeuer then that they diſguiſed their faces and their foreheads, ſo as they were able to deceiue others, yet notwithſtanding God conſtraines them to diſcouer themſelues, and to manifeſt themſelues to be ſuch as they were indeede: ſo as in deſpite of their teeth they bare the markes of their fraudes and diſſimulations in their faces.

Others expound, that their wickedneſſes were ſo apparent that one might perceiue the vilanie which they would couer, as in a glaſſe. But that which by and by followes confirmes the firſt ſenſe, when he ſaith they *declared their ſinnes* as the Sodomites. By which words he ſignifies, that they ſo let looſe the bridle to wickednes, y they bragged of their filthineſſe without bluſhing; as if it had been ſome excellent thing worthie of praiſe; firſt to haue taken away all difference betweene honeſtie and vilanie, and then to giue ouer themſelues to all prophane licentiouſneſſe. And therefore he compares them to the *Sodomites*, who were ſo farre blinded with their voluptuouſneſſe that they caſt themſelues headlong with a blockiſh brutiſhnes into all manner of leaudnes. You ſee then what is meant by the *teſtifying of their faces*, whereof he hath ſpoken before, to wit, that they bare in their faces manifeſt tokens of impietie, which were more then ſufficient to witneſſe their guiltines. *Gen. 18 20. & 19. 5.*

Woe be vnto them.] He here expreſſeth that which hath been ſaid heretofore alreadie: that all the cauſe of their euils remained in themſelues: becauſe they had prouoked the Lord by their vices and naughtines. And therefore they had no way to wind themſelues

ſelues out; and if they did, yet it ſhould bee but in vaine, becauſe the euill was ſo rooted in their bones; as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, Seeke what pretext you can to colour your ſinnes, yet you cannot accuſe God, as if hee ſhould ſmite you wrongfully. Know then, that your ſelues are the cauſe of it; and therefore giue glorie to God, and lay the whole blame vpon your owne heads.

Verſ. 10. *Say ye, Surely it ſhall be well with the iuſt: for they ſhall eate the fruites of their works.*

BEfore I ſet downe the opinion of others, I will touch ŷ true meaning of the words. Becauſe it is an vſuall thing that the threatnings of ſuch heauy vengeances of God haue been wont to bring a marueilous bitter and ſharpe temptation to the faithfull; and withall becauſe there is ſeldome any ſuch publike calamities, but they are alſo wrapped vp in the ſame with the wicked; for this cauſe the Prophet, as I take it, brings them back to the prouidence of God, which neuer ſo confounds things together, but that in the middeſt of ſuch confuſions he hath skill to diſcerne betweene the euill and the good.

But this place is diuerſly expounded. For ſome tranſlate, *Say to the iuſt, becauſe he is good, he ſhall eate the fruite of his hands*: and after their opinion, we ſhould gather this ſenſe; I will and commaund that the godly be of good courage: for howſoeuer I doe ſharply puniſh the ſinnes of the people, yet notwithſtanding it ſhall goe well with them. But this ſenſe ſeemes to me more agreeable, *Say*, that is, hold this for a ſure principle. Becauſe *to ſay*, is often taken in the Scriptures to think, and to haue been perſwaded: as in *Dauid, I ſaid, I will take heed to my waies*: and infinite other ſuch places. He commaunds not then that one ſhould tell the iuſt; but that euery godly man ſhould rather be perſwaded of this truth in his owne heart: namely, that his eſtate ſhould be happie and bleſſed, howſoeuer it ſeemed miſerable for the time preſent. And ſo I take the word *Ton*; for an happie and proſperous eſtate: as in the former verſe he vſed the word *Raah*, which is of a contrarie ſignification, & againſt which he now oppoſeth *Ton*. And thus I thinke that *Raah* ſhould not be taken for wofull, but for a troublous eſtate. *Pſalm. 39. 1.*

Alſo becauſe word for word, it is, *Say, Surely it ſhal be well with the iuſt*, it ſeemes that the particle *Ci* ſhould either be affirmatiue, as in many other places: or rather ſuperfluous. Although it be very likely, it ſhould be put by way of confirmation, as if he had ſaid, Surely it ſhall be well to the iuſt, let all occaſion of doubting therefore betaken away, and let it be held for certaine, that his condition ſhall be moſt bleſſed and happie. Now forasmuch as this is hard to perſwade any of, he addes, that *he ſhal eate the fruits of his workes*, that is, he ſhall not bee defrauded of the reward of his equitie. Whereas others take *To ſay*, to admoniſh, and tranſlate theſe words *It ſhall be well*, Admoniſh the iuſt that he do well; I reiect that expoſitiõ as beeing drawne too farr off.

Verſ. 11. *Woe be to the wicked, it ſhall be euill with him: for the reward of his hands ſhall be giuen him.*

HE oppoſeth this as a contrarie member to the former: from whence it is eaſie to gather the Prophets meaning: to wit, that his purpoſe was to comfort the good, and to terrifie the wicked by ſetting forth the righteous iudgement of God. For when any great calamitie falles out, by which all are alike afflicted hand ouer head, we begin to call it into queſtion whether the world be guided by the prouidence of God or no, or rather by the turning of the wheele of blind fortũe. Thus the faithfull feare to be wrapped vp in the ſame ruine with ŷ wicked. Others againe think that it is all one whether a man bee godly or wicked, ſeeing aſwell the one as the other are alike afflicted with peſtilence, warre, famine, and other ſuch corrections. And ſo from thence, this peruerſe imagination entreth in the minde of man, that there is no difference betweene the reward of the godly, and the vngodly. Amongſt ſueh an heape of darke cogitations, many by the temptation of the fleſh, are ſolicited to deſpaire. The Prophet therefore ſhewes the vpright iudgement of God; to the end they might perſeuere in his feare; and might alſo know, that thoſe ſhal not eſcape vnpuniſhed, who perſwade themſelues that he will not correct them, though they prouoke him dayly to wrath and indignation.

Alſo he exhorts them to magnifie and extoll Gods iuſtice with high reuerence: as if he ſhould ſay, Do not think that this world is gouerned by chaunce: or that God ſtrikes he cares not how, without keeping meaſure: but reſolue your ſelues aſſuredly that he will deale well with the iuſt: for the Lord will giue him that which he hath promiſed, and will not diſappoint him of his hope. And on the other ſide, be you as verilie perſwaded that the condition of the wicked ſhall bee moſt accurſed: becauſe hee himſelfe ſeekes his owne woe, and therefore ſhall it fall vpon his owne pate. And herewithall the Prophet alſo reprooues the blockiſhnes of the people who felt not the iudgement of God. For they ſuffred the puniſhment of their iniquities; and yet they hardenned themſelues againſt the blowes, as if they had bin altogether ſenſeleſſe. Now there cannot a worſe thing befall vs then when we harden our hearts againſt corrections, and feele not the hand that ſmiteth vs: when we perceaue ſuch a ſenſeleſneſſe in vs, ſurely then we are almoſt paſt hope of amendment.

Verſ. 12. *Children are extortioners of my people: and women haue rule ouer them: O my people, they that leade thee, cauſe thee to erre, and deſtroy the way of thy pathes.*

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THe Prophet alſo reprooues the follie and blockiſhneſſe of this people who were ſtarke blind, euen at noone day. There is nothing which men beare more impatiently, then to endure the yoke to be laid vpon their ſhoulders: neither do they verie readilie ſubmit themſelues to the gouernment of any that haue more power then themſelues. We muſt needes ſay that ſuch as obey delicate and effeminate perſons, and ſuffer that ſuch folke ſhould oppreſſe them, are become ſottiſh, impotent, and faint hearted. Neither is it to be doubted alſo, but thoſe who thus willingly did offer their ſhoulders like Aſſes to beare the burthen, were ſmitten from heauen with a ſpirit of amazednes. I graunt that thoſe who are couragious ought to beare the rule of a tyrant: but *Iſaiah* reproueth the Iewes, who for that they had obſtinately ſhaken off the ſweete yoke of God, were now readie to yeeld themſelues vnder vilanous and baſe ſubiection, & that with moſt ſeruile conditions. They could not complaine that they were conſtrained to it by force, ſeeing they obeyed them freely; to whome notwithſtanding they needed not to haue beene ſubiect vnleſſe they would. Whereby it appeares that they were ſtricken with the hand of God, and daunted with feare, ſo as they had neither ſtrength nor wit left in them.

And it is euen that ſame vengeance wherwith God had threatned the people with before by *Moſes*. For as we ſaid erewhile, the Prophets had ſtill an eye to this generall doctrine of *Moſes* in all their Sermons. For how can it bee that men hauing power to reſiſt, ſhould willingly put themſelues into bondage (which notwithſtanding they naturally flee) vnleſſe that God hauing depriued them of all counſell and vnderſtanding, ſhould thus leaue them to themſelues to auenge himſelfe by this meanes of their rebellions? Wherefore as oft as the like befals any of vs, let vs not think it is come to paſſe by chance: no, let vs on the contrarie know, that when witleſſe men, and more feeble then *little children*, ſhall haue dominion ouer vs, that the wrath of God hath then ceaſſed vpon vs: vnleſſe peraduenture we meane to be reproued by the Prophet, of a much greater blockiſhneſſe.

They that lead thee.] He goes on ſtil with the ſame doctrine, to wit, that God is exceedingly angry with ỹ Iewes, in that he hath let looſe the bridle to the wicked to trouble all. From hence alſo we may coniecture, that the common people fooliſhly ſuffered themſelues to be led hoodwinked by the Gouernours; ſo as they receiued their edicts and courſe of conuerſation as oracles. Now all the corruptions which raigned euery where, came frō thence. To the end that ỹ contagion therfore ſhould not ſpread further by the ignorance of the people, *Iſaiah* cries to them that they ſhould take heede of the Gouernours themſelues who were carrying them away headlong into deſtruction. Others expound; Thoſe which make thee happy. But becauſe the participle which he vſeth may be deriued from the verb *Iaſhar*, which ſignifies to gouerne, I had rather follow this interpretation, becauſe me thinks it ſutes beſt with the ſcope of the text. I confeſſe indeede that the falſe Prophets flattered the people: yet I ſee no reaſon why he ſhould mention their flatteries in this place. But it agrees very well to the heads and leaders: namely that they were the cauſe of ruine. For as the Princes are ordained for the common ſafety, ſo alſo is there not a more dangerous plague, then when they be men of no value; ruling all things as they liſt. He ſaith then, that thoſe which gouern are the cauſe of the euill, and corrupt all; ſeeing they ought to correct others, & to ſhew them the way by their examples.

Verſ. 13. *The Lord ſtandeth vp to plead, yea, he ſtandeth to iudge the people.*

14. *The Lord ſhall enter into iudgement with the auncients of his people, and the Princes thereof: for ye haue* * *eaten vp the vineyard? the ſpoile of the poore is in your houſes.*

* Or, conſumed.

WHileſt impiety runnes ouer the countrie with the raines in her neck, and that the Lord ſends no ſuccour from aboue, we either think that he is idle, or that he hath forgotten his charge. Therefore after he hath complained of the princes which did not their office, hee addes now that the Lord will do his; and that he will not ſuffer ſuch wicked ones to goe vnpuniſhed. For there cannot be a greater offence, nor a thing that troubles our mindes more, then when Magiſtrates in the open ſight of all the people ſhall ſhew all manner of leude examples, and yet none muſt dare once to open his mouth: nay by your leaue they muſt be ſoothed and flattered. Then we beginne to aske where is the Lord become? from whom (by this ouer great licentiouſnes) the chiefeſt thing wherein his glorie ought to ſhine, to wit, in good gouernment, is taken away. *Iſaiah* meetes with this difficultie. As if he ſhould ſay, Albeit I confeſſe indeed that the common people are bad inough; yet becauſe ỹ Princes themſelues are corrupt in the higheſt degree, yea ſo farre as by their euill examples to defile the whole bodie of the cōmon wealth; know ye, that God is gone vp into his heauenly throne, as a iuſt Iudge, who at the laſt wil cal them to account, and will giue euery one of them according to their workes. And yet he exempts not the common people as if they were faultleſſe; but to ỹ end we might know the fountaine whēce all the euils proceeded, he chiefly applies himſelfe to ỹ Gouernours in particular, and threatens them with that puniſhment which they had deſerued. Hee had ſet vp a iudgement ſeate for God before; from whence he ſhould pleade: now he tels them againe that he ſhall come: but how? *with the auncients.* Now although it were not greatly from the purpoſe, that the Prophet ſhould allude to thoſe lawful aſſemblies, where

the ancients are set with God, as being his leiutenants: yet notwithstanding I agree to the most receiued opinion: to wit, that God will euen plead against the *Ancients* of his people. This place then answeres to that of *Dauid*; God sits in ỹ assembly of gods: Psal. 82. 2. In a word, his meaning is to say, Although the Princes haue libertie now to doe what they will without punishment, and that no man dares reprooue their disordered appetites; yet know ye that there is a day cõming wherein they shall feele that God hath authoritie aboue them, wherein also they shall render vp an account to him of all their doings.

No doubt but the Iudges of that time were very vnwilling to heare such reprehensions: for they could not endure to be handled so sharpely; neither did they thinke it was lawfull so to doe: because they would haue all in their power; & would haue their fantasies held for law, that all things which please them should be lawfull for them; that euery man should glose and flatter them, by consenting to the things which they had wickedly done: they would bee iudged of none in their actions; no, they would not be subiect to God himself. Being growne to this vnrulines then, so as they could neither beare admonitions nor threatnings, the Prophet euen summons them to appeare before the iudgement seate of God.

We must note also, that they are called honorable Princes of the people; but it is in title onely: for in respect of their great dignities they thought themselues exempt and discharged from all lawes, as by some speciall priuiledge: and thought that howsoeuer prophane Kings and Princes were indeed subiect to the iudgement of God; yet that they notwithstanding were exempt from it by meanes of their holines. They perswaded themselues then that they had nothing to doe with reprehensions, as being a matter needles to proceede against them by threats and terrors, as if they had been prophane persons. And therefore the Prophet expresly telleth them, that the Lord will not onely enter into iudgement with the Princes in generall; but with these proude hypocrites, to whom he had committed the charge of his people.

And you haue consumed vp.] The similitude of the vine is very common, specially when mention is made of the children of Israel. And by this word the Prophet redoubles their fault, because they had dealt no more fauourable with the people of God (whom he had loued with a singular affection) then if they had been some profane nation ouer which they had ruled. This pronoune *you*, also hath great vehemencie in it: because he speakes euen to the husbandmen themselues, who being set to dresse the vine, did deuoure it like wilde beasts. And therefore he greatly amplifies their crueltie in this behalfe. For what a disloyaltie was that to deuoure that which they should haue conserued and kept? Now the Lord shewes by this similitude, what a care he hath of his; and how affectionately he loues them: not onely in regard that the Church is his vine and heritage; but also when he saith, that hee will not suffer the disloyaltie and wickednesse of them that gouerne by tyrannie.

When he ads, that the spoyles of the poore were in their houses, hee names one particular, by which the other parts of their life might be knowne. Now the Princes houses should rather haue been as the Lords house, in regard they supplied the place of God, which ought to haue been holy to all. It was an extreame sacriledge then, when of a sacred place they made it a theeuish den. Also this word *poore*, augments their fault. For it is the most barbarous crueltie of all others, to snatch from the poore and needie, who are not able to defend themselues, and therefore ought rather in deed to be succoured.

Vers. 15. *What haue you to doe that you beate my people to peeces, and grinde the faces of the poore, saith the Lord, euen the Lord of hosts?*

HE reckons vp some particulars, by which it appeares that the poore were proudly dealt withall by them; yea cruelly, and with all oppression and wrong. It was not needfull that the Prophet should recite by peecemeale al things which were to be reprooued in the Princes: because by this little, it sufficiently appeares how vniust and tyrannicall their gouernment was. But where shall the poore finde refuge, if not at the hands of the Magistrate, who ought to be the father of the countrie, and to be an helpe to miserable persons? Therefore hee vseth an interrogation with a kind of vehemencie, What? as if he should say, What boldnes is this? What barbarisme and crueltie is it thus to abuse the wretched estate of the poore, and to spare them nothing at all? So also by the two similitudes, he sets forth their pride, ioyned with crueltie.

Saith the Lord of hosts.] To the end this reprehension might haue such authoritie among them as was meete, he sets the person of God before them: for here is a close opposition: as if hee should say, You must not take these things as from the mouth of man, but it is God himselfe, who is the author of this accusation: it is he that pursues these iniuries, who will also take vengeance of you for them in the end. And therefore because those who are set in any degree of honour do vsually so ouerflow with pride, that they despise the words and admonitions of all men, he opposeth against the pride of such, the *Maiestie of God*, to the end they may not bee so conceited as to despise the sharpe threatnings which hee hath charged them with in good earnest. And yet let vs remember that wee take not this place as if the Prophet preached nothing but the mercie of God onlie. For hauing denounced vengeance in generall to all, he toucheth the heads especially, to the end that neither the one nor the other might thinke to escape the hand of God.

God. Wherefore hee here vſeth the argument, which we call from the greater to the leſſe: How can it be that the Lord ſhould pardon the common people, ſeeing hee muſt euen puniſh the Princes, becauſe they haue deſtroyed the vine?

Verſ. 16. *The Lord alſo ſaith, becauſe the daughters of Zion are hautie, and walke with ſtretched out necks, and with wandring eyes, walking and minſing as they goe, and making a tinkling with their feete.*

HEre followes another threatning againſt the ambition, diſſolution, and pride of women. And in this the Prophet hath not followed any preciſe order, but reprooues now one vice, then another, as the matter required: and then hauing finiſhed his ſermon, hee comprehends a briefe ſumme of it in few words, as hee did in the firſt Chapter. Hee ſpeakes then againſt ſumptuous apparrell, and ſuperfluous ornaments, which were euident ſignes of vaine oſtentation. For where there is this exceſſe in apparrell and ornaments, there is alwaies ambition ioyned with it: and ſo by conſequence, many other vices for the moſt part, doe goe hand in hand with it. For, from whence comes the ſuperfluitie both of men and women, but from pride? Firſt then hee iuſtly taxeth this vice as the welſpring of all the abuſe, and ſhewes it by the ſigne thereof, to wit, by their going; becauſe the women walked with *ſtretched out necks*. Now as it is an euident ſigne of modeſtie to bow the head (as alſo prophane authors doe witnes) ſo to liſt it vp too much, is a ſigne of arrogancie. And for a womans head *liſted vp*, what can it ſhew elſe but pride? The Prophet therfore did wiſely, in beginning at the fountaine it ſelfe: for if he had begun at the outward ſignes; as at the garments, walking, and ſuch like things, they would haue had their replies at hand, to wit, that their harts were vpright and innocent enough for all that: and that there was no ſuch great neceſſitie to crie ſo bitterly againſt them, and to ſummon them before the iudgement ſeate of God for putting on a little braue or light apparrell. To the end therefore that hee may meete with their vaine obiections, hee firſt diſcouers ỹ inward diſeaſe, which ſhewes it ſelfe euery way in all the outward attire.

That which hee addes of *wandring eies*, ſhewes a ſhameles luſt, which is oftenеſt ſeene and eſpied (as certaine witneſſes thereof) in the eies: for bold and audacious *eies*, are the true meſſengers of a diſhoneſt heart. On the contrarie, chaſte women haue their eies ſtedfaſt and drawne in as it were, rather then rouing and wandring abroad. *Tinkling*. This geſture ſutes wel with an immodeſt and laſciuious countenance. It is vncertaine, whether the women had little belles to their pantables, which tinckled as they went: or rather whether in keeping meaſure they carried their countenances as women dancers do, becauſe the manner of attire is much changed ſince that time. Notwithſtandiug I willingly receiue this expoſition; that in going they made their ſteps to ſound: for the very words doe ſufficiently ſhew it.

Verſ. 17. *Therefore ſhall the Lord make the heads of the daughters of Zion bald, and the Lord ſhall diſcouer their ſecret parts.*

18. *In that day ſhall the Lord take away the ornament of the ſlippers, and the calles, and the round tires,*

19. *The ſweete balles, and the bracelets, and the bonets,*

20. *The tires of the head, and the ſloppes, and the head bands, and tablets, and the earings,*

21. *The rings and the mufflers,*

22. *The coſtly apparrell and the vailes, and the wimples, and the criſping pinnes,*

23. *And the glaſſes and the fine linnen, and the hoodes, and the launes.*

HEre is a coupling of things together, in ſtead of a particle that renders the cauſe. For he denounceth, that ſeeing they cannot be amended neither by gentle admonitions, nor by any words; that the Lord will proceede otherwiſe with them, becauſe hee will no more vſe ſharpenes and rigor of ſpeech, but will come vpon them in great diſpleaſure and with his arme out ſtrethed to take vengeance vpon them. And therefore euen as they had ſhewed their rebellion from the *head* vnto the *feete*, ſo he alſo giues them to vnderſtand, that the Lord wil ſhew the ſignes of his vengeance vpon *all the parts* of their bodies. Wherefore he begins with the *head*, where the principall decking is; and afterwards deſcends to the other parts. Now we are to obſerue that the Prophet reprooues not the exceſſiue pompe of theſe women with this ſharpenes & vehemency without cauſe: for aboue all other vices, wherewith they are ſtained, they naturally burne with a fond deſire to decke and trim themſelues brauely. And although they are prone enough by nature to couetouſnes; yet will they ſpare no coſt to make themſelues fine: yea, they wil pinch their bellies, and offer violence to nature it ſelfe, that they may haue wherewith to attire themſelues the more coſtly & ſumptuouſly: ſo greatly are they corrupted with this vice, that it ſurmountes all others.

What vice is moſt predominate in women.

Hiſtories doe ſhew what vprores women haue raiſed at *Rome*, by reaſon of the law called *Oppia*, which was ordained concerning apparrell, becauſe one ſide would eſtabliſh it, and the other part would haue it aboliſhed: ſo that there could be no concluſion made hereabout by any graue and moderate courſe, becauſe of their riots. But we neede

Women made an vprore at Rome, becauſe of a law made for reſtraint of fine apparrell.

not goe so farre to seeke examples; for wee may find infinite numbers almost thorowout all nations; so as it is a vice too common in al ages.

Now because we are alwaies sharpe witted to deuise excuses to couer our excessiue superfluities, therefore the Prophet pointes as it were with his finger at the fountaine of all the mischiefe: to wit, this furious *pride*, before spoken of, wherewith women are carried away when they are to shew themselues, and appeare before others. For to the ende, they may be the better seene and discerned they will shine with deckings of their garments, that so the eies of euery one may be drawne vnto them. The Prophet then hauing touched the inward sore; hee reckons vp many particulars, that so he might bring the sottishnes of women into the open view of all the world to receiue disgrace. And therefore hee makes a long catalogue; because none are more curious then a woman about this matter of piling vp fashion vpon fashion, and tire vpon tire. She will heape ornaments one vpon another without nũber: and therefore it was not without cause that the auncients in times past called a womans cabinet, or chest, *A world*. For if all the pieces which are here mentioned, should be gathered together, and laid vpon an heape, a man should find as many fashions as there are parts of the world. And therefore it seemes the Prophet here rifles the chests of women to bring forth their paltrie packe of iewels which were laid vp therein; to the ende that by how much the more they gloried in them, and tooke pleasure therein; by so much the more euery one might bee made ẏ better acquainted with their follies. Therefore howsoeuer here bee a long catalogue, yet is nothing superfluous; seeing thereby their insatiable lusts are the better discerned.

A womans cabinate called a world by the Ancians.

As touching the particulars, I meane not to stand dilating vpon euery thing apart, seeing euen the best learned of the Hebrews themselues are doubtfull concerning some of them, neither can they make any true definition of the sundrie formes of these ornaments. It is sufficient for vs to know ẏ summe of the words, and to vnderstand the Prophets drift; to wit, that he gathers together and reckons vp all these apish toyes, to the end the ambition and dissolution, with the great varieties thereof, might be so manifest; that there might no excuse bee brought for defending of them. Also it were too great an impudencie to affirme that whatsoeuer women deuise in their fooliſh braine beyond the bounds of common honestie, should be counted and esteemed as necessarie for couering the bodie. For how many things are they which he here recites, which are neither required for nature, necessitie, nor for honestie? To what purpose serues these *bracelets, earings, chaines*, and other iewels? whence it appeares, that such a superfluous heape, could not bee excused with any pretence whatsoeuer. It is therefore an immoderate superfluitie which must either bee repressed, or restrained; for that oft times they fall out to bee whorish intisements, whereby to weaken the heart, and to inflame it with wanton lusts. No meruaile therefore, if the Prophet be so earnest against this vice, and denounceth such fearefull iudgements against it.

Vers. 24. *And in stead of sweete sauour, there shall be stincke, and in stead of a girdle, a rent, and in stead of a dressing of the haire, baldnes, and in stead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth, and burning in stead of beautie.*

IT is certaine that this region abounded with sweete smels: and wee neede not doubt, but they were very inordinate in the vse of them, as in other things. We see that euen the nations very farre off from the *East*, did not abstaine from excesse herein: for there was no cost nor long distance of places which could hinder them from it. How much more did the excesse herein ouerflow then, thinke wee, in the place where such things were in abundance? whereby doubtles one might see lust enflamed, and dissolutions augmented more and more. He signifieth then that they did many waies abuse these ointments and perfumes. For men are ingenious in pursuing their lusts, and yet can neuer be satisfied.

In stead of a girdle, a rent.] Others translate, Ripping, or vnlooſing, that is to say; the Lord will *vngird* them. Now he meant to oppose two things greatly contrary one to another: to wit, that as the women walked being curiously girt and adorned, so they shall now walke torne and naked. He also opposeth to dressing of the haire *baldnes*: because they did not weare their heare modestly, but in all dissolutenes. Also against a *stomacher, a girding of sackcloth*: Now whether it were a belt or some other kind of girdle, it is certaine that the Prophet meant to decipher out some ornament which was in great estimation. Also he opposeth *burning, to beautie*: For delicate & braue women are afraid to go often into the sunne, for feare of being sunburnt: and yet he saith notwithstanding that this shall happen vnto them. In a word, as well men as women are here admonished how soberly they are to vse all the gifts of God, as well in their *diet*, and *apparell*, as in all their other behauiour. For the Lord cannot away with excesse, and it must needes be that he auenge himselfe vpon it by sore and grieuous punishments, when men will not be brought into order by light corrections.

Vers. 25. *Thy men also shall fall by thy sword, and thy strength in the battell.*

26. *Then shall her gates mourne and lament, and shee being desolate shall sit vpon the ground.*

NOw he turnes his speech towards *Ierusalem*, and to all the kingdome of *Iudah*. Hauing

Hauing therefore ſhewed, that the whole bodie is infected and corrupt, and that there is no part free frō contagion, & hath not ſpared ſo much as the very women, he returnes vnto a generall doctrine. Now yee know it were not conuenient that there ſhould bee giuen to euery woman many husbands. Beſides, that which followes in the next place did not appertaine to this people only. Now hee ſets before them the manner of their chaſtiſement, in telling them that al the ſtrength of the people ſhall bee brought downe by warres. And from thence followes the *mourning of the gates*, which he foretelles ſhall come to paſſe when theſe diſcomfitures ſhall fall out. We know that in that time they kept their aſſemblies in the gates. So then euen as the *gates* did (as you would ſay) reioyce in the multitude of the Citizens: ſo they are ſaid alſo to *mourne* when there ſhould be ſuch an horrible waſt and conſumption of them. Notwithſtanding, I denie not but that hee compares *Ieruſalem* to a deſolate woman bewailing her widowhood. For it was the manner of thoſe that mourned, to ſit vpon the ground: as alſo this people were addicted to many more ceremonies, then our manner of life will beare. The ſumme notwithſtanding of his ſpeech is, that the citie ſhall remaine without inhabitants.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *And in that day ſhall ſeuen women take hold of one man, ſaying, Wee will eate our owne bread, and we will weare our owne garments: onely let vs be called by thy name, and take away our reproch.*

HEE ſtill followes the ſame matter; and no doubt but this Sermon was made together with the former. And therfore we muſt not ſeparate this verſe in any wiſe from it. By this circumſtance hee more fully expreſſeth what that ruine and deſtruction which he had before threatned againſt the Iewes, ſhould bee. For vnleſſe threatnings be redoubled againſt hypocrits, either they will play the deafe men, or elſe they will extenuate them in ſuch ſort, as the ſeueritie of God ſhall not touch them to the quicke. He here ſhewes then by the effect what horror of imminent deſtruction ſhall come vpon them, to the ende they ſhould not promiſe an eſcaping from it at their pleaſure: as if he ſhould ſay, Thinke not that a little skirmiſh ſhall leſſen your number in ſome part: but it is rather an extreame ruine which threatens you; ſo as there ſhall ſcarſely one husband bee found for *ſeuen women*. And hereunto appertaines the word, *ſhall take*. It is a thing contrarie to the modeſtie of a woman, to goe and offer her ſelfe of her owne accord to a man. Now the Prophet ſaith, that they ſhall not onely doe ſo: but that there ſhall be *ſeuen women*, which ſhall lay hands vpon a man to take hold of him; ſo ſmall ſhall the number of men be.

That which immediatly followes doth yet amplifie this extreame waſt; when they ſay, *We will eate our owne bread*, &c. For ſeeing it is the proper office of the husband to prouide for his wife and familie, the women doe ſeeke husbands with vnequall and baſe conditions, when they diſcharge them of all care of getting their maintenance. There muſt needs bee a very ſmall number of men left then, when many women hauing caſt off all ſhamefaſtnes are not onely conſtrained to content themſelues with one husband, but doe alſo agree to get their owne liuing, and deſire no more but that the husband will keepe the faith of mariage with them.

Let thy name be called vpon vs.] We may render it in another ſenſe, Let vs beare thy name. For when the woman comes into the family of the husband, ſhee takes his name, and loſeth her own: in as much as ỹ husband is her head: and therefore her vaile is a ſigne of her ſubiection. As *Abimelech* ſaid to *Sara*, *Abraham* thy husband ſhall be the couering of thine head: Geneſ 20.16. But if the woman marrie not, ſhe remaineth couered vnder the name of her family. Now it ſufficiently appeares by the 48. chapter of Geneſis, that this is the true ſenſe of this manner of ſpeech: where *Iacob* bleſſing his nephewes, ſaith, Let my name, and the name of my fathers, *Abraham* and *Iſaac*, bee called vpon them: that is to ſay, Let them be of our ſtocke, & partakers of the couenant, & neuer ſhut out thereof, as it came to paſſe in *Eſau* and *Iſmael*. The prophane authors alſo ſpeake after this manner: *Martia* deſiring to returne againe to *Cato*, (as it is in the ſecond booke of *Lucanus*) ſaith, Giue me only the bare title of mariage: let it bee lawfull to write vpon my Tombe; *Martia* wife of *Cato*. 1. *Cor.* 11. 3. *Gen.* 25. 23. & 21. 10. Cato and Martia.

Now they ſay, *Take away our reproch*: becauſe it ſeemes that they beare ſome reproch, when they find no husbands: not onely in that it ſeemeth they are deſpiſed as vnworthy, but becauſe it was a ſingular bleſſing of God among the ancient people to haue poſteritie: and therefore the Prophet ſaith, they ſhall not onely haue neede with care to bethinke them how to auoid this reproch; but ſhall vſe all poſſible perſwaſions to attaine thereunto. Laſtly, he ſignifies that the deſtruction ſhall bee ſuch, that almoſt all husbands ſhall die.

Verſ. 2. *And in that day ſhall the bud of the Lord be beautifull and glorious, and the fruit of the earth ſhall bee*

* excellent

* Or, in excellencie, and renowme.

excellent and pleasant for them that are escaped of Israel.

THis consolation is added in very good season, in regard that the faithfull might haue bene vtterly discomforted with the newes of such an horrible waste, and might doubt in themselues how the couenant of God could stand fast in this so great a ruine of the people. For there is great differēce betweene these two things, that the people shall be as the sand of the sea for multitude, and yet notwithstanding that they shall be so rooted out by an horrible ruine, that there shall be no dignitie nor glorie at all remaining in those that shall escape, no, not so much as a glimpse of any name. *Isaiah* therefore according to his custome, as also the rest of the Prophets, preuents the mischiefe in due time, and moderates the terror by adding this consolation, to the end that the faithfull should assure themselues, that notwithstanding all these things, the Church shall be saued, and that by this meanes they should fortifie their hearts in good hope. Euen as then in the second Chapter he disputed touching the restoring of mount Zion, so now also he promiseth, that a new Church shall spring vp, euen as a bud or sprig shooteth vp in the field, which was vndressed before. They do commonly expound this place of Christ: and so much the rather is this opinion receiued, as it seemeth to haue some colour by the sentence of *Zachary*; Behold a man whose name is *Branch*. Which is also further confirmed, in that our Prophet speakes not barely of this branch, but with addition, of *honorable*: as if it had been the meaning of the Prophet to speake of the Diuinitie of Christ. And after when the Prophet addes *the fruit of the earth*, they referre that to his humane nature. But when we shall consider all things aduisedly, I doubt not but he taketh the *bud of the Lord, and the fruit of the earth*, for an abundance of most ample and vnwonted grace, which abundance shall recreate the affamished: for he speakes euen as if the earth after a waste should be so barren and dry, that it should neuer promise any bud to come out of it, thereby to cause the grace of God to be the more longed for in so sudden a fruitfulnes, as if seared and barren fields should bring forth grasse beyond all hope.

Zach. 6. 12.

This maner of speech also is much vsed in the scriptures, to wit, that the gifts of God shall bud out of the earth, as the Psalmist saith, Truth shall bud out of the earth, and righteousnes shall looke downe from heauen, Psal. 85. 12. Also hereafter in the 45. Chap. The earth shall open, and saluation shal fructifie. It appeares by the course of the text that this is the true meaning of the place: for *Isaiah* addes in the words following, that the deliuerance of Israel, to wit, this handfull yet remaining, which the Lord will saue from this destruction, shall be the glorie and beautie of this bud. Also the word *Pheliath* which they commonly turne Deliuerance, is collectiue in this place as in many others. 1 But yet there may be a double exposition, either that those which shall be deliuered shal be a fruit of glorie and a bud of honour: or that the graces of God shall bud amongst them. The first exposition likes me best, because it seemes the Prophet addes the explication in the verse following, when he sayth, That those which shall remayne, shall be called holy. Questionlesse the Prophets meaning is to say, that the glorie of God shall appeare clearely, when a new Church shall be borne, as if hee should create a people of nothing. 2

Those who draw and restraine this place vnto the person of Christ, make themselues a scorne to the Iewes, as if for want of testimonies of scripture they should pull in places by the eares to serue their turne. For there are other places of scripture, by which wee may more clearely prooue that Christ is true God and man, so as it is no neede to coyne proofes thereof from hence. But yet I confesse that the kingdome of Christ is heere spoken of, vpon which the restauration of the Church is grounded. Neuertheless, let vs obserue ỹ this consolation is not sent to all indifferently, but onely to the *remnant* which should be drawne out of death as it were by wonderfull meanes. Againe, lest the consolation might seeme to bring but cold comfort if it had ben only sayd that a small number should be deliuered; he speakes of *an exceeding glorie, and excellent brightnes*, to the end the faithfull might assure themselues that they should receiue no hurt by this their diminishing, because the Church of God takes not her dignitie frō the multitude, but from puritie, which is, when God shall gloriously and excellently beautifie his faithfull ones with the gifts of his Spirit. Whence we ought to gather a most profitable doctrine; namely, that howsoeuer the faithfull be small in number, and that they be like brands taken out of the fire, yet notwithstanding that God will be glorified in the midst of them, and will no lesse shew a proofe of his excellent greatnes amongst them, then if he were in the midst of many.

Vers. 3. *Then he that shall be left in Zion, and he that shall remaine in Ierusalem, shalbe called holy, and euery one shall be written* * *among the liuing in Ierusalem.*

* Or, to life in Ierusalem.

HE holds on his former speech still, shewing, that when all the filth of the people shal be purged out, then that which remaines shall be *called holy*. Whereas some thinke that those are called holy which shall be found written in the booke of life, it seemes to me an ouer strict sense. We should rather reade these two members apart: *All those which shal be found in Zion, shalbe holy; and all those which shall remaine in Ierusalem, shall be written in the booke of life.* And this repetition is very frequent, and much vsed among the Hebrues, namely, when the Prophet sets forth one benefit of God by many titles; as when it is said, There shalbe saluation in Ierusalem, and remission

Ioel 2. 32.

miſſion of ſinnes in Zion; both which are to be referred to one end: yet neuertheleſſe the grace of God is the better manifeſted, when the cauſe of ſaluation is placed in the free pardon.

There is the like reaſon in this place: for he ſaith, that the Church being waſhed from her filthineſſe, ſhall be cleane; and that all thoſe who haue place in her ſhall be truly the elect of God. But yet it is certaine that this appertains not to all the viſible Church, in the which there are oftentimes many mingled, which only cary the name of the faithfull, and yet haue not any true marke of their profeſſion: yea, theſe ſurmount the little flock in number for the moſt part, euen as the chaffe doth the good corne. And howſoeuer the Lord had cleanſed them from the chaffe in their exile in Babylon, as if he had taken the fanne in his hand: yet wee know that the Church was very far off frō her right hewe notwithſtanding. But in regard that the image of this puritie did then ſhine in ſome part, which truly appeared after the ſheepe were ſeparate from the goats, *Iſaiah* according to his accuſtomed maner, in ſpeaking of theſe beginnings, comprehends the continuall courſe of time euen to the end, whē God ſhould fully accompliſh that which he had then begun.

We ſee the very ſame thing effected euery day: for although the Church be not wholly purged from her ſpots by being exerciſed vnder the rod and correction, yet notwithſtanding ſhe recouers part of her puritie when the ſpots are taken away. So then ſhe ſuſteines no loſſe by her afflictions, becauſe that as ſhe is diminiſhed one way, ſo ſhe is much more comforted another way, by caſting out from her many hypocrites. For example, the health of a ſick body can not be recouered vnleſſe you firſt purge the rotten and corrupt humors away which is in it. From hence we gather a very fruitfull conſolation, for wee are wont to deſire a multitude, and would by that iudge of the good eſtate of the Church: but we ſhould rather deſire to be a ſmall number, that ſo the glory of God, rather then of a multitude, might ſhine in the midſt of vs. But becauſe our owne glorie carries vs away, from thence it comes to paſſe that wee more regard the number of men then the vertues of ſome few. Wee muſt alſo gather what the true glorie of the Church is, for it then truly floriſheth, when the Saincts haue place in her: and although they be few and deſpiſed of the world, yet they neuertheleſſe make the eſtate thereof floriſhing and deſireable. But becauſe it will neuer be in this world that the Saincts ſhould occupie the place alone in the Church, we muſt patiently beare the mingling, and in the meane while hold it for a ſingular benefit as oft as it approcheth any thing nie to this puritie.

The Church ſuſtaines no loſſe by her afflictions.

Note.

The true glory of the Church defined.

Note.

We haue ſayd alreadie, that by thoſe which are written in the booke of life, we muſt vnderſtand the elect of God, as if he ſhould ſay, The prophane multitude ſhal be cut off, who only haue their names written in the earth. Now the Prophet alludes to the place in *Moſes* in the 32. of Exod. where he deſires rather to be blotted out of the booke of life, then that all the people ſhould periſh. But although God haue none other booke but his eternall Counſell, by which he hath predeſtinated vs to ſaluation, in adopting vs for his children, yet this ſimilitude agrees very well to our weakne, becauſe our vnderſtanding can not otherwiſe comprehend how God ſhould know his flock, in ſuch wiſe as none of the elect ſhould euer be depriued of eternall life. Seeing then that God hath his choſen *writen*, the decree of adoption, by meanes wherof eternall felicitie is aſſured vnto them, is called *the booke of life*. As touching the reprobate, although for a time it ſeemes they be equall to the children of God, yet notwithſtanding they are not enrolled in this Catalogue, as we ſee how they are driuen away when he gathers together, and puts his owne apart. Now the accompliſhment hereof ſhall not be, till the laſt day: notwithſtanding vnto Gods children, becauſe they are aſſured of their election, when they perſeuere conſtantly, while the reprobate fall to reuolting, it is a great comfort in calamities, when being ſhaken with temptations, we continue ſtedfaſt in our vocation.

Verſ. 4. *When the Lord ſhall waſh the filthineſſe of the daughters of Zion, and purge the blood of Ieruſalem out of the midſt thereof by the ſpirit of iudgement, and by the ſpirit of burning.*

HE ſtill goes on with the ſame doctrine: for in as much as we commonly thinke that the Church receiues great hurt through the afflictions by which ſhe is diminiſhed, the Prophet inſiſts more and more vpō the contrary ſentence. And now to beate back this error, he reaſoneth by the contrary, to wit, that God rather waſheth and purgeth out all the corruptions from his Church by meanes of afflictions. By *blood*, I vnderſtand not only murthers, and ſuch other notorious crimes, but all maner of filthineſſe and vncleanneſſe whatſoeuer. Now there is a redoubling in this ſimilitude, by which he repeates one and the ſame thing twice, becauſe that which before he called filthineſſe in generall, now he calles it *blood* in particular, as the fluxe of blood, or ſome ſuch like thing. In ſumme, he ſhewes the fruites which theſe corrections bring, to wit, that by them our filthineſſe is cleanſed. For whileſt vngodlineſſe ſpreades it ſelfe hither and thither without puniſhment, then we grow as corrupt as others, for which cauſe it is neceſſarie that the Lord ſhould awaken vs by admonitions, yea, as a good Phyſition, that he purge, launce, and ſometimes that he ſeare, and burne.

He takes *iudgement* for puritie, to wit, for the effect of iudgement, when the things which were declining are ſet againe in their firſt eſtate. He addes, *the ſpirit of burning*, by which their filthineſſes are purged and conſumed. Wherein we are to note two things: Firſt, that the purgation of the Church is

wrought

wrought by the ſpirit. Secondly, that the name is impoſed vpon the ſpirit by the effects; now of *iudgement*, now of *burning*. As if he ſhould ſay, The iudgement of the ſpirit, and the burning of the ſpirit. As oft then as theſe manners of ſpeech are met withall in the Scripture, to wit, The Lord will doe theſe things by the ſpirit of truth, power, and righteouſnes, &c. we may turne this phraſe of ſpeech thus; In truth, in power, and in righteouſnes of the ſpirit. For the ſpirit of God, from whom both the beginning and end of the worke of our ſaluation comes, workes thus in vs. From theſe epithites then we muſt obſerue what the principall effects of the ſpirit are: the Lord purgeth out our droſſe by his ſpirit, that he may amend and reforme vs. By the word *iudgement*, he ſheweth what the chiefe vertue is in the reſtauration of the Church: to wit, when thoſe good things which were confuſed & ouerthrowne are reſtored, and ſet in their right order againe. *Burning* alſo ſheweth the maner and way which the Lord vſeth to reſtore the Church to her firſt puritie.

Verſ. 5. *And the Lord ſhall create vpon euery* place of mount Zion, and vpon the aſſemblies thereof, a cloud and ſmoke by day, and the ſhining of a flaming fire by night: for vpon all the glorie ſhall be a defence.*

* Or, habitation.

6. *And a couering ſhall be for a ſhadow in the day for the heate, and a place of refuge, and a couert, for the ſtorme and for the raine.*

Vpon euery habitation.] As if he ſhould ſay, There ſhall not bee the leaſt corner in the mountaine of *Zion*, where the grace and fauour of God ſhall not appeare. I take *habitation* and *aſſemblie*, for one and the ſame thing. For I take not *Aſſemblie* for congregation, but for the place where men meete. Now to the end hee might deſcribe and ſet forth a full bleſſing, he alludes to that which *Moſes* recites; namely, that when the Lord would deliuer his people from the bondage of Egypt, hee ſent a piller of a cloud by day, and a piller of a fire by night, Exod. 13. 21. It is an vſuall thing with the Prophets, that when they would ſet forth any excellent benefit, they then call to remembrance this moſt glorious worke of God, to wit, The deliuerance out of Egypt. Becauſe then did the Lord wonderfully diſplay the infinite treaſures of his grace, to the end hee might eſtabliſh his Church; not omitting in that worke any teſtimonie of his bountie and goodnes, that the felicitie of his choſen people might be famous thorowout the whole world. But aboue all things, this was moſt memorable, that they ſhould be preſerued by day, by the couering of a cloud from the annoyance of too much heate, and that the piller of fire ſhould goe before them in the night, to the end they ſhould not wander or goe aſtray. The ſumme is this; that when God will gather home his Church from out of *Babylon*, that the manner of it ſhall bee no leſſe admirable, then that by which the people were in times paſt deliuered out of *Egypt*. Not that they ſhould be accompanied in the midſt of their iournie betweene *Babylon* and *Iudea*, with the cloud and the piller of fire, as in the wildernes: but becauſe he ſhewed teſtimonies of his fauour towards them by meanes no way leſſe excellent then they. As if any ſhould ſay at this day, The Lord will illuminate vs by the light of his holy ſpirit; he will giue clouen tongues, by which his Goſpell ſhall be ſpread thorowout the world: No man would take this literally, as if the Holy Ghoſt ſhould be ſent downe from heauen in a viſible forme: but this miracle ſhould bee remembred only, to the end the faithful might learne to reſt at this day vpon ỹ ſame power of God in the reſtauration of the Church, as the Apoſtles had experience of in their time. And withall, that by this manner of ſpeech the Prophet mentioneth a continuall ſucceſſion of bleſſing; as if he ſhould ſay, God will not ſtretch forth his hand to deliuer you for a moment only, but euen as he hath alwaies aſſiſted our fathers in the deſert; ſo after he hath deliuered you, he will defend you vnto the end.

That which he addes, vpon *All glorie*, depends vpon that which he ſaid before, to wit, that the bud which ſhould againe ſprout forth, ſhould be glorious. It is as much then as if he had ſaid, Vpon thoſe which ſhal beare the ſignes and markes of their deliuerance. It may be alſo that he alludes to that place of Exodus: where it is ſaid, that the houſes which the deſtroying Angell had marked, were not hurt: Exod. 12. 23. For as then the ſprinkling of the blood was a ſafekeeper of their ſaluation; ſo alſo *Iſaiah* promiſeth that the faithfull ſhal be in ſafetie, when God ſhall haue marked them. And this ought to be diligently obſerued. For wee are admoniſhed, that we cannot otherwiſe bee partakers of the grace of God, vnleſſe wee beare his image, and that his glorie doe ſhine in vs.

And a couering] &c. Although the Prophet confirmes that which wee haue touched alreadie, to wit, that God will leade his choſen perpetually, vntill he haue brought vs to our wiſhed end: yet notwithſtanding we are admoniſhed that the faithfull ſhall bee alwaies ſubiect to many troubles. For *heate* and *cold*, and other ſharper euils then thoſe doe ſtill fiercely purſue them: ſo as when they are deliuered out of one danger, they fal againe into another. But behold here a moſt ſweet conſolation, to wit, that againſt all *ſtormes*, the only ſhadow of the Lord ſhall ſuffice vs: becauſe by it we ſhall be ſo couered, that nothing ſhall hurt vs, or bring vs the leaſt damage. Although then that diuers afflictions and troubles doe enuiron vs on all ſides, yet the Lord promiſeth that hee will aſſiſt vs: as it is ſpoken in the Pſalme: The ſunne ſhal not ſmite thee by day, nor the Moone by night: Pſalm. 121. 6. For the Lord ſhall preſerue thy going out, &c. It onely remaines that wee

follow

follow our vocation, and diſcharge our duties faithfully. It befalles alike to faithfull and vnfaithfull, to endure many troubles: but the wicked haue no refuge nor couert vnder which they may ſhroud theſelues; they muſt of neceſſitie be ouerwhelmed. But the condition of the faithfull is bleſſed. For although they be cumbred with *heate* and *cold*, yet they haue a ſure refuge vnder the protection of God. Only let vs be mindfull that that glorie whereof wee ſpake before doe ſhine in vs: otherwiſe theſe things doe nothing at all appertaine vnto vs. But if we beare the marke of God, let vs be aſſured that he will bee our helpe as oft as any tempeſt ſhall fall vpon vs.

THE V. CHAPTER.

* Or, for.

Verſ. 1. *Now will I ſing* * *to my beloued, a ſong of my beloued to his vineyard. My beloued had a vineyard in a* * *very fruitfull hill.*

* Heb. Sonne of the oyle, or of the fat.

THe argument of this Chapter differs from the former. For the Prophets purpoſe is to ſet forth the eſtate of the children of Iſrael as it then was: to the ende euerie one might take knowledge of his faults, and that by this meanes, ſhame and diſpleaſure in themſelues for their ſinnes might prouoke them to come to true and earneſt repentance: as alſo that hereby they might behold their miſerable condition as in a glaſſe. For otherwiſe they would haue flattered theſelues too much in their vices, and would not haue borne any admonitions at all. It was needfull therefore that their brutiſhnes ſhould bee painted out before them as in liuely colours. But to the end he might procure himſefe the greater authoritie he vſeth this preface: for they were wont to write excellent and memorable things in verſe; to the end euery one might haue it in their mouth, that ſo there might remaine a perpetuall remembrance of them. *Exod.* 15. According as wee ſee that ſong which *Moſes* wrote, Deut. 32. and many others after him who did the like; that as well in publike as in priuate, one might heare all things ſounded forth by ſuch voices. For the doctrine is thereby more highly aduanced, then if it ſhould be taught onely. For this cauſe *Iſaiah* compoſed this *ſong*, that ſo the people might take a more cleare view of their filthines. Neither is it to be doubted, but theſe things were handled excellentlie, both for art and voice, as the cuſtome is, wee know, to compoſe verſe with the moſt exquiſite skill that may be.

To my beloued.] It is certaine that he meaneth God; as if he ſhould ſay, I will make a ſong on Gods behalfe, by which hee complaines of the ingratitude of the people: becauſe there was much more vehemencie in it to bring God in ſpeaking. But ſome may aske wherefore *Iſaiah* calles him *his beloued*. Some doe anſwer; it was becauſe hee was of the kindred of Chriſt. And the trueth is indeede, that hee deſcended from *Dauid*: but this ſeemes to bee conſtrained. It ſhall be more plaine and agreeable, if according to the ſentence of S. *Iohn*, we ſay, that the Church is committed to the friend of the bridegrome: and that we put the Prophets in this number. For no doubt but this title is fitting for them, ſeeing the charge of the auncient people was committed vnto them, to the ende they might be maintained vnder their head. It is no meruaile then, if they were iealous and diſpleaſed, when the people turned away their hearts from him. *Iſaiah* then puts himſelfe in the perſon of the bridegrome; and as one grieued and perplexed in regard of the Church committed to his charge, hee complaines that ſhe hath broken the couenant of wedlocke: and withall laments and bewailes her diſloyaltie and ingratitude. *Iohn* 3. 29. *1. Cor.* 11. 2.

And hereby wee may ſee that it was not S. *Paul* alone who was iealous ouer the ſpouſe of God, but alſo all the Prophets and Teachers, as much as in them lay, had the like care; to wit, ſo many as were faithfull to the Lord. And this title of Spouſe ought to touch all the ſeruants of God to the heart; and to quicken vp their ſpirits. For what doth a man hold more deare vnto him then his wife? Surely euery honeſt man will prefer her before all treaſures; and will more readily hazard his goods to other mens cuſtodie, then his wife. And therefore he muſt needes bee eſteemed very faithfull to whoſe keeping a man will commit his beſt beloued. Now the Lord commits this truſt to the Paſtors and Miniſters, and puts his Church which is as his deare wife into their hands. What wickednes were it then to betray her by our ſloth and negligence? Whoſoeuer is not inflamed with the care of her preſeruation, he cannot couer himſelfe vnder any pretence whatſoeuer. Whereas in the ſecond place, he addes the word *Dodi*, which he vſed before; although he chãgeth the firſt ſyllable, yet notwithſtanding it is of the ſame ſignification with the firſt. Be it then that ſome turne it, Vncle; others Coſine, I am rather of their opinion who take it by way of alluſion. For we muſt giue more liberty to Poets then to other writers. He hath then thus garniſhed theſe words, and come ouer them (as you would ſay) to the end that by ſ rhythme, and tuning of the verſe, he might helpe their memorie, and quicken their vnderſtandings.

My beloued had a vine.] The ſimilitude of the *vine* is much vſed in the Prophets: and there is no compariſon more fitting his purpoſe then this. For he ſhewes by it two waies how much the Lord eſteemes his Church:

There is no poſſeſſion that a man holds more deare to him then his vine: neither is there any thing that requires more daily and continuall labour and diligence. The Lord then not onely teacheth that we are as a pretious heritage vnto him; but would alſo haue vs take knowledge of the continuall care and
1 thought he takes for vs. In the beginning of the ſong, the Prophet remembers the benefits which the Lord had beſtowed vpon his
2 people the Iewes: then he ſhewes how great
3 the ingratitude of this people was: thirdly,
4 the puniſhment and correction which will follow: laſtly, he makes a catalogue of their ſinnes: becauſe men will not acknowledge their offences, but by maine force.

In a very fruitfull.] In the entrance hee ſhewes that God had ſeated this people in a happie dwelling place, as if a man ſhould plant a vine in a pleaſant and fruitfull hill. For by the word which he vſeth, I vnderſtand an high place, which is exalted aboue the plaine: we commonly call it *a hill*. Whereas ſome referre it to *Ieruſalem*, as if he ſhould deſcribe the ſituation thereof, I thinke it to be farre fetched and conſtrained. It ſeemes to me rather, that the Prophet purſues his allegorie. And becauſe God had vouchſafed to take this people into his care and ſafegard, he compares this grace to the planting of a vine. For vines are more eaſily planted in hils and high places, then in vallies. And as one ſaith, The vine loues the high hils, the Weſt, and the ſide of a wood. He alluded then to the common cuſtome of planting vines. Afterwards hee followes the ſimilitude, ſaying, that the ſeate of this place was not common as others were. For in calling it, *The ſonne of the oyle, or of the fat*, in his language; he meanes a fat and fruitfull place. I approoue not of their expoſition who reſtraine it to the fruitfulnes of *Iudeah*. For the Prophet meant to deſcribe the happie and bleſſed eſtate of the people by this ſimilitude.

Verſ. 2. *And he hedged it, and gathered out the ſtones of it, and he planted it with the beſt plants, and he built a tower in the midſt thereof, and made a winepreſſe therein: then hee looked that it ſhould bring forth grapes: but it brought forth wild grapes.*

HE ſhewes the continuall care and diligence of the Lord in dreſſing his vine: as if he ſhould ſay, He omitted nothing of that which is required to be in a good husbandman, who aboue all things watcheth vpon his charge. Notwithſtanding wee are not here curiouſly to examine the text, word by word as many doe, ſaying, That the Church was inuironed with *hedges*, to wit, with the protection of the holy Ghoſt; to the end it might be ſecured againſt al the aſſaults of the diuel: that the *preſſe* ſignifies the doctrine: and that the *ſtones* ſignifie all troubleſome errors. The Prophets meaning, as I haue ſhewed, was more plaine and ſimple; to wit, that God diligently performed the office of an husbandman, ſparing neither paines nor coſt. But in the meane while, the Iewes had great cauſe to conſider in themſelues with how many great and diuers ſorts of benefits the Lord had enriched them. When the Church at this day is ſet forth vnto vs vnder the ſimilitude of a vine, wee ought to referre theſe figuratiue ſpeeches to the benefits of God, by which he aſſures vs of his loue towards vs, and alſo of the care he hath for our ſaluation. It ſeemes that in the word of *planting*, order ſhould not bee obſerued: for a man ſhould rather plant firſt, and then cloſe it with an hedge afterward. But thus I vnderſtand it, that he no ſooner planted his vine, but he forthwith prouided all things belonging vnto it. And therefore he iuſtly accuſeth them of ingratitude and diſloyaltie, that they brought not forth fruite worthie the coſt and paines beſtowed vpon them.

And we are greatly to feare leſt the Lord take not vp the like complaint againſt vs. For by how much the more the Lord ſhall haue enriched vs with greater benefits then they; ſo much the more abominable ſhall our vnthankfulnes be, if we abuſe them. The Lord neuer beautifies and adornes his Church in vaine; or that ſhe ſhould onely make outward vnprofitable ſhews; but to the end ſhe might bring forth *grapes*, that is to ſay, good fruits. But if we diſappoint the Lord of his expectation, the puniſhment which the Prophet here foretelles, will certainely follow. Wherefore the remembrance of his benefits ought to mooue and pricke vs forward with all diligence to yeeld him thanks. Moreouer, there is here a cloſe oppoſition in the word *vine*, thus greatly husbanded: becauſe that by ſo much the more we are bound to make pretious account of God his benefits, as they are more rare and excellent; as being pledges of his particular loue towards vs. That hee cauſeth the ſunne to ſhine as well vpon the wicked as the good, and beſtowes all things neceſſarie vpon them for to feede and cloth them; theſe are common gifts. But how much more ought wee to priſe and eſteeme this couenant of grace, which hee hath contracted with vs? by meanes whereof he illuminates vs by the light of his Goſpell; which grace he only beſtowes vpon his beloued. We are therfore aboue all things to waigh & conſider of this care and diligence, which the Lord beſtowes, in working daily vpon our minds, and in framing vs to his owne Image.

Now he looked.] He heere complaines that the people who had beene indued with ſo great excellencie of gifts, were wickedly and vnthankfully become degenerate; and accuſeth them for contempt of the louing kindneſſe of God. For he ſaith, that in ſtead of good grapes, *this Vine brought foorth ſowre and wild grapes*. Now, we muſt not imagin ỳ God (before whoſe eyes all things are naked) can be deceiued of his hope, as a mortall man may be: for in the ſong of *Moſes* he publiſheth with a loud voyce, what the peruerſitie of this people would be, and that it was appa-

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rant to him euen from the beginning. My beloued, ſaith he, will kick with the heele againſt me, after ſhe ſhall become fat and luſtie, Deut.32.15. There is then no more vncertentie of hope in God, then of repentance: neither doth *Iſaiah* ſubtillie diſpute heere what God waited for in himſelfe, but how the people ought to behaue themſelues, leaſt they receiue ſo great fauours in vayne. And thus God commaunds that his Goſpell ſhould be publiſhed for the obedience of faith; not that he lookes that all ſhould yeeld their obedience thereunto; but becauſe the vnbeleeuers might be left without excuſe by the oncly hearing of it. To conclude, there is nothing which ſhould more prouoke vs to liue holily and according to God, then when the Holy Ghoſt compares the obedience which we yeeld vnto God, to ſweet and pleaſant fruit.

Verſ.3. *Now therefore O inhabitants of Ieruſalem, and men of Iudah, iudge, I pray you, betweene me, and my Vineyard.*

4. *What could I haue done any more to my Vineyard, that I haue not done vnto it? Why haue I looked that it ſhould bring foorth grapes, and is brought forth wild grapes?*

NOw he appoints euen thoſe to be Iudges of his cauſe, with whom he pleades: as men are wont to do in things ſo plaine and apparant, that the aduerſe partie can haue no euaſion. It is a ſigne then that God hath gotten the better end of the ſtaffe, whē he permits thoſe who are guilty, to ſhew whether the matter be ſo or no. Now he firſt demaunds, *What could be more deſired* of a huſbandman or good houſholder then that which hee did to his Vine. From thence hee concludes, that they are vtterly without excuſe, in that he ſhould be ſo wickedly defrauded of the frutes of his labours: although it ſeemes in the ſecond member, that he complaines in himſelfe that he waited for any pleaſing or deſireable frute of ſo wicked a people. As it will often come to paſſe that we ſhal complaine by our ſelues, when the euent of a thing doth not anſwere our hope: and we are ſory to haue beſtowed our labour and coſt vpon ſo vnthankfull perſons, whoſe peruerſitie ſhould rather haue kept back ſuch benefits from them. And we wil confeſſe that we were indeed iuſtly deceiued, becauſe we were too eaſie and light of beliefe. Yet notwithſtanding, this ſence wil be more plaine; to wit, ſeeing I haue fully diſcharged my dutie, and haue done aboue all that could haue beene expected in husbanding my Vine, whence comes it that it yeelds me ſo euill recompence? and that in ſtead of the fruit which I looked for, it only brings forth bitter fruit?

If any ſhall obiect now, that the remedie was in God his hand, if he had but only bowed the heart of the people; This is but a friuolous cauill to excuſe them: for their conſciences pricked them in ſuch wiſe, that they could not eſcape by laying the fault vpon an other. For although God doe not pearce with efficacie into the hearts of men by his holy ſpirit, to make them teachable; yet ſhall it be in vaine for any notwithſtanding, to mutter that this was wanting vnto them, ſeeing that their externall vocation doth ſufficiently cut off all pretext and ſhew of ignorance. Alſo, God ſpeakes not heere of his power, but he denies that he was bound to do more for them then he did.

Verſ.5. *And now I will tell you what I will do to my Vineyard; I will take away the hedge therof, and it ſhall be eaten vp: I will breake the wall thereof, and it ſhall be troden downe.*

6. *And I will lay it waſte: it ſhall not be cut, nor digged; but briars and thornes ſhall grow vp: I will alſo command the cloudes that they raine no raine vpon it.*

BEcauſe he holds the Iewes as good as condemned perſons by their owne mouth, he by and by addes that he will be the auenger of the contempt of this grace, ſo as they ſhall not eſcape without puniſhment. For this reproch would not haue bin ſufficient to haue moued thē, vnleſſe he had forthwith threatned thē with correction. He giues them now to vnderſtand then, that ſo great wickednes whereby they haue diſloyally mocked him, ſhall not eſcape ſcot-free. Now the ſumme of the vengeance is, that they ſhall be depriued of the gifts which they had abuſed; not only when God ſhall withdraw himſelfe frō them, but alſo that they ſhall be laid open to the ſpoile of the enemies. In the meane while he ſhewes how miſerable their condition ſhall be, when he ſhall once ceaſe to beſtow his liberalitie vpon them. Whence it followes, that it ought to bee attributed to the ſingular goodnes of God, that this Vine continued ſafe and ſound till then: yea he admoniſheth by how many ſundrie waies it was preſerued; and alſo how many meanes God hath in his hand to deſtroy and lay it waſte, both within and without. For his ſuccour being withheld from it, it muſt needs lie open to be deuoured of all that ſhould paſſe by, whether men or beaſts. After (ſaith he) that I ſhall take away my hedge, the beaſts ſhall tread it vnder feete, and it ſhall be eaten vp, and the robbers ſhall rob and ſpoile it, and ſo it ſhall be laid fallow. And further, becauſe the Lord ſhall ceaſe to prune and deck it, it ſhall bring forth no more fruit, in regard it wants huſbanding: but briars and thornes ſhall grow vp, which will choke the plants; yea, God will cauſe ſ very rootes to wither away by withholding raine.

Now we may perceiue by this, with how many weapons God is furniſhed to reuenge himſelfe vpon our ingratitude, when he ſhall ſee that wee deſpiſe his benefits. True it is that the Prophet continues the ſimilitude: and to the end he may win the better audi-

ence, he enricheth his speech with figures; notwithstanding it behoues vs simplie to gather, that euen as God dayly bestowes infinite blessings vpon vs, so wee also giue diligent heed, that by taking away now this, and afterward that, he auenge not himselfe vpon our contempt of them. And as touching the gouernment of ỹ Church, by how much the more it hath need of many helps, so much the more shall she be subiect to many chastisements, if she wickedly corrupt the things that God hath ordained for her saluation. And therefore it is no wonder if so many calamities threaten vs at this day, with Note. wast and destruction. For we ought to attribute all the euils that shall befall vs (whether the decay of vision; or that the wicked haue their swinge; or that wolues and foxes doe creepe into the Church) to our owne vnthankfulnes: because wee haue not yeelded such fruit as we should, but haue been slothfull and idle. Let vs acknowledge the wrath of God then as oft as we are iustly depriued of so many benefits as hee doth willingly offer vs.

Vers. 7. *Surely the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Iudah* are *his pleasant* * *plant: and he looked for iudgement, but behold oppression: for righteousnes, but behold a crying.*

* Or, branches.

Hitherto hee hath spoken figuratiuely: now he sets downe the drift of his song. Heretofore he hath only charged the Iewes with iudgement: Now he shewes that they are not only guiltie, but also that hee holds them as conuicted persons. For they could not bee ignorant of the benefits which they had receiued from God. Thou (saith the Psalmist) broughtest a vine out of Egypt, and hauing driuen out the nations, didest plant them in, Psalm. 80. 9. *Isaiah* followes not all the parts of the similitude neither was it needfull: It was sufficient to haue shewed the scope and drift of it. The whole people were the *vine*: the particular persons the 1 *branches*: thus hee first accuseth the whole 2 body in generall; and lastly euery one in particular: so as none could exempt himselfe from this condemnation, as not hauing iustly deserued the same before.

It sufficiently appeares wherefore the people is called a *vine*. Because God had chosen them, and made the couenant of grace and of eternall saluation with them, and had enriched them with infinite benefits. The beginning is the plant; the labour afterwards followeth. This people was adopted of God, and husbanded by him diuers waies. For their adoption had not been sufficient, if the Lord had not wrought vpon them and framed and inriched them with his graces from day to day. We ought at this day to be much vrged with this doctrine. Christ affirmes, that *Ioh.* 15. 1. he is the vine, and that being ingrafted into him, the father will purge vs, for as much as God vouchsafeth to performe the office of a husband man in this behalfe, and carefully bestowes all those things vpon vs which hee (in reproach) saith he, bestowed vpon the ancient people. Is it any maruaile then if he be grieuously offended, when he bestowes his labour in vaine, and without profit? From hence comes that threatning; Euery branch *Ioh.* 15. 2. that beares not fruite in me, shall be hewen downe and cast into the fire.

He looked for iudgement.] He begins plainelie to shew how wickedly the Iewes are degenerate, amongst whom all kind of violence and of iniustice had place, hauing reiected all equitie and righteousnes. In the words, hee vseth a meeting together; which hath great elegancie: and although they sound almost one of them like another: yet they are of contrarie signification. For *Mischapt* signifieth iudgement: *Mispach conspiratie*, or oppression: *Tsedaca* Iustice: and *Tseaca* the crie and complaint of those which were oppressed by violence: which things were not wont to be heard, when euery man had his due. Moreouer he makes mention of two things which God requires principally of his people, as being indeede the true fruites of the feare of God. Although notwithstanding the seruice of God be first in order: yet it is not inconuenient that it should be described by the duties of the second Table. They are rightly conuinced to haue contemned God; because they exercised crueltie against men: for where inhumanity beares sway; there religion is quenched.

Let vs know that the same is now said vnto vs: for as this people was planted; so also haue we ben. We ought also to call to mind that which S. *Paul* saith, that we were but *Rom.* 11. 24. wild Oliues, and they were the true and naturall Oliue. We then which were strangers are grafted into the true Oliue, and are purged and adorned with a continuall care of the Lord. But what fruits bring we forth? truly not onely vnprofitable, but also bitter. And therefore we are guiltie of greater ingratitude, in regard that we are inriched and abound in benefits, much more excellent. And iustly is this complaint commenced against vs, seeing that violence and wrongs doe reigne euery where. But because the general doctrine did not sufficiently prick their hearts; he describes two kinds particularly: to the end hee might shew them as with the finger how far off this people were from the fruite that a good vine should bring forth.

Vers. 8. *Woe be vnto them that ioyne house to house,* and *lay field to field, till there be no place, that ye may be placed by your selues in the midst of the earth.*

Now he reprooues their insatiable auarice and couetousnes; from whence frauds, injuries, and violences do commonly arise. For it is not a thing vnlawfull in it selfe *to ioyne one field to another*, nor one *house to another*: but he aimes at the heart; which by no meanes whatsoeuer can bee satisfied, when

when it is once ſet on fire with deſire of hauing. Hee deſcribes the affection of thoſe then which thinke they haue neuer enough: neither are content, how rich ſoeuer they be. We may ſee that the couetous are poſſeſſed with ſuch a greedy luſting, that they deſire to haue all to theſelues alone; & think that that which others haue, is their want, or is taken frō them. And therefore *Chryſoſtome* hath an elegant ſpeech to this purpoſe: That the couetous would gladly take away the ſunne from the poore; if it were in their power. For they grutch their brethren, the very elements which yet are common, and would gladly ſwal ow them vp: not to enioy them; but becauſe their luſt depriues them of vnderſtanding in this behalfe. In the meane while they conſider not that themſelues are not able to doe any thing without the helpe of others, & that a man being alone by himſelfe is vnprofitable; they onely carke and care how to gather much together; and therefore they deuoure all by their couetouſneſſe.

Chryſoſtom.

He chargeth the couetous and proud with ſuch a furie, that they would haue all others cut off from the face of the earth, to the end themſelues alone might haue it in poſſeſſion: and therefore there is neither end nor meaſure in their luſt. What folly and madnes is it to driue thoſe from of the earth, whom God hath placed therein with vs, and to whom he giues a dwelling place common with vs? Queſtionleſſe a worſe thing could not befall them then to haue their wish. Neither could they alone till the ground, reape, and performe other neceſſarie duties of this life; nor yet could they adminiſter things neceſſarie to themſelues. Alſo God hath ſo vnited men together; that one hath neede of the helpe and induſtrie of another: and there is no man, vnleſſe he be out of his wits, who will reiect his brethren; as though they were hurtfull or vnprofitable. The proud alſo cannot inioy their glorie, if they ſhould be left alone. How blind are they then who would chaſe and driue men away to reigne by themſelues.

The couetous deſire to dwell alone. But a worſe thing could not befall them, then to haue their wish.

Now as touching the length and greatnes of *houſes*: the like is to be ſaid of them; as was heretofore ſaid of *fields*: becauſe the ambition of thoſe is alſo reprooued, who deſire to dwell in goodly palaces and ſpatious houſes. It is not vnlawfull for him who hath a great family to haue alſo a large houſe: but when men (puffed vp with pride) will adde to their houſes without cauſe, onely to be at more libertie, and that one alone takes vp the dwelling places which would ſuffice a great many; then it is meerely ambition and vaine glorie, which ought worthily to be reprooued. For it is all one, as if hauing contemned others; they onely ſhould bee lodged: and that their poore brethren were worthie of no more but the couering of the firmament; or that they ought to goe ſeeke out ſome other habitation.

Verſ. 9. *This is in mine eares ſaith the Lord of hoſtes:* * *ſurely many houſes ſhall be deſolate, euen great and faire without inhabitant.*

* Or, if there be not many, &c.

SOmething muſt be heere ſupplied; for his meaning is that the Lord is ſet downe as the Iudge, hauing the knowledge of all theſe things. When the couetous rappe and ſcrape their riches together, they are blinded by their luſt, and thinke not that they muſt one day be called to an account. True it is that men are neuer ſo beſotted, but they attribute ſome kinde of iudgement to God; but they flatter themſelues in ſuch wiſe, as that they thinke ſurely God regardeth not. So they acknowledge a iudgement of God in generall, but when it comes to the particular, there they lay the raines in the neck, and ſuppoſe they ſhould not be kept ſo ſhort. Alſo in this particle, *if there be not*, wee ſee a forme and maner of oath often vſed in the ſcripture. For to the end he might the more aſtoniſh them, hee ſpeakes doubtfully as it were by ſentence broken off in the mid way. He might haue expreſſed this threatning by a full ſentence; but being imperfect, it holds the hearer more in ſuſpence, and ſo it brings the greater feare with it. Moreouer, by this maner of oath (halfe pronounced as we ſay) the Lord would teach vs to accuſtome our ſelues to modeſtie, to the end we take not libertie in vſing execrations.

What is it then that he threatneth? *That many houſes ſhall be deſolate.* This is a iuſt puniſhment, whereby the Lord corrects the couetouſnes and ambition of men, which would not be brought to conſider their end, that they might haue contented themſelues with a little. As he, who derided the inſatiable couetouſnes of *Alexander*, who becauſe he vnderſtood by the philoſophie of *Anacharſis* that there were many worlds, ſighed in himſelfe, becauſe with ſo much labour he had not yet conquered the gouernment of one. A world (ſaith he) will not ſuffice *Alexander*, he is as diſcontented as if he were pinnd vp in a very narrow roome; or as if hee were bounded within ſome certaine Iland; and yet when his time comes to be buried, he muſt content himſelfe with a coffin. For it is death only which teacheth and conſtreineth vs to confeſſe how vaine a thing the bodie of man is.

Alexander. Anacharſis. *Vnus pellæi Iuueni non ſufficit orbis &c.*

We ſee euery day examples therof, and yet who is inſtructed by it? for ſ Lord ſheweth vs in a glaſſe how ridiculous the vanitie of men is, who lay out an infinite maſſe of money to build pallaces, which yet will one day bee neſts and dens for night crowes, owles, miſe, and ſuch like beaſts. Theſe things are dayly before our eyes, and yet wee take none of them to heart, to grow the wiſer by them. There fall out ſo many and ſodaine changes, ſo many houſes deſolate, ſo many cities waſted and laid on heapes, laſtly, ſo many other and ſo euident ſignes of God his iudgements, and yet notwithſtanding men can not bee withdrawne nor weaned from this inſatiable greedineſſe of coueting. The Lord threatneth by the Prophet *Amos*, You haue built you houſes of hewen ſtone, but you ſhall not

dwell in them. Alſo, he ſhall ſmite the great houſe with breaches, and the little houſe with clefts, Amos 5. 11. and 6. 11. This falls out day by day, and yet the inordinate affections of men can not be aſwaged.

Verſ. 10. *For ten acres of vines ſhall yeeld one bath, and the ſeed of an omer ſhall yeeld an epha.*

HE teacheth, that the like ſhall befall to the fields and vines, namely, that the couetous ſhal not inioy their reuenues which they deſire, becauſe their luſt is inſatiable; yea ſo as by their rauening they ſhall deſtroy the fruits of the earth, euen as certaine beaſts doe cauſe the buds of the vine, and eares of corne to burne and moulder away by their breath. The fields therefore ſhall be ſo barren, that they ſhall hardly yeeld againe the tenth part of their ſeed. The vines alſo ſhall yeeld very little wine. A *bath*, is a certaine meaſure of moiſt things, as *Ioſephus* witneſſeth; now it conteines 72. engliſh halfe pints, which meaſure is very little for ten acres, and principallie in a fat ſoyle. An *omer*, is a certaine meaſure of drie things, and alſo conteines (as the ſame Author ſaith) 31. buſhels. *Epha*, is the tenth part thereof, whereby it appeares that it conteines a little more then three buſhels. And yet notwithſtanding in good ground one doth not only gather ten times as much, but thirtie times more then was ſowen, and in ordinarie ground much more then it receiued; when it comes otherwiſe to paſſe, no doubt it is a certain ſigne of the curſe of God, who auengeth himſelfe of the inſatiable couetouſnes of men, and they notwithſtanding lay the fault in the badnes of the ſoyle, as if that were the cauſe; but all in vaine, becauſe we ſhall not want ouerplus, if the Lord do not curſe the earth for the couetouſnes of them that dwell in it. When they gather together, and heape vp ſo careſully, what doe they elſe but ſwallow vp the benefits of God by their greedineſſe? And though this vice be not ſeene in all, becauſe they are not able; yet the affection thereof is not wanting, for the world was neuer more ſet on fire with this coueting. Is it any wonder then if it haue experience of this puniſhment of God?

Verſ. 11. *Woe vnto them that riſe vp early to follow drunckenes, and to them that continue vntil the night, til the wine do inflame them.*

IT was not the Prophets meaning to recken vp all the ſinnes heere which then raigned, but he only toucheth ſome perticulars vnto the which they were moſt addicted: and hauing handled the generall doctrine, it was neceſſarie to come to application; yea and to touch thoſe things which were chiefeſt, becauſe there would haue been no end if he ſhould haue proſecuted them all, one after another. After that he hath reproued the vice of couetouſnes, he ſpeakes againſt gurmandizing, which was then a very common ſinne among them; for he makes choiſe not only of ſuch perticular vices which were in one or two perſonages, but of ſuch as reigned commonly enery where. And the truth is, that theſe vices are ſo contagious that they infect the whole body. *To riſe betimes*, ſignifies as much as to do ſome thing carefully, as it is ſayd in *Salomon*, Woe to the people whoſe Princes eate in the *morning*, that is to ſay, who place their chiefe care in feeding their belly, and in inioying their voluptuouſnes, Eccle. 10. 16. now this is nothing elſe but to ouerturne the whole order of nature. For as *Dauid* ſaith, Man ought to riſe in the morning to goe to his worke, and to wait vpon his buſines till the euening, Pſal. 104. 23. But if he riſe to do nothing but to take his pleaſures, and to giue himſelfe to follow drunkennes, it is monſtruous. He addes, that *they continue till the euening*. As if he ſhould ſay, from morning to night, they continued in their drinkings, and were neuer weary in gouzelling in of wine. Now *abundance* and *exceſſe* are ioyned together, becauſe where all things abound, there men abuſe them to exceſſe and intemperancie.

Men muſt not riſe in the morning to be idle, but to labor.

Verſ. 12. *And the harp and the viol, timbrill and pipe, and wine are in their feaſts: but they regard not the worke of the Lord, neither conſider the worke of his hands.*

HE addes *Inſtruments* with voluptuouſnes, by which, men giuen to gurmandiſe, prouoked their appetit. It may be theſe Inſtruments were differing from ours, yet notwithſtanding they appertained to Muſick, which *Iſaiah* condemnes not; for it is an arte in no wiſe to be contemned; but he paintech forth a people ouerflowing in all ſorts of ſuperfluitie, and who gaue themſelues libertie to take all their delights: which ſufficientlie appeares by that which followes, *But they regard not*. As if he ſhould ſay, they ſo wallowed themſelues in their delights, and were ſo glued to their pleaſures, that it ſeemed they were begotten and brought vp in them; neuer thinking wherefore God gaue them things conuenient. For men were not ſent into the world to eate and drink, & to plunge themſelues in diſſolutions; but to obey God, and to ſerue him in reuerence, to acknowledge his benefits, and to ſtudie how to pleaſe him in all things; but when they ouerflow in exceſſe, daunſing and ſinging, without any other drift then to paſſe their life in iolitie, they are worſe then brute beaſts; for they conſider not to what end God created them, neither how he gouernes the world by his prouidence, vnto which marke all that we do in our life ought to tend.

Muſick in it ſelfe not to be condemned.

We are not put into this world to plunge out ſelues in delights, but rather that we ſhould ſtudie how to pleaſe God.

I thinke it enough that I haue laid forth that ſence which I take to be the moſt plaine: becauſe I cannot receiue other mens accute interpretations: Among others, theirs who by *the worke of the Lord*, vnderſtand the law. Neither am I purpoſed to recite euery mans opinion,

opinion. It ſufficeth to hold that the Prophet laies this reproch vpon ſuch as gaue themſelues to ſurfetting, ſo as they willingly became brutiſh; when they withdrew their minds from God, who was the author of life.

Verſ. 13. *Therefore my people is gone into captiuitie, becauſe they had no knowledge, and the glorie thereof are men famiſhed, and the multitude is dried vp with thirſt.*

I Allow not the expoſition of ſome interpreters; namely, as if the people fell into many vices through ignorance and error, becauſe the teachers had their mouthes ſhut vp: which in the end was the cauſe of their ruine. No, he rather ſets himſelfe againſt a groſſe and voluntarie ignorance: as if hee ſhould ſay, They drew their deſtruction vpon themſelues by their owne follie. The ſence is then, that the people ſhall periſh becauſe they had deſpiſed inſtruction; whereas they might haue been at their eaſe, if they would haue beleeued good counſell. And therefore the Prophet expreſely ſaith, *My people:* becauſe they were ſeperate from other nations by a ſingular priuiledge; to the end they being kept and guided vnder God, might hold a right manner of good life. As it is ſaid in Deut. 4. 7. What nation is ſo great that hath ordinances and lawes ſo righteous, or to whom the gods come ſo neere vnto them, as the Lord thy God is neere (at this day) vnto thee? This ſhall be your wiſedome and vnderſtanding in the ſight of all the people to heare your God. Such profanenеſſe therefore greatlie agrauates the crime; that this people ſhould bee ſtarke blind in the midſt of ſo great light. And therfore this accuſation, namely, That the people which God had taken into his charge ſhould bee without knowledge, was very grieuous. For the law was euery way ſufficient for the direction of their whole life: ſeeing it is a ſhining light amiddeſt the common darkenes of this world. And therefore it was a mouſtrous thing that the people would not giue themſelues to walke in the way which was ſet before them, but rather wilfully caſt themſelues headlong into deſtruction. The Prophet now to their reproch telles them that they ought to impute all the calamities which they indured, to their owne default, becauſe they refuſed to bend their eare to God, who would ſo faithfully haue taught them.

Whereas ſome expound the word *Captiuitie* by a metaphor, it ſeemes too ſtrict: becauſe the Prophet here deſcribes the puniſhment, wherewith God did ſmite this people in part, and wherewith hee determined to ſmite them afterward: to the end hee might plainely ſhew that the people was miſerable by reaſon of their ſin; as if they had in a manner wiſhed the curſe of God to fal vpō them. When the Prophet made this Sermon, there were ſome of the tribes gone into captiuitie alreadie. Alſo the deſtructions of both kingdomes did approch. And therefore the Prophet ſpeakes as if they had been all *now preſently in Babilon.* Laſtly, he addes another ſcourge, to wit, that not onely the common people, but alſo the moſt excellent among them ſhould be dried vp *with famine and want:* wherein the vengeance of God would be the more apparant. For it was an horrible ſpectacle to ſee the rich and chiefe men in whom conſiſted the credit of the whole nation to wander vp and downe; dying for hunger. And yet God paſſed not meaſure in executing ſo rigorous a iudgement vpon them: becauſe wee muſt alwaies haue an eie to the roote of their ignorance, to wit, that the Iewes were become wholly deſperate, ſo as they obſtinately reiected the light of the heauenly doctrine. Yea, they ſtopped their eares againſt the Lord, when he was readie to performe the office of a good maſter in teaching them. From hence wee gather a very profitable doctrine: namely, that the fountaine from whence all plagues doe flow, is, becauſe we cannot endure to bee taught by the word of God. And that is the principall thing which the Prophet would haue vs to marke.

But ſome may aske whether ignorance be the cauſe of all euils: For we ſee that many offend not ſo much of ignorance, as of rebellion: and although they ſee what is right, yet notwithſtanding they will not follow it. Whence it followes that they ſinne wittinglie; and not onely of ouerſight. I anſwere that ignorance is ſometime neere, and ſometime further of; that is, This man wants the meanes; and the other hath the meanes, as they ſay. Ignorance is ſaid to bee neere, when men deceiue themſelues vnder ſome pretence; and do wittingly blindfold themſelues. That which is farre off, is when men reiect the principles whereby they ought to take direction for the rule of their life. For they ought to looke directly vnto God and his will. But when they deſpiſe it, they are rebellious and obſtinate: yet notwithſtanding ſuch are ignorant, becauſe they will not learne, but reuolt from the foundation. And yet that ignorance excuſeth them not, which they willingly imbrace, in reiecting ſuch a teacher. Wherefore this ſentence remaines ſure, that the people are diuers waies afflicted; becauſe they knew not God, neither would ſuffer themſelues to bee taught by him.

Obiect.

Anſ.

A ſimple ignorance: and affected ignorance.

Verſ. 14. *Therefore hell hath inlarged* it ſelfe, and hath opened his mouth without meaſure, and their glorie, and their multitude, and their pompe, and hee that reioyceth among them, ſhall deſcend into it.*

* Or, his ſoule.

BY this verſe the Prophet ment to preſſe thoſe with feare which were growne too ſecure, and were nothing mooued with any threatning whatſoeuer. For although the captiuitie was an horrible thing, and the famine

nine also; yet was the stubbernnes and blockishnes of this people so great, that they laid not these fearefull signes of God his anger nigh their hearts in good earnest, as they ought to haue done. And therefore *Isaiah* threatens some thing yet more fearefull; to wit, that *hell had opened his throate* to deuour them all. I said erewhile, that this which is here said of the time present, ought partly to be referred to the time to come. The Prophet also speakes not rashly, as of things cleere and manifest. And he would present the thing as it were before the sight of the people, to the end they might behold that with their eies, which they could not bee brought to beleeue. Moreouer, as in comparing *hel*, or the graue to an insatiable beast; so by *the soule* he meanes the belly, whereinto the meate descends. The summe is, that the graue is as a large and deepe gulfe, which by the commandement of God, opens her throate to deuoure men adiudged to death. You see then that this prosopopei, or faining of persons, hath much greater vehemencie in it, then if he had said, that all were iudged to die.

The multitude.] He ioyneth the base and noble together, to the end none should flatter himselfe with hope of escape: as if he should say; death shall consume you, with all that you haue, namely, *pleasures, riches* and *pompe*, together with all things else, wherein you place your confidence. This then is a confirmation of ỹ former sentence. And this particle *Therfore*. Or, for this cause, is alwaies to be obserued. For ỹ people imputed the cause of their calamities to fortune; or rather howsoeuer it were, they were hardned vnder the corrections of the Lord. *Isaiah* giues them to vnderstand therfore that these things fel not out by hap hazzard. Moreouer, men are wont to quarrell with God, yea, they are so proud and shameles, that they feare not to make head against him. Therefore to the end this pride might be beaten downe, hee shewes that the chastisements wherewith they are punished, are most iust: and that they were wholly to blame themselues, for being euery way so miserable.

Vers. 15. *And man shall be brought downe, and man shall be humbled, euen the eies of the proud shall be humbled.*

THis is as it were in the shutting vp of his speech; in which he shewes to what end and issue these scourges would come vnto: to wit, that *all should be humbled*; *and that the Lord only should be exalted*. We haue seene the like sentence heretofore, and haue there declared the Prophets meaning: to wit, the end why we are chastised of God. For aduersities are so odious vnto vs, that for the most part we can conceiue no good thing to proceed from them. When we heare of punishments, wee haue them in horror and detestation, because we consider not that the Lord is iust. But the Prophets call vs to another consideration, to wit, that whilst men sport themselues in their sinnes, they smother as it were the iustice of God, which shineth not clearely, vnlesse when hee takes vengeance vpon our iniquities. Behold indeede an excellent fruite, and such a one as is to bee preferred before the saluation of all men. For we ought to let all things giue place to the glorie of God, which shineth no lesse in his iustice then in his mercie.

Chap. 2. 11. 17.

There is no cause then, why we should so much feare the rods of God wherewithall we are corrected: but ought rather in all humilitie to imbrace whatsoeuer the Prophets pronounce against vs. Although in this kind of speech the Prophet hath also touched the pride of the hypocrits to the quicke; who euer become the more wicked when they escape still vnpunished: as if he should say, do yee thinke it is possible that after God hath forborne you so long, yet at the last you should tread him vnder your feete? no, assure your selues he will arise, *and will be exalted in your destruction*. Because the Prophet hath put the word *Adam* in the first place, and after *Aisch*; some thinke he ment to comprehend as well noble as base; as if he should say, It shall not be the common people only which shall perish, but also all those who are noted for their honour, riches and dignitie. And I willingly receiue this sence, because *Aisch* is deriued from force; and *Adam* from earth. If any will expound it more simplie, I leaue him to his owne iudgement. Howsoeuer it be, the Prophet hath here comprehended all mortall men; as well great as small.

Vers. 16. *And the Lord of hosts shal be exalted in iudgement, and the holy God shall be sanctified in iustice.*

HE shewes the manner of the *excellencie*; or the formall cause, as they say, of this exaltation, whereof he spake before: and it is as much as if he had said, That the Lord of hosts (whom the wicked doe proudly treade vnder foote) *shall be exalted, when he shall shew himselfe the iudge of the world*. And thus hee scornes the sottish confidence, wherewith the wicked were swollen. For if iudgement and iustice must haue the vpper hand; there ruine must needes follow: seeing their pride was nothing else but an ouerturning of the whole course of nature. Now we must diligently note, that it is no more possible for the wicked to remaine alwaies in an happie estate, then that God should suffer his glorie to be abolished. Although iudgement and iustice doe differ in nothing one from the other, yet the repetition is not superfluous. The vehemencie also of the speech is further enlarged, when hee addes in the second member, *and the holy God shall be sanctified*, to the ende the wicked should not through a false imagination promise a lasting felicitie by force, or without cause; which they cannot doe, but that the holines of God shall thereby be abolished. But seeing God is holy of his owne nature, it must needs be that he must be sanctified. Whence it followes that

ruine

ruine is prepared for the wicked, that ſo their obſtinacie and rebellion may be brought vnder, becauſe God can not denie himſelfe.

Verſ. 17. *Then ſhall the lambs feede after their maner, and the ſtrangers ſhall eate the deſolate places of the fat.*

SOme tranſlate, The lambs ſhall feede according to their maner; others, according to their portion; but he meanes, according to their cuſtome. This verſe is diuerſly expounded: but we are to note in the firſt place, that it is the Prophets meaning to giue conſolation to the faithfull which were terrified by the hearing of ſuch fearefull iudgements of God: for looke how much the more a man is of a good and tender conſcience, ſo much the more feeles he the preſent hand of God, and the more neerely is he touched to the quick with his iudgements: laſtly, the feare and reuerence of God cauſeth vs to be touched in good earneſt with whatſoeuer it be that is ſet before vs in his name; wherefore they could not haue bene withheld from diſpaire in hearing ſo terrible threatnings, vnleſſe this conſolation had bin added thereunto as a ſweet ſauce to giue them occaſion to reliſh and take a ſweet taſte in the mercie of God. And this is a thing much vſed in the Prophets, to wit, ſtill to haue an eye alwayes to the faithfull, to furniſh them with comfort. Although then ſaith *Iſaiah* it ſeemes God is minded to deſtroy all this people, yet notwithſtanding he will ſhew himſelfe a faithfull ſhepheard toward his *lambs*, and will feed them as he was wont to doe; marke that for one point.

Alſo the meaning of the Prophet was to beate back the pride of the great ones, who in oppreſſing the faithfull and ſimple by an vniuſt tyrany, boaſted notwithſtanding that they were the Church of God ſtill; he tels them therfore that this their boaſting is full of lying and vanitie, thus to adorne themſelues with the title of the flock or ſheepfold of God, becauſe they are goates, and not lambs; and therefore when they ſhall be cut off, God will ſtill haue meanes in his hand to feede his flock; but yet by the way, that the lambs ſhall neuer thriue, nor be in good plight, till they be ſeperated and deliuered from the goats.

The deſolate places.] The expoſitors do yet againe vary vpon this place alſo: but I thinke the true ſence is, that after the children of God haue been driuen away for a time as baniſhed men, they ſhall be reſtored to their right, and ſhall then recouer that which was *deſerts*, or which was trampled and ſpoyled by the *fat beaſts*; that is to ſay, by the proud and cruel which had ſpoiled them of their goods. By the *deſerts*, he meanes the poſſeſſiõs which they had left, and which others had occupied, in as much as he hath regard to the cuſtome which was then well knowne and commonly vſed amongſt them, to wit, that if any poſſeſſed fields or houſes, he had his hand (as it were) in ſuch wiſe ſtretched forth vpõ them, that no man durſt touch ſo much as a clod of earth, but and if he left them, an other occupied them. The people then had ſo left their inheritances, out of which they had bin driuen, that they had no hope euer to recouer the ſame againe; ſo as in regard of them, they might well be called *deſerts*, yea, *deſerts of the fat*, becauſe the ſtrong and men of power poſſeſſed them. Now although it may ſimply be taken for fat deſerts, yet notwithſtanding it is more probable that the tyrants are heere called the *fat*.

Verſ. 18. *Woe vnto them that draw iniquitie with cords of vanitie, and ſinne as with cartropes.*

HAuing inſerted a briefe conſolation to aſwage the ſharpnes of the puniſhments in regard of the faithfull, he returnes to the threatnings, and goes on to ſtrike them thorow with theſe thundring ſpeeches, which at the leaſt might terrifie them in ſome ſort. By *cords*, he meanes nothing elſe but the alluremẽts of ſinne, by which men ſuffer themſelues to be deceiued, and thereby to become hardened in their hearts in wickednes, becauſe lightly they either contemne the iudgements of God, or frame vaine excuſes; or elſe pretend they can do no otherwiſe; what vaile then ſoeuer it be which they put before thẽ, that the Prophet calleth *cords*. For as often as men are led away to ſinning by the concupiſcence of their fleſh, in the beginning therof they conſult in themſelues, and feele ſome bridle which reſtraines them, and which doubteleſſe would hinder them from committing of euill, if that they were not ouercaried by a contrarie tempeſt, which ſhakes off and puts away all remorſe of conſcience. When any man is entiſed or ſtirred vp to euill, his conſcience by a ſecret inſtinct asketh him, What doeſt thou? And ſinne neuer creepeth thus vpon vs, but we feele ſome remorſe. And God hath thus in deed preuented men, to the end all ſhould not giue ouer themſelues with an vnbridled licentiouſnes to commit euill. Whence commeth it then that men are ſo obſtinate in their naughtineſſe? To ſay the truth, they ſuffer themſelues to be beguiled by allurements, and do ſo drench their minds with delighting themſelues therein, that they deſpiſe the iudgements of God, and all to purſue their owne ſinnes with greedines. They flatter themſelues, in beleeuing that which is ſinne, to be no ſinne; or elſe they mince them, making thẽ leſſe then they be; or, excuſe themſelues in them vnder one pretence or other. Theſe are then the *cords* and wicked bands by which they draw iniquitie to them. Whence it appeares, that God did not threaten them in vaine; for they not only ſinned wittingly, but obſtinatly and rebelliouſly. To conclude, they ſo pulled and halled ſinne vnto them, that they were left without excuſe.

Verſ. 19. *Which ſay, let him make ſpeede: let him haſten his worke that we may ſee it: and let the counſell of the holy*

one

one of Israel draw neere, and come, that we may know it.

HE notes out one perticular, by which he shewes how they drew sinne vnto them as with cartropes. There is nothing so dangerous as to reiect all thought of God his iudgment, and not only that, but also to contemne whatsoeuer he saith as a fable. *Isaiah* meant therefore to expresse an extreme contempt, when as men hauing been forewarned of God his iudgements, shall in scorne say, *that they would gladly see them*, and deride at them, as at some bug-beare, which these words so full of contempt and presumption do euidently shew: *Let him come: let him hasten.*

Worke heere (by a kind of excellencie) is taken for iudgement. For it seemes in deede that the Lord regards not when he deferres to take vengeance vpon the iniquities of the vngodly: but when he ariseth to giue iudgement, and to execute punishment, then his worke appeares, and is manifest in deed (as they say) because we perceiue by the effects that the world is gouerned by his power and authoritie. *Worke* then in this place is specially taken for iudgement, because thereby it something appeares vnto vs that God is not idle, but doth his office. Now the wicked speake of him in derision and scorne, and we haue experience of this frowardnes and obstinacie at this day more then is meete, and wee must wage the like warre against them which the Prophets did. The wicked thinke that God takes his ease in heauen, and cares not for mens matters, as certaine epicures, who placed God his chiefest happines in this, that he had nothing to doe. And although they imagin that there is some God, yet they acknowledge him not in his iudgement, but in the meane while they make good cheere, and neuer pine away themselues with such thoughts. Let the Prophets and Ministers crie, and that with open mouth, let them threaten and terrifie vs whilst they list, we will securely lye still, waiting till that which they threaten come to passe, and in the whilst we will make merie. Thus the Prophet recounts the speeches of the wicked, whereby they shewed in what contempt and disdaine they had his word, not only saying *let his worke come: but let it come quickly, and let it draw neere:* for in regard it came not suddenly, they concluded, that whatsoeuer he executes not as soone as he hath spoken the word, is but smoke.

2. Pet. 3. 4. In the second Epistle of S. *Peter* he brings in the wicked speaking thus and saying, that since the world was created all things haue continued alike; there is still one continuall course of nature, and therefore it is but a mockerie to looke for a day of iudgement after so many ages. In the meane while they prouoke God and that of set purpose, to the end he should forthwith shew his power. They adde *Counsell*, to his worke: as if they should say, how long wil God deliberate vpon it, eare he tell what he will do? let him rather shew vs by effect what he hath decreed. Their fault also is greatly amplified in that they dare to mock so wickedly at the doctrine which was so familiarly taught them: being herein more wicked then the very prophane heathen; because they despised that word whereby God had adopted them as a peculiar people vnto himselfe.

That we may know it.] See heere manifest signes of infidelitie. For the wicked will not acknowledge God, vnlesse they presently feele him: neither wil they beleeue his words. But if the holy Ghost by this marke brandeth them for abominable wicked ones, it behoueth vs by a contrary marke to let our faith and godlines appeare: to wit, that we rest in the bare and naked word of the Lord, although the euent doe not by and by shew it selfe, seeing it is the propertie of faith to hold vs fast glued to the mouth of God. The confirmation is added indeed by the works, but we must not begin at them. For thus stands the difference betweene the elect, and the reprobate: the elect rest simplie vpon the word of God, and yet in the meane while despise it not: but the wicked despise his word though he should speake a thousand times; and are importunate vpon him still to see his works; and when iudgement is threatned, they aske, where is it? and thus they can not indure that one should mention it vnto them, vnlesse it doe by and by appeare by effects. Where there is so litle moderation, it followes that there is no faith, but rather a rebellious obstinacie, which turnes a man out of the way, and estrangeth him more and more from God.

Vers. 20. *Woe vnto them that speake good of euill, and euill of good; which put darkenes for light, and light for darkenes; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for sowre.*

ALthough many restraine this sentence to Iudges, yet if we obserue the words a little more narowly, it shall be easie to gather from the whole context, that this is a generall sentence. For hauing before cried out against those who could not endure any admonitions, he still goes on with the same reprehension. Now it appeares that such kind of people haue alwayes some pretence or other wherewithall to deceiue themselues. And therefore they neuer cease to make replies as oft as their vices are set before them: but he expresly reproues the shameles impudencie of those who of set purpose endeuored to ouerthrow all difference betweene good and euill. And the letter *Lamed* placed before these two words *euill*, and *good*, shewes the sence to be thus; namely, those that *make euill of good, and of good euill:* that is to say, who by craftines full of vanitie couer, excuse, and disguise wicked matters, minding by their subtilties to change the nature of euery thing: but on the contrary by lyes and slanders they ouerthrow that which is good. For whosoeuer hath the feare of God, he is withheld by conscience and shamefastnes from excusing his sinnes, or enterprising to condemne

demne that which is iuſt and right. But they who are voyd of this feare, are alſo impudent to commend vices, and make no bones of it at all to condemne vertues, the which in whomſoeuer it be, is an euident ſigne of deſperate wickednes.

We may alſo applie this ſentence to diuers particulars. For if priuate perſons are here accurſed when they ſay, euill is good, and good euill: much more is it true of thoſe, who are aduanced into high place, and haue publike office; whoſe dutie is to vphold and maintaine all that is lawfull and right. But hee rebukes all ſuch in generall who flatter themſelues in euill doing; and for hatred which they beare to vertue, condemne that which is done vprightly: yea, who to couer their filthines, vſe cauilling ſhifts; and become altogether obdurate in themſelues. The Prophet ſaith, that ſuch folke do all one, as if they ſhould *turne light into darknes, and ſweete into ſower*: For thus they ſhew themſelues to be poſſeſſed with a diabolicall rage; when they ſo mingle and confound all principles of nature.

Verſ. 21. *Woe vnto them that are wiſe in their owne eies, and prudent in their owne ſight.*

HE goes on ſtill in rebuking ſuch as could not bee reclaimed by any perſwaſion whatſoeuer, who ſhut the gate againſt all good counſell and holy admonitions which are made vnto them. Laſtly, he pronounceth a woe againſt all deſperate contemners, who oppoſe and ſet the luſts of their fleſh, or the peruerſe confidence of their owne wiſedome, againſt God his doctrine, and admonitions. And not onely reprooues thoſe which are ſo puffed vp with a falſe opinion of their wit, that they are aſhamed to learne of others: but he alſo condemnes all ſuch in generall, who being wiſe in their owne conceit, refuſe to heare God ſpeaking, and to obey his holie counſels. This vice hath been too common in all times, and is to be ſeene at this day in many: who although they make conſcience to reiect all the doctrine of godlines openly, yet are ſo farre off from any true teachablenes and obedience, that they proudly reiect whatſoeuer likes them not. They grant there ought to be ſome bridle to hold them in: but on the otherſide, arroguncie ſo blinds them that they quickly murmure againſt God, when he ſhewes them but the way wherein they ſhould walke. And not content with that; but with furious indignation gnaſh their teeth when any reprooueth that which they doe. For where ſhall we finde that man who renouncing all his owne reaſon, will bee readie to learne, from God his mouth onely? Now there is not a more dangerous peſtilence then this lying ſhew of wiſedome, ſeeing teachablenes is the beginning of godlines; when renouncing our owne wiſedome, we goe thither where God calles vs. But this falſe perſwaſion, is not condemned onely, for that it makes men diſobedient to God, and ſo cauſeth their ruine: but alſo becauſe it is intollerable in it ſelfe. For we muſt become fooles, if we will be the diſciples of God. It is alſo certaine, that whereſoeuer this modeſtie and humilitie beares not ſway, by meanes whereof men do voluntarily yeeld their obedience; there reignes a furious rebellion. *In their owne eies*, is as much as when we ſay in our French tongue, In their owne opinion, or conceit. 1. Cor. 3. 18.

Verſ. 22. *Woe be to them which are mightie to drinke Wine, and to them that are ſtrong to powre in ſtrong drinke.*

Now the Prophet reprooues another vice: to wit, *drunkennes* and *intemperancie* of life, whereof he had ſpoken before. And thus it is very likely this chapter was gathered out of diuers ſermons; and that the heads of them are ſummarily touched onely. For in regard the Prophet ſaw no repẽtance, he was cõſtrained to repeate & beat into their minds one and the ſame thing often. He returnes then to the ſame reprehenſions which he had touched before: and preacheth againe againſt drunkenneſſe, exceſſe, couetouſneſſe and other corruptions. Whence we may gather, that when admonitions profit nothing, we ought to vſe the greater vehemencie againſt the ſtubberne and vnteachable. Neither truelie are we to feare, leſt this importunitie ſhould be wearieſome; but often to repeate the reprehenſions till they bow vnder them; or elſe till they ſhew an incurable malice.

He taunteth them pleaſantly, telling them that they are luſtie and *ſtrong to drinke*; becauſe they ſpend and conſume their ſtrength in fighting with the pot and glaſſe. But what a brutiſhines is this, for a man being of a good conſtitution of body, to make ſhew of his ſtrength, in drinking exceſſiuely. Alſo becauſe the figure Synecdoche is vſed of the Prophets in all the Scripture; he takes the ſpeciall for the generall, as if he ſhould ſay, Woe to drunkenneſſe, woe to intemperance, &c. But hee hath of purpoſe ſet forth that which was the moſt ſhamefull, that ſo hee might make this vice generally abhorred and deteſted. For there is nothing more vile and baſe (as we haue ſaid) then for a man to proue his force, in deuouring and ſwallowing in meates and drinks, and thus to wreſtle againſt himſelfe by cramming in as much meat as his belly will hold. Such men hold no rules of ſobrietie, neither do they know why God nouriſheth them. We eate and drinke to vphold the body, and not to ouerthrow it. We liue to ſerue God, and to beſtow our ſtrength in the helping of our neighbours turne: but when men endeuor not to preſerue their ſtrength by theſe meanes, but rather ouerturne it by proouing how much they can beare, it is certaine they are become worſe then brute beaſts.

Verſe 23. *Which iuſtifie the wicked for a reward, and take away the righ-*

righteouſneſſe of the righteous from him.

Exod.23 8. Deut.16.19. HE reproues a corruption which was then riſe in iudgement ſeates, and ſhewes the cauſe why there was no iuſtice kept in them, to wit, for that gifts had place and were in account. For auarice blinds the eyes of the wiſe, and peruerts all order of iuſtice and right, yea euen in thoſe who otherwiſe beare ſome good affection thereunto. But ſome may obiect, that iudgements are peruerted by many other meanes then by preſents only, ſeeing that hatred, friendſhip, loue, and other ſiniſter affections doe very often blind the vnderſtanding. This is very true, but the Prophet aimed at that which falls out for the moſt part, & yet notwithſtanding meant not to ſpare the vices which he expreſſed not. By whoſe example good Teachers ought to be wiſe and well aduiſed in conſidering and correcting thoſe vices which carrie the chiefe ſwinge among the people, and aboue all to inſiſt vpon thoſe which they ſee to be moſt in vſe by wicked cuſtome.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Now this corruption whereof mention is made in this place, is the moſt frequent of all others in iudgement ſeates, and therefore the Iudges which would iudge iuſtly, ought to take diligent heed they auoid it. Neither muſt we giue eare to thoſe Iudges who denie that preſents are giuen them to that end: or who ſay, that although they receiue them, yet notwithſtanding they will giue vpright iudgement: for where gifts haue place, there needs muſt all affection of equitie and iuſtice be corrupted, neither can it be poſſible that thine affection ſhould not be moſt inclined to him of whom thou haſt receiued thy reward. To conclude, let vs giue eare vnto the Lord, who ſaith, that rewards blind the eyes of the wiſe, and peruert the words of the iuſt, leſt in doing otherwiſe we will ſeeme to be wiſer then God himſelfe.

Where gifts haue place, there all loue of iuſtice muſt needs be corrupted.

Deut.16.19.

Verſ.24. *Therefore as the flame of fire deuoureth the ſtubble, and as the chaffe is conſumed of the flame, ſo their roote ſhall be as rottennes, and their bud ſhall riſe vp like duſt, becauſe they haue caſt off the law of the Lord of hoſtes, and contemned the Word of the holy one of Iſrael.*

THat it might not ſeeme he hath cried out ſo oft without cauſe, he ſhewes againe how great and horrible puniſhment is neere to this people, and denounceth an extreme ruine againſt the obſtinate, becauſe they would not be brought into the way, but obſtinately reſiſted againſt the heauenly doctrine: now he vſeth ſuch figures as were fit to expreſſe his meaning. and alſo ſuch as touched them neerer to the quick, then if he had ſpoken plainely without them. He begins with a ſimilitude, and forthwith ends with a metaphor, in attributing a *roote* and *bud* to the people, as to a tree: for by theſe two words he comprehends whatſoeuer force was in the people; were it open, or hid: and ſaith, that all of it ſhould periſh. For euen as when the *roote* which giues ſtrength vnto the tree and ſuſteineth it begins once to rot, then the tree decayeth: ſo he threatens deſtruction to this people, and tels them that all their ſtrength is waſted and conſumed. But he ſhewes not now, as heretofore, the particular kinds of wickedneſſes by which they had prouoked the wrath of God. He only addes the generall cauſe, to wit, the *contempt of the law of God*, becauſe, as we all know, that is the fountaine of all euils. He alſo amplifies the fault greatly, that in as much as the will of God was manifeſted vnto them in the *law*, they could not ſay it was by ignorance or error, but of ſet malice, that (in ſhaking off the yoke of God) they gaue themſelues the raines to all licentious libertie, which was all one, as if in reiecting a moſt louing father, they ſhould giue ouer themſelues to be vaſſals and ſlaues to the diuell. Adde withall, that he accuſeth them of a generall reuolt, as if he ſhould ſay, they were not rebellious againſt God in one kind only, but they wholly forſooke the Lord as diſloyall apoſtataes. Moreouer, that they did not only deſpiſe the word of God, but he complaines of a thing more horrible, to wit, that the word was become abominable vnto them, or, that they reiected it with a wicked deſpitefulneſſe. If ſo be then that the contempt of the law of God be the wellſpring, head, and perfection of all euils, there is nothing we are more to feare, then that Satan ſhould ſo preuaile as to turne vs aſide from the reuerence of it. And if we be ſubiect to ſome faults, yet let vs ſuffer at the leaſt that the medicine may be applied vnto them; vnleſſe in reiecting thereof proudly and maliciouſly we meane to draw eternall perdition vpon our owne heads.

Verſ. 25. *Therefore is the wrath of the Lord kindled againſt his people, and he hath ſtretched out his hand vpon them, and hath ſmitten them that the mountaines did tremble, and their carkaſes were torne in the midſt of the ſtreets: and for all this his wrath is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.*

IN this verſe the Prophet repeates the former iudgements whereof the Iewes had experience alreadie; and ſhewes, that they be not yet at an end, but that far worſe puniſhments are prepared for them, vnleſſe they returne into the right way. I confeſſe indeed that the time paſt is often changed for that which is to come, but the words of this text will beſt agree ſo; for he propounds two diſtinct things cõcerning ỹ obſtinat rebellió of this people: firſt, how God had alreadie chaſtiſed their iniquities. Secondly, ſeeing there was no ſigne of repentance, that he hath yet other ſcourges readie to correct their wickedneſſes. Thirdly, hee ſhewes what theſe ſcourges are, and tels them that the Aſſyrians

ſhall

ſhall come as ſoone as the Lord ſhall but hold vp his finger, yea that they ſhall come at his only hiſſing. This is the Prophets meaning. Whence we may gather, that as ſoone as a people hath eſcaped one calamitie, they forget their chaſtiſements, and neuer thinke more of the iudgements of God: and although experience ſhould alſo be the miſtris of fooles, yet they harden their hearts vnder the blowes. *Iſaiah* ſtrikes at this ſenſeleſnes, as if he ſhould ſay, Haue you ſo ſoone forgotten the calamities vnder which you groned not long ſince? Whence came it that the *dead bodies* were caſt heere and there, but becauſe the Lord had ſtretched forth his hand vpon you? And if God dealt with you as a Iudge, what is the cauſe that the wounds which do yet bleed, do not worke a reuerent feare in you to preſerue you from heaping ſinne vpon ſinne thus freſhly againe on all ſides? And to this end doth he repeate the particle *Therfore*, wherin he yelds a reaſon of his ſpeech, as if he ſhould ſay, Theſe are not afflictions that come at aduenture, but are manifeſt ſignes of God his diſpleaſure. He alſo ſaith expreſly, that God was *angrie* with *his people*: for had not the Iewes fallen from their dignitie, their condition had been more happie then that of all ỹ nations of the world beſides. When God therfore deales ſo ſharply & ſeuerely with his choſen people, no doubt but they had grieuouſly prouoked him by their rebellions. And withall he refutes the falſe brag of the Iewes wherewith they were woont to aduance and boaſt themſelues, as if they forſooth ought to be exempt from all corrections, becauſe they were the *peculiar people of God*. Alſo when he ſaith that *the mountaines trembled*: by this compariſon he expreſſeth the weight of the puniſhments vnder which they hardened themſelues, to the end he might yet more ſharply reproue their ſenſleſnes, as being more blockiſh then things without feeling if they felt not the wrath of God, and the horrible vengeance wherewith the kingdome of Iſrael had been chaſtiſed.

And for all theſe things.] Hee threatens more heauie plagues to come, as hath been ſayd. For although the wicked know they are corrected of the Lord, yet they thinke all is paſt, as ſoone as they haue receiued but two or three blowes. And therefore they wrap themſelues vp as it were in a vaine confidence, as though the worſt were paſt, and that the powers of the Almightie were ſpent. This is the cauſe why he cries out, that *the wrath of the Lord is not yet appeaſed*: and that although they haue ſuffered many calamities, yet notwithſtanding hee is furniſhed with varietie of darts, from whence they were to looke for infinite wounds.

The Conjunction Copulatiue may be reſolued into the Diſiunctiue, as if he would ſay, Be ſure that *the hand of God is yet ſtretched out*. Now he hath regard to that which he had ſayd before, namely, that the hand of God was lifted vp. He ſaith now, that it is not pulled in, but that he will yet purſue and ſmite them with wounds, yea, yet more feareAs in verſe the 26.

Verſe 25.

full and terrible. We ought to meditate vpon theſe ſentences diligentlie, to awaken ſuch men who feare not to lie ſnorting, and that after they haue been humbled and chaſtiſed of God.

Verſ. 26. *And I will lift vp a ſigne vnto the Nations afarre, and will hiſſe vnto* * *them from the ends of the earth: and behold,* * *they ſhall come haſtely with ſpeede.*

* Or, a people

* Or, he.

IN this, and in the verſes following, he ſhewes what puniſhment the Lord would inflict vpon this people, to wit, that they ſhall be ſo ſpoyled by the Aſſyrians, as the Iſraelites their brethren had been a little before them, yea much more grieuouſly: for howſoeuer the Aſſyrians in times paſt had much waſted them, the kingdome of Iudah neuertheleſſe was not yet brought to ruine. Adde hereunto, that the deſtruction of the kingdome of Iſrael was as a looking-glaſſe, wherein they might behold the wrath of God, and the iuſt iudgement which hee had brought vpon them: and yet no queſtion but this propheſie ſeemed incredible to them of Iudea, although there were many good likelihoods of it, and all becauſe the ſtate was quiet; and they no ſooner had the leaſt ſhew of truce, but they forthwith grew careleſſe: therefore hee ſayth, that this deſtruction ſhould come *from afarre*, whereof they did not ſo much as dreame. And thus he ſounds the Alarum as if the enemies had bin alreadie at the gates. For he puts not theſe words *from afarre* and *from the ends of the earth*, to put them in any hope, but rather of ſet purpoſe he thus ſpeakes, to the end they ſhould not iudge of the wrath of God by things apparant to the eye.

We are woont to eſteeme of dangers according to the outward appearãce of things; when the enemies are farre off, or that they be hindred by other impediments to moleſt vs, we thinke we are ſafe. Thus the people ſlept, as they ſay, on both ſides, no otherwiſe then as if they had been out of all danger. But *Iſaiah* declareth, that all this ſhall not hinder the Lord from ſending the Aſſyrians with banners diſplayed to cut them in pieces. This *lifting vp a ſigne*, is a figuratiue kind of ſpeech, becauſe when the banner is diſplayed and the Captaine giues the ſigne, then the ſouldiers are wont to arme themſelues and to begin the fight.

He ſhall hiſſe.] Although the change of the number be a thing much vſed in the Scripture, yet it is not without reaſon, I take it, that the Prophet of many nations makes but one people, for he ſhewes that when God ſhould aſſemble many peoples & ioine them to one body, that this ſhall be no confuſed multitude, but ſhould be as an intire body, hauing one head which ſhould rule and haue the ſoueraignte ouer them. He rather vſed ỹ word of *hiſſing* then ſome other that ſounded more terrible, as of ſounding the Trumpet, or ſuch like; to ſhew, that God had no neede

of any great noyse to assemble the enemies togither, and that it is no hard matter for him to be reuenged on them which haue offended when the time appointed is come, for he can finish all things by the least signe that may be.

And behold he shall come.] He heere yet further confirmes that which I haue noted, to wit, that the wrath of the Lord must not be esteemed according to outward obiects: for although it seemes that all things do promise peace, yet shall warre come notwithstanding sodainely frō thence whence we looked not for it: yea and although it may seeme we be enuironed with friends round about vs, yet shall God raise vp enemies from the ends of the earth, which shal come easily vpon vs (all lets whatsoeuer to the contrary) as if a plaine and smooth way were prepared for them. Which we ought to beare well in mind, lest we suffer our selues to be blinded by some false trust and confidence.

We are also to obserue, that warres fall not out by chance, nor at mens appointments, but by the commandement of God, euen as if he sounded the Trumpet to assemble the souldiers. Be it by warre then, by famine, or pestilence that we are afflicted, let vs know that all of them do proceede from the hand of God, because all things come at his voyce, and readily obey him. And yet the *Chaldeans* had not this zeale of obeying God, for they were caried away with their couetous and insatiable lust and desire of dominion, or thought of some such like end, but God serued himselfe of them to execute his iudgements. And herein we clearely see an admirable witnes of the power of God, which is not tied to the will of men, neither depends it vpon their fantasies, but it is free for him to call whom he will to doe him seruice, yea such as are vtterly ignorant of it. And yet the wicked are not hereby excused when they are thus drawne against their purpose, because they serue not God freely, for they propound some other thing vnto themselues, as crueltie, spoile and violence, and God by their crueltie correcteth the sinnes and offences of his people.

Vers. 27. *None shall faint nor fall among them: none shall slumber nor sleepe, neither shall the girdle of his loynes be loosed, nor the latchet of his shooes be broken.*

His meaning is, that all things shall be so fitted and prepared, that nothing shall let or hinder them to march on forward: as if a Prince hauing inrolled his souldiers, should by and by giue order to prepare the wayes to bring in prouision of victuals, and to administer al things necessarie whatsoeuer. He shews then that they shall be readie and nimble, and that there shall be no impediment to cause them to prolong the time. He also shewes their diligence, affirming, that none of them should so much as slumber. Now in these words, *none shall slumber, nor sleepe*, the order is a little inuerted: for he should rather haue sayd, *none shall sleepe, nor slumber*: because it is a lesse matter to slumber then to sleepe. But this maner of speech must be thus resolued, They shall not slumber nor sleepe: that is to say, they shall be so farre off from sleeping, that they shall not slumber at all. We haue the like phrase of speech in the 127. Psalme, He which keepes Israel shall neither slumber nor sleepe. It is an Hebraisme then, which agrees neither to the Greeke, nor Latine.

Vers. 28. *Whose arrowes shall be sharp, and all his bowes bent: his horse hoofes shall be thought like flint, and his wheeles like a whirlewind.*

His meaning is, that they shall be furnished with fit weapons. Now he retaines the maner of fight vsed among the Assyrians and other Easterne people, who for the most part were accustomed to arme themselues with *bowes and arrowes* for warre, as we see the Englishmen doe at this day: but vnder these particulars he comprehends all sorts of weapons. But because the way was long, and the voyage difficult, the Iewes might happilie thinke there would be many impediments to turne away the enterprise of the enemy, and that is the cause he saith, why the *hooses of the horses should be like flint*, so as they should neither faint nor be wearie, but should easily come to Iudea. Hereunto appertaines the other member, when he compares the *wheeles to a whirlewinde*: for the people of old time were woont to goe to warre with Chariots, and therefore he not only mentions *horses*, but also *wheeles*. And all this is to be referred to this great haste and diligence which they should vse, to wit, that the Lord should not be hindred by the long distance of the way to bring in deadly enemies against the Iewes to destroy them.

Vers. 29 *His roaring shal be as a Lion, and he shall roare like Lions whelps: they shall roare, and lay hold of the pray: they shall take it away, and none shall deliuer it.*

This appertaines to crueltie. He compares the Chaldeans to *Lions*, whose sight is fearefull, and of nature cruell, as if he should say, They shall not be such mē as are touched with any sense of pitie, mercie, or humanitie, but shall rather shew themselues cruell, and like wilde beasts. He also addes, that they shall be of such *strength*, as none shall dare to come neere them to pluck the pray out of their teeth, Meaning thereby, that the Iewes shall be vtterly vnable to disappoint their assaults, because that for feare of their crueltie none shall aduenture to approch vnto them: for in regard that God would vse them as his seruants to punish the Iewes, it was requisite they should be furnished with a terrible power and maiestie, that this sottish people

people might be made to vnderſtand at the laſt that they had not to doe with men, but with God, into whoſe hands it is a terrible thing to fall. Heb. 10. 31.

Verſ. 30. *And in that day they ſhall roare vpon them, as the roaring of the ſea: and if they looke vnto the earth, behold darkenes, and ſorrow, and the light ſhall be darkened in their skie.*

THe Prophet addes this, to let the Iewes vnderſtand that the Chaldeans ſhould not come into the field at random, but ſhould be appointed thereunto by God, and prepared by his hand. By the *roaring of the ſea*, he meaneth ſuch a great hurly burly, as ſhould ſeeme like vnto a deluge, by which all Iudea ſhould be drowned. He alſo cuts off all hopes, in foretelling that there ſhould be neither *eaſe nor end* in theſe chaſtiſements. The Iewes (ſaith he) ſhall looke vp and downe to finde meanes to eſcape, as men are woont to do in any great perplexitie, but on which ſide ſoeuer they turne them, be it to heauen or to the earth, they ſhall finde no eaſe from either of them, becauſe miſeries and calamities ſhould vtterly ouerwhelme them on all ſides. This maner of ſpeech is very common, yea euen among the rude people, at ſuch time as deſtruction and calamities do threaten on euery ſide, when no iſſue or eaſe can be perceiued. It is neceſſarie then that it ſhould fare thus with vs, when the Lord purſues vs, to the end his high hand may alwayes appeare in our eyes; and that on which ſide ſoeuer we turne our ſelues, we might behold the creatures armed againſt vs for the execution of his iudgements: for we may ſometimes eſcape mens hands, but which way ſhall we be able to flee from the hand of God?

THE VI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *In the yeere of the death of king Vzziah I ſaw alſo the Lord alſo ſitting vpon an high throne and lifted vp, and * the lower parts thereof filled the Temple.*

*Or, with his lowe parts he

THey haue been woont to begin the 6. Chapter heere, but ſome thinke it is the beginning of this booke; and therfore that the Propheſies of *Iſaiah* were not well collected and gathered together, alledging this reaſon, that ỹ Prophet refuſeth to take vpō him ỹ office of teaching, which he would not haue done, if he had exerciſed it before: and that he ſeemes altogether a nouice, ſeeing he yet knew not his vocation. Moreouer that heere he declares how he had now ſeene the Lord, and not before. But I thinke theſe reaſons are not of any value, as I haue touched heretofore, and therewithall I anſwere, that it ought to ſeeme no new thing that the Prophet ſhould be caſt as it were into a ſwound, and ſo aſtoniſhed with this ſtrange viſion, that he ſhould vtterly forget he was a Prophet: for there was no part in him which was not abaſhed at the preſence of God; and therefore as one amazed he willingly ran into ſome hole, or rather thinking himſelf but a dead man, he thought verily he ſhould haue giuen vp the ghoſt. And it is very neceſſarie that the children of God ſhould be thus touched, when God letteth them perceiue the ſignes of his preſence, to the end they may be humbled and confounded in themſelues. Adde alſo, that God meant thus to feare the rebellious people in the perſon of his ſeruant, and therefore it is no maruell if he excuſe himſelfe being ſo aſtoniſhed with feare; as alſo in regard that he had not before felt the weight of his charge as now he did, after the maieſtie of God had thus euidently appeared vnto him.

Queſt. Anſ.

But why was not this viſion giuen him in the beginning? I anſwere, it was neceſſarie in regard of the time, to confirme him more and more in the execution of his office. An example whereof we may ſee in the Apoſtles, for in the beginning they were ſent with commandement, not to paſſe the bounds of Iudea, but after Chriſt roſe againe, he eſtabliſheth them anew in a ſolemne maner. He breatheth on them, and tels them that they ſhould receiue the holy Ghoſt; and contents not himſelfe therewith, but ſending downe the holy Ghoſt from heauen vpon them in firie toongs, he put an extraordinarie power vpon them. So according to the diuers mutations which happened in times and kingdomes, it was neceſſarie that *Iſaiah* ſhould be confirmed and approued againe by a new viſion: as well that he might be encouraged to conſtancie, and might with the more cheerefulnes follow his vocation in time to come, as alſo that his miniſtrie might be authoriſed among the Iewes by the authoritie of God. This reaſon to me ſeemes ſufficient why he had not this viſion at the beginning, but had it rather ſometime after he began to teach.

Mat. 10. 5. *Iohn* 20. 22. *Act.* 2. 3.

Now that this booke takes not his beginning here, it ſufficientlie appeares by that we haue ſeene in the former preface, which is much more cleare and proper then this. And becauſe all paſſage might be ſtopped by the deſperate obſtinacie of this people, it was neceſſarie he ſhould begin his ſpeech with this vehemencie here ſet downe: as alſo becauſe it is very likely that he had exerciſed the function of teaching a long time vnder king *Vzziah*, who was dead as I thinke before this propheſie was publiſhed. Laſtly, the Prophet by theſe words ſignifies, that God appeared

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peared vnto him after he had alreadie begun to execute his office.

Some by *Death* vnderstand the Leprosie wherewith this king was smitten, which was 2.King.15.5 indeed a ciuill death, because the king was constrained to forsake the companie of men, and to leaue the gouernment of the kingdome: but I had rather take *death* in his proper signification. Thus I thinke then, to wit, that *Isaiah* prophesied the former things frō the time of *Vzziah*, at that time when he was strucken with Leprosie, and that *Isaiah* had this vision after his death, at that time when *Iotham* should succeed him. For we know how the change of kings do bring diuers stirres and hurly burlies, so as it is no wonder if *Isaiah* were confirmed againe in his calling. Also the prophesie it selfe which followes will declare sufficientlie that he had preached sometime before he had seene the Lord. For the blinding of the people is heere spoken of, whereof the Prophet had such experience, ỳ their stubburnnes might haue caused him to haue giuen ouer that which he had begun, seeing he lost all his labour. The Lord then confirmes him by this vision, to the end all discouragemēts being set apart, he should manfullie continue to do his dutie, and goe on with that which he had begun by the commandement of the Lord.

I saw the Lord.] Some aske how *Isaiah* could *see the Lord*, who is a spirit, and therefore can Obiect. not be seene with corporall eyes: and also because the vnderstandings of men are not able to mount vp to his infinit greatnes, how it can be that he should comprehend him vnder a visible forme? But we must note, that Ans. as oft as God shewed himselfe to the fathers he neuer appeared vnto them in his whole essence, but as men were able to comprehend him, according to their capacitie. For it is not inconuenient (albeit men creepe heere as it were vpon the earth, or at the least are very low beneath the heauens) that God should descend downe vnto them, so as the beames of his glorie should appeare vnto them as in a glasse. Such a forme then was represented before *Isaiah*, whereby he tasted and saw the incomprehensible maiestie of God as farre as his weakenes could beare. And therefore he attributes *a seate, a garment, and a bodily sight* vnto him. Whence wee may gather a very profitable doctrine, to wit, that as oft as God shewes any signe of his presence, we are to know for certaine that he is present by vs: for he deceiues not in giuing vaine representations, as men wickedly disfigure him by their fooliish inuentions. Because this representation then was a true testimonie of God his presence, *Isaiah* rightly affirmes that *he saw him*. As when it is sayd Matth.3.16 that *Iohn saw the holy Ghost* in the likenes of a Doue, the name of the spirit is transferred to the signe, because he should not doubt but it was the holy Ghost which rested vpō Christ.

It is demanded in the second place who Obiect. this Lord should be. S. *Iohn* in the twelfth of his Gospel teacheth and that truly, that it Ans. was *Christ*, because God neuer shewed himselfe to the fathers but in his eternall Word, and only Sonne. And yet some notwithstanding do restraine this amisse to the person of Christ in my iudgement, seeing the Prophet giues him indefinitly the name of *God*. The name *Adonai*, which seemes best to appertaine to Christ, fauours their opinion nothing at all, for it is often attributed vnto God simply, and without relation. Mention is made of God in this place then without determining of either end: yet notwithstanding one may properly say, that *Isaiah* saw the glory of Christ, because he was the image Col.1.15. of the inuisible God from euerlasting.

Sitting vpon a seate.] He could not haue better described the maiestie of God in regard of the circumstance of the place then vnder the person of a *iudge*, to the end his maiestie might the better awaken the Iewes, and we shall see hereafter the horrible iudgement which the Lord pronounceth from his seate. But to the end we thinke not the Prophet should inuent how he could paint out God, we must note that he faithfullie represents the same shape and forme which was exhibited and shewed vnto him. Now some may Obiect. doubt whether the Prophet was brought into the Temple, or whether these visions were Ans. reuealed vnto him sleeping. Although they are wont to bring many reasons for the one or the other exposition, which leaues it in suspence, notwithstanding the most probable coniecture is, that although he were out of the Temple, in the house, or in the fields, yet that this vision might be giuen him as to the rest of the Prophets.

And with his tower parts.] Almost all the expositors do vnderstand this of the fringes of the garment; although it may be referred to the verges of the iudgement seate: so as his meaning is to shew that the greatnes of God was such, that it spread it selfe throughout all the parts of the Temple. He also meanes to attribute a more excellēt and glorious forme vnto God, then to any humane creature whatsoeuer. And that he thus appeared in the *Temple*, it doth yet adde greater authoritie to the vision, because he had promised his presence to his people there, and there the people waited for answers, according as *Salomon* had expressly declared at the dedication of the Temple, 1.King.8.30. To the end then the people might know that these things proceeded from God (vpon whom they called dayly, and vpon whom in a vaine confidence they were puffed vp) this vision was shewed to the Prophet in the Temple. Now this must needs obtein great credit among them, when it was preached aloud that this was no word of any mortall man, but a diuine oracle comming downe frō God, whose name they had wont boldly to vsurp as oft as they would attribute vnto themselues any great matter. For this indeed was a very sharp and an odious prophesie, and therefore had the greater need of sound confirmation. And it is also a thing vsuall among the Prophets of God, namely, that he spake vnto them from his Temple and from his Sanctuarie.

Vers.2. *The Seraphims stood vpon it,*

euery

euery one had ſixe wings; With twaine he couered his face, and with twaine he couered his feete, and with twaine he did flie.

HAuing teſtified that God had appeared vnto him full of maieſtie and glorie; he addes that the Angels were about him, which he calles *Seraphims*, in regard of their feruencie. Now although the etymologie of this word is well enough knowne, yet diuers reaſons are brought on both ſides. Some affirme they are called Seraphims, becauſe they burne with the loue of God: others, becauſe they are ſwift as fire: others, becauſe of their brightnes. Howſoeuer it be, the incomprehenſible maieſtie of God is ſet forth vnto vs in this deſcription, as by the ſunne beames, to the end in them we might learne to conſider and adore ſo admirable and excellent a glorie. Many thinke there were two Seraphims, euen as there were two Cherubims, which compaſſed the Arke. I willingly receiue this opinion, and yet I dare not affirme any thing, where the ſcripture is ſilent. Now in regard it is an vſuall thing in the ſcripture to appropriate the deſcriptions which are made of God, to the ſignes, the vſe whereof was ordinarie, and the knowledge thereof familiar among the faithfull; it may be the Prophet ſaw ſuch a figure. In the meane while I ſo continue to hold this as a probable coniecture, that yet notwithſtanding I hinder not any to receiue a contrarie interpretation, if any can bring better warrant, for *Daniel* ſaw thouſands of Angels, and not two only. Dan. 7. 10.

Exod. 25.

Six wings.] This figure is not without reaſon. For theſe wings thus compoſed, contained ſome myſterie, which ỳ Lord would not haue whollie hidden. The two by which the Angels *flie*, ſignifie nothing elſe but their readineſſe and nimbleneſſe to execute the commandements of God. And ſeeing the analogie of this thing is certaine and euident, I hope thoſe which are not contentious will eaſily agree thereunto. The other two wherewith they *couered their faces*, ſufficientlie ſhew, that the Angels themſelues can not beare the brightnes of Gods maieſtie; yea, that they are dazled with his looke, euen as we are when we behold the ſunne in his brightnes. And if the Angels can not beare the maieſtie of God, how great ſhall the raſhnes of men be if they ſtriue to attaine thereunto? Let vs learne then to enquire no further of God then is lawfull and expedient, in ſuch wiſe as our knowledge may ſoberly and modeſtly taſte that which yet is very farre off from our capacitie. Yet notwithſtanding the Angels do not ſo couer their faces as that they ſhould vtterly depriue themſelues of any ſight of God, for they flie not at randon. So we alſo may behold God, but yet ſo farre foorth as the weakenes of our vnderſtanding can endure. There is a little more difficultie as touching the other two wings. For ſome thinke they haue their *feete couered*, leſt they ſhould touch the earth, and ſo get ſome foile from thence, as wee our ſelues and others haue been wont to doe. For euen as in walking we gather duſt & filth, ſo whileſt we remaine vpon the earth we are infected, as with touching ſome contagious thing. Whence we may learne, that the faithfull ſhall haue no acquaintance with the Angels, vnleſſe they flie aloft, being no longer glued to the earth. This is the expoſition which ſome bring. But I am rather of their opinion who thinke theſe *wings* had a cõtrarie vſe to thoſe which were aboue rehearſed: for euen as they couered their faces with wings aboue, leſt they ſhould be ouerwhelmed with the exceeding brightnes of God; ſo had they *wings beneath*, to couer themſelues from our ſight. Now if it be ſo that wee can not behold ſo ſmall beames of the brightnes of God which glimmereth in the Angels but we be by and by dazled; how can we behold that moſt excellent and bright maieſtie of God which is able to ſwallow vp all our reaſon? Let men learne then that they are farre remote from the perfect knowledge of God, ſeeing they are vnable to attaine ſo farre as to the Angels. This expoſition I take to be the beſt, and yet I reiect not the firſt.

Verſ. 3. *And one cried to another, and ſaid, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hoſts: the whole world is full of his glorie.*

IT was neceſſarie all theſe things ſhould be repreſented to the Prophet in a viſion, to the end that not only the people but euen *Iſay* himſelfe ſhould be the more moued. For there was no leſſe neede in regard of him, then of all the people, ſeeing he was to ſuſteine very hard and difficult aſſaults; neither could he haue boldly denounced theſe things, vnleſſe he had been firſt confirmed. The people alſo being admoniſhed by this viſion how exceeding great and fearefull the maieſtie of God was, who pronounced this ſentence againſt them, ſhould be terrified therewith in good earneſt. This God (at whoſe only looke the Angels themſelues tremble, and whoſe praiſes they continuallie ſound forth with full voyce; laſtly, whom they ſerue and obey) came forth vpon his throne: but men whom he had vouchſafed to adopt for his children, proudly with obſtinacie reſiſted him. Now when we heare that the Angels are continually buſied in ſounding forth Gods glorie, let vs know that their example is ſet before vs for our imitation. For it is the higheſt ſeruice we can do vnto him to be occupied in celebrating his praiſes. In as much then as he herein makes vs companions with his Angels, it is to the end that whilſt we wander here below, we ſhould notwithſtanding be conioyned and made like to the heauenly inhabitats. Laſtly, to the end the harmonie between vs and the Angels may be perfect in all points, it behoues that the praiſes of God doe not only ſound vpon our tongues, but that all the actions of our life be referred thereunto; which we ſhall then do when we endeuor to doe all things therein to the glory of God.

To be occupied in celebrating Gods praiſes, is the higheſt ſeruice we can do him.

Holy, Holy, Holy.] The Auncients haue vſed this teſtimonie againſt the Arians when they would prooue the three perſons in the one eſſence of God. I miſlike not their iudgement, although if I ſhould haue to deale with heretikes, I had rather vſe ſtronger arguments, for they triumph and become the more hardened when we contend againſt them with ſuch places as are not ſufficientlie plaine and euident, as heere they might readily anſwer, that by the number of Three in this place was ſhewed a perfection (as in many other places of the ſcripture beſides.) Although I doubt not but the Angels doe heere ſet forth one God in three perſons (and to ſay the truth, we can not magnifie God, but we muſt by and by celebrate the praiſes of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghoſt) yet notwithſtanding I take it we ſhould rather vſe more ſolid teſtimonies, to the end that whileſt we go about to prooue the chiefe article of our faith, we expoſe not our ſelues to the ſcoffes of heretikes. So then by this repetition there ſhould be rather ſhewed an vnwearied continuance of praiſing, as if the Prophet had ſayd, The Angels neuer ceaſed their melodie in ſinging the praiſes of God: as indeed his *Holineſſe* miniſtreth to vs infinite matter thereof.

The whole world is full. Word for word it is, The fulneſſe of whole earth: which we may referre as well to the fruits, liuing things, as to all ſorts of riches wherewith God hath furniſhed the earth; and ſo the ſenſe ſhould be, that in this adorning of the earth, and the diuers furnitures which are in it, we may ſee the *glorie of God* to ſhine, becauſe they are ſo many teſtimonies of his fatherly loue towards vs. Notwithſtanding the moſt ſimple and naturall ſenſe is, that the *glorie of God filles the whole world*, and is ſpread abroad throughout all the quarters of the earth. And in mine opinion there is heere a cloſe oppoſition, by which he beates back the fooliſh ouerweening of the Iewes, who imagined the glorie of God was ſhewed no where elſe but vpon them, as if they meant to ſhut it vp in their Temple. Now *Iſaiah* ſhewes that it is ſo farre off from beeing ſhut vp within ſo narrow bounds, that it *fils the whole earth*. And this agrees to the propheſie which will afterwards follow touching the blinding of the Iewes, for thereby he hath giuen entrance for the Gentiles into the Church of God, in regard they ſupplied the emptie and forſaken place of the Iewes.

Verſ. 4. *And the limtels of the doore cheekes mooued at the voice of him that cried, and the houſe was filled with ſmoke.*

THis noyſe of the *poſts* ſufficiently ſhewes that it was no voyce of man which the Prophet heard; for there is no mortall man that is able to make the poſts and threſhold of an houſe to ſhake with his voyce. Now the Lord meant not only to confirme *his voyce* to the Prophet, but to men alſo, and that for euer, that ſo it might be knowne throughout all ages. Let vs know then that the *voyce of God* is confirmed to vs at this day by this ſound, to the end we alſo ſhould tremble as oft as he ſpeaketh: for if the dumb and inſenſible creatures are moued therewith, what ought we to do; we, I ſay, which feele, ſmell, taſte, and only vnderſtand it, to the end we ſhould holily and reuerently obey his holy word?

The houſe was filled with ſmoke.] This was a common and an ordinarie ſigne which the Lord vſed among the auncient people: for as ſoone as *Moſes* entred into the Tabernacle we reade that the ſmoke was ſpread, ſo as the people could neither ſee *Moſes* nor the Tabernacle. The ſmoke then which *Iſaiah* deſcribes was no new thing; but God according to his accuſtomed maner meant thereby to teſtifie that he would manifeſt his power in executing iudgement vpon this people. *Exod.* 33. 6. 9.

But ſome may aske why the Lord would manifeſt his preſence by this ſigne rather then by an other? A twofold anſwere may be giuen to this queſtion. Firſt, becauſe the Lord hath alwayes been bent to repreſſe the boldnes of men, to the end they ſhould not enquire further into his Maieſtie then was meete, being alwayes prone (euen all of vs) to be prying ouermalepertly and raſhly in this regard. Wee would pearce aboue the clouds and ſearch into the very ſecrets of Gods counſell, and in the meane while neglect that which is before our feete. From thence ariſeth this laberinth of errors, in which after ỹ ſpirits of men are enwrapped, they forthwith fall to ſerue falſe gods: for we no ſooner giue leaue vnto thẽſelues to forge what they liſt of God in their fantaſie, but they by and by therewithall enterpriſe they care not what againſt him. And therefore it is not without cauſe that he hath oppoſed this *ſmoke*, thereby to admoniſh men of their weakenes. And yet he would not haue them to be either blind, or beſotted with the blockiſhnes and error of the Papiſts, who at this day couer ignorance vnder the name of ſimplicitie: but he forbids to ſearch or prie further into the heauẽly myſteries then that which is manifeſted vnto vs by himſelfe in his word: for that (as S. *Auguſtine* ſayth) is a very learned ignorance. Wherefore as oft as mention is made of the like ſmoke, let vs know it is as a bridle by which we ought to be kept in awe, that we ſhould not be too curious in ſearching into the counſels of God. Secondly, this *ſmoke* was to ſtrike a feare into them, as we ſee when *Dauid* deſcribing God to be terrible and angrie, ſayth, that cloudes and darknes are round about him, Pſal. 97. 2. which alſo agrees very well to this place, becauſe he pronounceth an horrible iudgement, to wit, the blinding of the Iewes. Some would haue this a forerunner of ỹ fire which ſhould burne the Temple: but that which I haue ſet downe is more probable.

Queſt.

Anſ. 1

Auguſtine.

2

3

Verſ. 5. *Then I ſayd, Woe is me, for I am vndone, becauſe I am a man of polluted lips, and I dwell in the midſt of a people of*

of polluted lips: for mine eyes haue ſeene the King and *Lord of hoſtes.*

NOw the Prophet telles in what manner he was effectuallie touched with this viſion, to wit, that hee was ſo terrified with the feare of Gods preſence, that *he thought himſelfe vndone.* And hee addes the reaſon wherefore he thought thus of himſelfe: Becauſe (ſaith he) I am of *polluted lips.* I wonder why S. *Ierome* hath turned it, Becauſe I held my peace, ſeeing there is no ambiguitie in the word. It is true that the verb *Damah* ſignifies to hold ones peace, but in this place there is a certaine note of the verb paſſiue which is added. It may alſo be tranſlated thus, Wo vnto me for I am brought into ſilence: becauſe ſilence is often taken for death in the ſcripture, and it is ſayd, that thoſe which are buried are in ſilence. But ſeeing it is all one as touching the ſenſe, I will not contend much about the tranſlation. His meaning is then, that he was ſo terrified with the ſight of God, that he became as a dead man. And indeede there is no cauſe why we ſhould wonder at this; for man muſt be wholly brought to nothing in regard of his fleſh, to the end he may be renued according to God. Whence is it that men liue, that is, that they thinke they liue, being puffed vp with the knowledge of their owne reaſon and power, but becauſe they are ignorant of God? And ſo before he reueale himſelfe to vs we thinke we are gods rather then men, but when the Lord appeeres, then we begin to feele and perceiue what wee are. Frō thence comes that true humilitie which conſiſts in this, that men attribute nothing to themſelues, but depend wholly vpon God. Wherefore this and ſuch like places vpō this argument, ought to be diligentlie obſerued. Now it was an ordinarie thing with the holy fathers to crie, *I ſhall die, I am vndone,* as oft as they ſaw God. Wherfore before our minds be well awakened by approching to God in good earneſt, our life is nothing elſe but a vaine imagination: we are in darknes, wherein it is very hard to diſcerne truth from error: but when we are come into the light, it is eaſie to diſcerne the one from the other. So when God comes to vs he brings the light with him, to the end we may ſee that we are nothing, which yet wee can not perceiue whileſt we are puffed vp with a vaine opinion of our ſelues before.

Iudg. 13. 22.

Obiect. *Yet mine eyes haue ſeene.*] Is it the ſight of God which brings death to men? For it ſeemes ſtrange that the looke or preſence of God ſhould take away the life, whereof he is the fountaine.

Anſ. I anſwere, that this falles out by accident, and in reſpect of our owne default, and not from the nature of the Lord. Death is in our ſelues, and we perceiue it not but when it is compared with the life of God. And without all queſtion this is it that the Prophet here meanes. For he ſaith not ſimplie, I am dead, but he addes the reaſon, namely, becauſe he is *of polluted lips.*

Queſt. But why reſtraines he pollution *to the lips?* Was hee pure in his vnderſtanding, in his thoughts, and in the other parts of his body?

Anſ. I anſwere, The Prophet toucheth that which was the principall and moſt precious thing in him, to wit, his tongue, which was dedicate and conſecrated to God, by whom he was inſtituted a Prophet. And although otherwiſe he was a ſinner, yet notwithſtanding in regard of the holy office which he exerciſed, he was ſpecially conſecrated in this part. And yet in as much as he anſwered not to the holines of God, he confeſſeth he is *polluted,* yea euen in that part which is the moſt holy in him. And this I take to be the ſimple and natiue ſenſe of this place, although the expoſitors haue ſayd nothing touching it hitherto.

In the midſt.] This is added by way of expoſition. For here he puts himſelfe among the people, no otherwiſe then as one who felt himſelfe guiltie of the pollution of the whole body, and forgets the puritie he had receiued of God, becauſe he was vnable to ſtand before him. Hence it appeeres, how ſuch erre as thinke the Prophet feigned as the common people are wont to doe, who forge diuers inuentions of God. For as I haue ſaid, the preſence of God is the confounding of the fleſh, becauſe it ſhewes vs that we are nothing in our ſelues. He which ſeeth God, and is guiltie of his owne miſerie, what can he feele but his owne perdition? becauſe God is the Iudge, from whom nothing can be hidden, or vnknowne; in whoſe preſence all our puritie becoms impuritie. And if this befell the Prophet, what may wee thinke of our ſelues? for what are wee in compariſon of him? Although God hath begun to purge vs, yet muſt wee alwayes acknowledge our vncleanenes, the reliques whereof we ſhall alwayes feele in our fleſh. From this place alſo we are to gather a generall doctrine, to wit, that mens mouthes are polluted and impure if they be not purged of God. Whence it followes, that all humane doctrines do alwayes ſmell of their impuritie: for there is nothing pure, but that which proceeds frō the Lord.

All doctrines of men ſmell of impuritie.

Verſ. 6. *Then flew one of the Seraphims vnto me with an hote coale in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with the tongs.*

THe Prophet ſhewes what remedie was giuen him after he had been thus terrified, and as he thought to death: and this confirmes that which I haue ſaid alreadie, to wit, that the puritie of the lips comes from God only, for men can bring nothing of their owne which is not vaine and impure. If any obiect, it is abſurd that the Lord ſhould purge him now, as if his toong had been impure and prophane before, which notwithſtanding was the organ of the holy Ghoſt: I haue heretofore ſufficientlie anſwered this obiection. True it is that the Lord had purged him before, but according to his meaſure. The purgation which is now added is greater, becauſe it hath his degrees and increaſings, which no man can whollie obtaine at the firſt. Wherefore we muſt not gather that

the Prophets lips were impure before, because they are now purged: but wee are to regard to what end this was done, namely, because the Lord would augment and increase his graces in him, and rayse him vp higher in dignitie, to the end he might haue greater authoritie among the people; and this was requisite by reason of the times, and of the mutation which was then in the state. *The fire is taken from the altar*, as diuine and heauenly, because the law forbad to take any strange fire from thence: the reason is, in regard that whatsoeuer men doe mingle with sacred things, can not but be a meere profanation. Wherefore *Isaiah* was taught by this figure, that all puritie floweth from God only.

Vers. 7. *And he touched my mouth, and sayd, loe, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquitie shall be taken away, and thy sinne shall be purged.*

WE see how God stoopes downe to the weakenes of humane sense. He puts the *tongs* in the hand of one of ỹ Seraphims; to the end he may take a cole from the Altar and applie it to the Prophets mouth. This was done in a vision: yet notwithstanding God raysed vp the vnderstanding of the Prophet by the help of this outward signe. But wee must not thinke that the cole had any vertue in it selfe, as superstitious people imagin hidden vertues in magicall arts: there is nothing of all this heere; for it is one God and none other which can purge vncleannes from any part whatsoeuer. The Angell was heere the minister of the purgation, but he was not the author of it; to the end we post not that ouer to another which belongs to God alone. And this the Angell himselfe expresseth clearely, in that he attributes nothing to himselfe, but taking the holy pledge which he had receiued of God, he applies it as a sacrament to the mouth of the Prophet: not as if he could not haue been clensed without the *cole*, but because this visible signe was profitable for a witnes and confirmation of such a thing. And this also is the vse of Sacraments, namely, to confirme vs according to our weakenes. For we are not Angels to behold the mysteries of God without any helps; and therefore he lifts vs vp to him by little and little, and as it were by steps.

The vse of Sacraments.

Behold he hath touched.] He shewes how the confirmation which was giuen by the signe was not in vaine, but that the thing which was signified by it was forthwith granted, so as *Isaiah* well perceiued he was not deceiued. Whence we may gather, that the thing it selfe is giuen vs in the Sacraments with the signe. For the Lord feeds not our eyes in the Sacraments with bare and emptie figures, but he ioynes the truth it selfe with them, to testifie that he works by the signes effectuallie. And wee must note this so much the more diligently, as there are few at this day who are acquainted with the true vse of the Sacraments; as also in regard that commonly there are contentions among many holy and learned personages, euen about this matter. Now in the first place we must hold this article, That ỹ truth can neuer be separate from the signes; although it ought to be distinguished. For we see and feele the signe; as the bread which is giuen vs by the Minister in the Supper: and because Christ must be sought in heauen, it behoues vs that our thoughts be caried thither. Notwithstanding he offreth his body by the hand of the Minister, to the end the faithfull might truly inioy it; prouided that they aspire to heauen by faith where he is. He giues it then to the faithfull who raise vp their minds to him by faith, because he can be no deceiuer.

God giues vs the thing signified in the Sacraments, and feeds not our eies there with emptie shadowes.

The truth neuer separated from the signes, yet they must be distinguished.

Faith.

Now the vnbeleeuers receiue the signe indeed, but because they lie groueling vpon the earth, and ascend not vp into the kingdome of Christ, they are not partakers of the veritie, because that he which hath not faith, can not lift vp his thought to God, and therefore can not be partaker of Christ. It is faith only which opens vs the gate into the kingdome of God: wherefore whosoeuer will liue by the flesh of Christ, it is necessarie that he be lifted vp farre aboue all humane sense into heauen by faith. In a word, there is nothing but the spirit of God only which can make vs partakers of this Communion: yet notwithstanding it followes not thereupon that the truth of the Sacraments should be diminished by the vnbeliefe of men, seeing God alwaies offreth the spirituall thing, but the wicked leaue it behind them; euen as the grace of God by the Gospell is offred to all, but all do not receiue it, although they heare it, and be constreined to consent to the truth of it.

The Spirit.

Moreouer we learne from this place, that the Sacraments are neuer separated from the word, for the Angell representeth not a dumb person in this place; but after he hath giuen the signe, he by and by addes the *word*, to shew the end of it: for it could haue been no Sacrament, vnlesse the word had also been ioyned vnto it, whereby *Isaiah* might vnderstand wherefore the cole was put to his mouth. And therefore let vs know that the principall part of the Sacraments consists in the word, which without it are but meere corruptions; as wee see at this day how the Sacraments in the Papacie are commonlie turned into meere may-games. Now the summe is, that there should remaine no impediment why *Isaiah* should not now susteine the person of God, being perfectlie clensed, and pure from all spot.

The Word and Sacraments must go together.

Vers. 8. * *Also I heard the voyce of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send? and who shall goe for vs? Then I said, Heere am I, send me.*

* Or, after.

THe Prophet begins now to declare the end of this vision, and why the Lord appeared in so glorious a maiestie to ordaine him a Prophet againe, to wit, because he was to carrie an incredible ambassage touching the blinding of the Iewes: he is made more

certaine

certaine then of his vocation in ſo odious a matter, to the end that treading all feare of man vnder his feete, he may obey the commandement of God, for there is nothing that ſo ſecureth the minds of the faithfull, as whē they know they ſerue God. He had alſo another teſtimonie, to wit, that he was purged of God, and this was ſufficient to make him vndertake the hardeſt burthen which could be impoſed vpon him.

Whom ſhall I ſend?] The Prophet brings in the Lord ſpeaking, as if he could find no man fit to do this meſſage. Some thinke that the blockiſhnes of the Prieſts and Prophets is heere touched, becauſe not one amongſt them was able to teach, although they were many in number. Now although this reaſon hath ſome colour, yet I had rather refer it to the certentie of ỹ vocation of the Propher, to wit, that the Lord called him not forth at random, but with choice. This is then a graue deliberation which the Lord takes as touching him whom he ſhould ſend: not that he doubteth but theſe maners of ſpeech are in regard of vs, euen as when he ſayd, *I will goe downe, and ſee*, Gen.18.21. For God, to whom all things are manifeſt, needs no inquiſitie: but to the end that men may not thinke he haſtens too much in doing any thing, therefore he applies himſelf to their cōmon maner of ſpeech. So whē he asks, *Whom he ſhould ſend*, he ſignifies, that he needs not a common perſon, but an excellent Teacher in the execution of ſo great a charge. Hence wee are to gather that the authoritie of *Iſaiah* was confirmed, to the end he might not only be held for a Prophet, but the chiefe among the Prophets. *Who ſhall goe for vs?* I am of opinion indeede that this place notes out the three perſons in the Deitie, as elſewhere alſo, *Let vs* create man after our image, Gen.1.26. For God deliberates with himſelfe, and that in the plurall number. And no doubt but he here conſults with his eternall Wiſdome and Power, that is to ſay, with the Sonne, and the Holy-Ghoſt.

Heere am I.] This ſo prompt an anſwere ſets forth the greatnes of that readines which proceeds of faith. For he who before was like a dead man, feares now no difficulties at all. Whence we ſee, that this terror whereof we haue ſpoken heretofore, proceeded not from rebellion, as if he would flee the preſence of God, and refuſe the charge which was inioyned him: but becauſe he had neede of new grace, that ſo he might feele and know himſelfe ſufficient for the ſuſteining of this office. Whence it is to be obſerued, that we can neuer rightlie enterpriſe any thing, without certaine teſtimonie of our vocation: for without that, we ſhall ſtagger and doubt at euery ſtep.

Hee that doubtes of his vocation, muſt needs ſtagger at euery ſtep.

Beſides, it is a great prop to vphold our infirmitie, when we feele that we are not deſtitute of neceſſarie gifts, but that God furniſheth vs, to the end we may the more eaſily performe our charge. Moreouer it behoues vs to be inſtructed by this excellent example of obedience, that as oft as the Lord calls vs, we be readie and prepared to beare the burthen which he ſhall lay vpon vs, and that we refuſe it not, notwithſtanding all the difficulties which may ſtand in our way. When the Prophet ſaith, *Heere I am*, it is as much as if he ſhould haue ſaid, I am readie to execute that which God ſhall command me; for by this maner of ſpeech, obedience is often noted forth in the Scripture.

Verſ.9. *And he ſaid, goe, and ſay vnto this people, yee ſhall heare indeed, but yee ſhall not vnderſtand: yee ſhall plainly ſee, and not perceiue.*

IT appeares againe frō hence more clearly, how neceſſarie this viſion was for *Iſaiah*, to the end he might not faint in his courſe euen at the firſt puſh. For this was a great offence of mind vnto him, that he muſt be faine to haue experience of ſuch an obſtinacie and rebellion in the people of God; and not for a yeere or two, but euen for more then fortie yeeres together. It was neceſſarie therefore that he ſhould be well armed, and to become euen as a wall of braſſe, that he might be inabled to ſtand againſt ſuch a rebellion. The Lord plainly teſtifies to *Iſaiah* then, that he ſhall haue to deale with obſtinate people, whom he ſhall do very little good vpon; yet that he muſt not faint by taking offence at ſo ſtrange a thing, neither be diſcouraged by ſuch a ſtubburnnes; but ỹ he is to ouercome all theſe temptations, and to paſſe beyond them with an inuincible courage. For the Lord admoniſheth him before hand touching that which ſhould come to paſſe: and it is as if he ſhould haue ſayd, Thou ſhalt teach, but without fruite, but yet ceaſe thou not for all that to inſtruct ſtill, becauſe I command thee: and though thou perceiue no fruite, yet be not therefore wearie: only obey me, and leaue all the iſſue of thy labour vnto my will. I forewarne thee touching theſe things betime, to the end thou ſhouldſt not faint nor turne aſide by reaſon of thy ill ſucceſſe, as though ſomething vnexpected were befalne thee. Adde withall, that he is commanded to detect their blind obſtinacie openlie, as if of ſet purpoſe he ſhould thunder out againſt them, and ſhould ſay, I know it very well that I ſhall loſe my labour, but I care not, it is enough for me that God approues of my actions, to whom my preaching ſhall be a ſweet ſmelling ſauour, although it bring death vnto you, 2.Cor.1.

Miniſters are to yeeld obedience vnto God: and to commend the ſucceſſe of their labors to the bleſſing of God.

Verſ.10. *Make the heart of this people fat, make their eare heauie, and ſhut their eyes, leſt they ſee with their eyes, and heare with their eares, and vnderſtand with their hearts, and conuert, and be heale them.*

HEre the former ſentence is better expreſſed. For God not onely admoniſheth *Iſaiah* that he ſhall loſe his labour in teaching; but alſo that he will *cloſe vp the eyes* of this people

people by his doctrine, thereby giuing them occasion of greater blindnes and obstinacie, which in the end shall worke their perdition. He signifies that the people being depriued of reason and vnderstanding, shall perish, and that there shall be no remedie left: notwithstanding he therewithall aduertiseth ỳ Propher, that his labour shall be an acceptable sacrifice vnto him, howsoeuer it bring ruine and death to the Iewes. And truly this is an excellent sentence, not only because *Isaiah* foretelles the things which were accomplished in the kingdome of Christ, but because it conteines a very excellent doctrine, the vse whereof is perpetuall in the Church of God. Also those who walke faithfullie in the ministrie of the word, shall be forced to feele the experience of it: and we learne it by effect more then were to be wished: but this hath been common to all the seruants of Christ, and therefore ought we to beare it with the greater courage, howsoeuer it be a great scandall to those that serue God with a pure conscience. Besides, we are not only much offended hereby, but Satan vnder this pretext pricks his instruments forwards to bring their doctrine into the greater disgrace; namely, that is not onely without fruite, but also because it doth hurt, so as it makes men more obstinate, and works their confusion. For many at this day hauing nothing else to reproch the doctrine of the Gospell withall, affirme, that the preaching therof brings no other fruite but this, that it makes men worse then they were before. Now whatsoeuer the euent be, yet notwithstanding God declares that our ministrie pleaseth him, because we do that which he hath commanded.

Besides, albeit our labours seeme vnprofitable, and that men cast themselues headlong into destruction, waxing more obstinate, yet must we goe on still, because we do nothing of our owne will, and therefore to content our selues that we are approued of God. We haue cause to sigh indeed when the euent answereth not our labour: and wee ought to be much in prayer vnto God that he would giue his word efficacie. Yea, we are to lay the fault in part vpon our selues, when we see so little fruite; yet are we not for all that to cast away our weapons, or to forsake our charge. The truth must alwaies sound forth from our mouthes, although there be no eares to heare it, yea, although the world be as blind and as senseles as stones. For it is more then sufficient that we faithfullie serue to the glorie of God, and that our labours are pleasing to him: neither is the sound of our voyce in vaine when it leaues the world without excuse.

The faithfull teachers ought heere to receiue a singular consolation, to fortifie themselues the better alwaies against the offences which fall out euery day by the rebellions of men, lest they be thereby cooled: no, let them continue in their office with inuincible constancie. Now forasmuch as this also is a generall offence, to wit, that the liuely word of God (at the hearing whereof all the world ought to tremble) strikes thus the eares of men without fruit or profit; let the weake in faith learne also to strengthen themselues with this sentence. We are wont to wonder how it can possiblie come to passe that the greatest part of the world should so furiouslie resist against God. And from thence also ariseth this difficultie, to wit, whether that can be the heauenlie truth of God or no which is reiected without punishment; because it is not likely that God would speake to men, to the end they should scorne him. But to the end our faith waier not, we must oppose this stay; namely, that the office of teaching was committed to *Isaiah*, that in casting abroad the seed of life, it should bring forth nothing but death: as also that mention is not made heere of that which befell once, but it is a prophesie of the kingdome of Christ as shall be said anon. Furthermore the circumstance is to be noted, that *Isaiah* was not sent to all, but only to the Iewes: wherefore there is very great vehemencie in the particle demonstratiue *Hinneh*, as if he should say, The people whom the Lord had speciallie chosen, heard me not; but shut their eyes in so manifest a light.

Therefore let vs not maruell, if whilest we speake to those who brag of the name of God, it happens to vs euen as if we told a tale to deafe eares. True it is this is a sharp message that the Prophet should say he is sent of God *to stop vp their eares, to shut their eyes, and to make their hearts fat*, because it seemes these things are nothing agreeable to the nature of God, and that therefore they are contrarie to his word. But we must not think it strange if God auenge himselfe vpon the malice of the people by such an extreme blinding of them. In the meane while the Prophet hath shewed heeretofore that the cause of this blindnes was in themselues. For in commanding them to hearken, he testifies, that there is a doctrine fit for their instruction, if they would shew themselues teachable; and that the light is offred to enlighten & leade them, if so be they would open their eyes.

All the fault then is imputed vnto the people, because they reiected so wonderfull a blessing of God. Whence the solution of the difficultie which we touched alittle before, is more apparent. I grant it seemes very hard at the first blush, that the Prophets should make the hearts of men more hard; seeing they bring the word of God in their mouth, by which as by a light men should lighten and order their paths, Psal.119.105. And we know that *Dauid* giues it this title, Psal.19.9. It is not the office of the Prophets then to blind the eyes, but rather to open them. And heereafter this word is called perfect wisedome, Chap.8. How comes it to passe then that it takes away mens vnderstanding, and makes the dullards? Rather the hearts which were before of stone, iron, and steele, should hereby be mollified: how can it be then they should be come the more obdurate? I answere (as I haue touched alreadie) that such blindnes and hardening proceeds not from the nature of the word, but is by way of accident: and it ought to be attributed to the wicked.

Obiect.

Answ.

wickednes of men. For euen as they who haue ſore eyes can not accuſe the Sunne for hurting them with the light thereof: nor hee which hath a weakenes and fault in his hearing, a cleere and very loud voyce which he can not beare: laſtly, as he that is of a weake capacitie is not to be offended with high and difficult things which he is vnable to comprehend: So likewiſe the wicked can not accuſe the word of God that they become the worſe after the hearing of it. Seeing then that all ſ fault is in themſelues becauſe they do not giue it acceſſe into their hearts, what wonder is it if that which was appointed for their foode, do become their bane? For it muſt needs be, that the diſloyaltie and infidelitie of men ſhould be puniſhed in this maner, to the end they ſhould feele death from that, whence they might haue receiued life; and darknes from thence, whence they might haue receiued light: laſtly, all noyſome and hurtfull things frō thence, where they might haue had the fulnes of all bleſſings to ſaluation. Which is diligentlie to be noted, becauſe there is nothing more common with men, then to abuſe the gifts of God: and whileſt they make theſelues beleeue they are very innocent, anon they deck themſelues with other mēs feathers. But they are doubly wicked, in as much as they applie not thoſe things to their true vſe which the Lord hath giuen them in truſt; but haue alſo prophanely and miſerably corrupted them.

Similies.

The puniſhment of infidelitie.

S. *Iohn* alledgeth this place to ſet out more plainely the obſtinacie of the Iewes. True it is that he recites it not word by word; but yet he explanes the meaning thereof ſufficientlie. And therefore could they not beleeue (ſaith he) becauſe *Iſaiah* ſaid, he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts. Notwithſtanding this propheſie was not ſ cauſe of their vnbeliefe, but the Lord ſo foretold it, becauſe he foreſaw they would be ſuch. Now the Euangeliſt applies that to the Goſpell which was practiſed vnder the law: and teacheth therewithall, that the Iewes of his time were depriued of reaſon and vnderſtanding, becauſe they were rebellious againſt God. Although if any ſhould aske the firſt cauſe, we muſt come to the predeſtination of God. But becauſe this counſell is hidden frō vs, we muſt not be curious in ſearching into it. For the reaſon of God his eternall counſell apperteines not to vs; but we muſt looke to the cauſe which is before our eyes, to wit, their rebellion, by which they made themſelues vnworthie of ſo many and great benefites.

S. *Paul* alſo ſhewes from this place not once but often, that all the cauſe of their blindnes remained in themſelues, Act. 28. 27. Rom. 11. 8. *Thou*, ſaith he, haue made their eares heauie, and ſtopped their eyes. So, that which the Prophet attributes heere to doctrine; that the Apoſtle attributes to the wicked *affection* of this people, who were the cauſe of their owne blinding. S. *Paul* brings in the *holy Ghoſt* ſpeaking in this place. S. *Iohn* ſaith, that *Iſaiah* ſpake thus of *Chriſt*, after he ſaw his glorie. Whence it appeeres, as we haue ſaid heretofore, that this God which filled the whole earth with his glorie, was Chriſt. But Chriſt is not ſeparate from his Spirit. It is to very good purpoſe then that S. *Paul* hath referred this place to the holy Ghoſt: for although God did repreſent himſelfe to the Prophet in the liuely image of his Sonne, yet is it alſo certaine that whatſoeuer he repreſented vnto him, was wholly ſhed into him by the power of the holie Spirit. Now let the wicked barke againſt vs while they will with their blaſphemies, and blame our doctrine, becauſe the world is made the worſe by the preaching of it; yet ſhall they gaine nothing thereby, neither yet be able to diminiſh the leaſt tittle of the authoritie thereof, for they muſt forthwith condemne God himſelf when they condemne his doctrine, but their ſlanders can not let that his iuſtice ſhould not appeere; or that he ſhould not preſerue that and vs alſo blameles.

Act. 28. Ioh. 12. 41.

That they conuert not.] Hee heere cleerely pronounceth, that he ſent not the Prophet to ſaue the people, but rather to deſtroy them. But the word of God in it ſelf is healthfull, and at leaſt neceſſarie it is that there come ſome fruit from the preaching thereof, which may profit ſome, although many loſe the fruit of it by their owne infidelitie. I anſwere, mention is made heere of the whole bodie, which was alreadie deſtinate and vowed to deſtruction, for there are alwayes ſome whom the Lord hath exempt from this generall perdition. The word was powerfull to ſaue thoſe, and did truly bring forth his effect: but the common ſtate being ſunken deepe in rebellion and infidelitie, periſhed. Whereby we alſo ſee that the word of God is neuer ſo hurtfull, that there ſhould not be ſome few which feele ſaluation by it, and haue triall thereof effectuallie.

Obiect.

Anſ.

But wee are to note from the order and courſe of the words, that repentance is the beginning of healing. Firſt of all then let vs ſee what he meanes by this word *healing*. He referres it to the rods and ſcourges of God wherewith the people had been humbled for their ſinnes. Now the cauſe of all the euils which we endure, is our rebellion againſt God; but when we repent, and that he ſhewes vs the light of his countenance, then the rods wherewith he chaſtiſed vs are caſt into the fire, and thus we are *healed*. This order ought to be diligentlie obſerued of vs, by which it very well appeeres whereat the Lord aimes in inuiting vs to come vnto him, as alſo what drift the holy doctrine hath, to wit, that we might be *conuerted*. Behold here then that part of the Goſpell, Do penance, or Repent. Afterwards, by offring vs reconciliation, he promiſeth remedies for all euils, not only againſt the bodie, but alſo againſt the ſoule. But if we receiue not ſo excellent a fruit of the word of God: if we be not reconciled vnto God as ſoone as the word ſounds in our eares, we haue cauſe to blame none but our ſelues, becauſe the fault wholly remaines in vs. And in very truth that which the Prophet recites heere is a ſtrange thing, and as it were againſt nature, to wit, that

Mat. 3. 2.

men

men should become rebellious and obstinate, yea altogether incurable by ỹ doctrine of Gods word, the propertie whereof is to cure and heale men. It must needs be acknowledged then as a singular grace and mercie of God when we are touched inwardly, seeing the arme of the Lord is not reuealed to all. Notwithstanding the chiefe thing which *Isaiah* would teach vs by this horrible chastisement of malitious obstinacie, is, that aboue all things wee beware how wee contemne the Lord his voyce when he calles vs. *Iohn 6.44.*

Vers. 11. *Then said I, Lord how long? And he answered, vntill the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be vtterly desolate.*

ALthough the Prophets are seuere in denouncing the wrath of God against men, yet they cast not off humane affection, and therfore it is necessary they susteine a double person; for they ought to pronounce the iudgemẽt of God with a bold and stout courage, so as they should rather see the whole world brought to vtter ruin and destruction, then that the least iot of his glorie should be diminished. And yet in the meane while they are not cruell, as if they were not touched with any compassion of their brethrẽ, whose destructiõ notwithstanding in regard of their office they are forced to foretel. Now although these two affectiõs seeme cõtrarie, yet do they agree very well, as it appeeres by ỹ example of *Ieremiah*, who at the first refused this hard burthen, in that he was cõmanded to threaten destruction to the people; but by and by after he takes heart againe vnto him, and stoutly follows his office: our Prophets mind was thus composed, for in regard of his obedience to God, he publisheth his iudgements with a loud voyce; and yet notwithstanding he had some respect to the people: as if he should say, O Lord, if it must needs be that they be blinded, yet let it not be *for euer*. And questionles when he made this prayer he was touched with compassion, desiring that so heauie and fearefull a punishment might be mitigated. Thus then naturall affections ought not to hinder vs from doing our duties. As for example, It is a naturall affection that the husband hath to the wife, the father to his children; and yet notwithstanding they must be so restrained and kept vnder, that we haue a speciall eye to that which agrees with our vocation, and to that which the Lord commands. *Simile.*

We must note this point diligentlie, for when we once begin to let loose the raines, we often pretend this excuse, to wit, that although our hearts were prompt and readie to do that which God commanded, yet we were ouercome with naturall affection: but wee must so weane our naturall affections that they hinder not our vocation; as we see they hindred not the Prophet that he should not follow his calling; for ỹ Lord must haue such authoritie ouer vs, that when he commands, we must forget our selues, and all that we haue. Furthermore, although the holy care that the Prophet had ouer the people be heere noted, yet the greatnes of the chastisement is by and by expressed, to the end the wicked (according to their custome) should not promise themselues any release. Neither are we to doubt but that the Prophet was stirred vp to aske this by a secret inspiration from God, to the end this sharp and terrible answere (which by and by followes) might be more plainely darted against them. Whence it appeareth what issue the vnbeleeuers shall haue, to wit, that they shall not be chastised superficially or lightly, but shall be cut off with extreme rigor.

He aggreuates this, when he saith, *Till the houses be left without man, and the land be vtterly desolate.* Because peraduenture the countrie might be spoiled, and yet there might remaine some citie: also some cities might be assailed and destroyed; but yet some houses might remaine still: therefore he declares that there shall be such a discomforture, that not only *cities*, but *houses* shall be also rased to the ground, and that there shall be an horrible waste throughout the whole land: howsoeuer notwithstanding that euen in the greatest destructions there is alwayes something left. Now howsoeuer this was but once pronounced by *Isaiah*, yet let vs know that this appertaines to vs also, for the same iudgment is prepared for all those who with a rebellious spirit shall oppose thẽselues against God, or with a stiffe neck shall resist against his yoke: yea, so much the more fiercely as any shall behaue themselues this way, so much the more sharply shall the Lord handle them vntill he haue vtterly consumed them.

Vers. 12. *And the Lord haue remooued men farre away, and there be a great desolation in the mids of the land.*

THis verse conteines no new thing, but only expounds the former, and by other words describes ỹ destruction which should happen to the countrie of Iudea, to wit, that God would send the inhabitants of the countrie farre off: for hee leaues no hope that those which escape the sword shall be therefore exempt, because they shall be led into captiuitie. Then he immediatlie addes a generall sentence touching the *desolation of the land*: as if he should say, It shall be left solitarie, and stripped of inhabitants, be it that they flee, be it that others be caried away into exile, or that others perish by the sword: behold what reward is prepared for the rebellious and obstinate, which heape sinne vpon sinne, vntill the vnquenchable wrath of the Lord be kindled to the heighth.

Vers. 13. *But yet in it shall be a tenth, and shall returne, and shall be * eaten vp as an elme or as an oke which haue a substance in the when they cast* their leaues: so * Or, left bare.

ſo the holy ſeed ſhall be the ſubſtance thereof.

THere is ſome obſcuritie in the words; but let vs firſt ſearch out the ſenſe, and then it ſhall be eaſie for vs to gather the ſignification of ỹ words. This place is expounded two wayes. Some expound the Hebrue word *Aſiriiah*, the tenth part, others the tenth; and will haue it to be a Noune Collectiue. Truly *Aſirith*, and not the former word, ſignifies properly Tenth among ỹ Hebrues, although there be no great difference herein. They which turne it Tenth, thinke that truces are promiſed to the people, becauſe there ſhould be ten kings from the reigne of *Vzzias* vntill the deſtruction of Ieruſalem. And indeed we ſhall finde ſo many from *Vzziah* to *Zedchiah*. And thus there ſhould be a great approbation of the Prophets doctrine, to wit, to be able to number ỹ Kings which ſhould reigne euen after his death, and not only to ſhew this, but alſo the time and the day. I know not whither the other ſenſe ſhould be more proper; for it ſeemes the Prophet meant here to comfort the people, becauſe they ſhall yet retaine ſome hidden vigor, which ſhall ſprout forth, howſoeuer for a time it ſeemes they be whollie dead, as the trees which are wont to waxe greene after the winter is paſt.

But becauſe the firſt expoſition is probable enough, therefore I will expound this verſe according to thoſe who thinke that mention is made heere of ten Kings, and that after they ſhall be paſt, the people ſhall be caried into captiuitie, and the land then conſumed as with a deuouring fire. In the meane while the reader ſhall note, that whether we turne it Tenth, or tenth part, yet we may very fitly referre it to the people, and then the ſenſe ſhall be, Vntill the people be brought to the tenth part; becauſe he had ſpoken before of ſome remainders of the people which ſhould be very ſmall, and will ſpeake of it againe hereafter. And indeed there remained a very ſmall number. It ſhould be taken well thus then, as if of a thouſand there ſhould remaine an hundreth, of a hundreth ten, and of ten one.

Chap. 1. 2. Ie Chap. 10. 22.

Shall returne.] That is to ſay, there ſhal come a change for the better, when the Iewes ſhall *returne* out of exile into their countrie, and that the land ſhall recouer a freſh colour. But it ſeemes there ſhould be ſome contradiction in the hanging together of the text; for the Prophet immediatlie addes, that it ſhall be eaten vp, or left bare: how cold comfort ſhould this be, that the people ſhould be brought home to be deſtroyed againe afterward? Some reſolue this difficultie thus, as if *Iſaiah* ſhould ſpeake of the laſt and finall deſtruction of the people. But in mine opinion he meaneth that it ſhall not be an vtter ruin, but ſuch an one as we ſee in trees, the leaues whereof fall in winter, and there remaines no appeerãce of any thing but a dead trunck of wood: yet when the Spring comes they will bud afreſh: he ſaith then, that the like ſhall befall to this people. The word *Leuer*, ſignifies to burne, and therefore it is as much to ſay as to be conſumed with fire. But wee muſt conioine it and reade it with the ſimilitude which is by and by added. For *Iſaiah* ſaith not ſimplie that it ſhall be conſumed; but as the beech or elme, that is to ſay, with hope of a neere reſtauration.

Whereas S. *Ierome* tranſlateth Declaration, I know not frõ what other word he thought this took his originall, vnleſſe he interpreted freely as it came in his minde; looking rather to the meaning of the Prophet, then to the etymologie of the word, becauſe when trees flooriſh and bring forth leaues, their life is manifeſted, and comes foorth againe into ſight; and this will be very agreeable. It ſeemes alſo it was not without cauſe that *Iſaiah* hath put theſe two kinds of trees here, becauſe the one buds ſooner then the other, and floriſheth ſooner alſo; and ſo came it to paſſe to the Tribe of Iudah. For firſt the ten Tribes with halfe the Tribe of *Beniamin* were caried away into captiuitie: ſo they which had floriſhed firſt, firſt withered. *Iudah* withered in the latter end with great hope to ſprout againe: and becauſe heere is giuen hope of libertie, it was not like to the captiuitie of the Iſraelites. It ſeemes then that there is ſome proprietie in this ſimilitude of *trees*, which notwithſtanding I would not preſſe too much. By the word of *caſting the leaues*, we muſt vnderſtand the falling away of them, as when the trees are ſtripped of their leaues, as of their garment. For in this nakednes it ſeemes the trees be ſeare and dead, although notwithſtanding there is a ſecret vertue remaining within thé, by which at the laſt they are reſtored againe at the Spring.

So ſhall.] This is the application of the Similitude, which hath great force in it, for when we behold the goodnes of God in this order of nature, we are greatlie confirmed therein. Euen as S. *Paul* propoũds the image of the reſurrection by the ſowing of corne, which is a thing vſuallie done: ſo alſo *Iſaiah* in this place ſhewes the reſtauration of the Church by taking a Similitude from *trees*, which after the fall are like dead ſtocks, but aſ ſoone as the Spring is come, they waxe greene, and bring foorth new leaues, which they could not doe, vnleſſe they retained ſome ſappe within them during the winter, howſoeuer in outward appeerance they ſeemed dead. He propheſieth that the like ſhall befall this people, to wit, that although in this grieuous and hard captiuitie they ſhould reſemble drie trees, and therefore might be thought paſt hope of recouerie, yet ſome ſtrength ſhould be conſerued in them, by the which they ſhall be ſuſteined in the midſt of all theſe anguiſhes; and after they haue borne them for a while, at the laſt they ſhall ſpring forth and floriſh.

Wee haue ſaid that this doctrine belongs not to one ſeaſon only, and therefore wee ought to make our benefit of it. For it often happens that the Church is in ſuch diſtreſſed eſtate amids the manifold calamities which ſhe ſuſteines, and is ſo deſtitute of all appeerance of ſtrength, that a man would thinke

ſhe were vtterlie periſhed. As often then as this falles out let vs yet be fullie reſolued that there is ſtill a ſap hidden within, which howſoeuer it appeare not by and by to our eyes, will yet ſhew forth his fruit in the end. Now this ſap is hidden in the word of God, by which only the Church is vpheld.

Holy ſeed.] Heere he ſhewes what this ſubſtance is, to wit, the ſmall number of the faithfull, which he calles a *holy ſeed*. For he meanes the elect, which ſhould be ſaued by the free mercie of God, and ſhould be reſerued from this captiuitie, becauſe that this baniſhment was as it were the purgation of the Church whereby the Lord tooke away the wicked, who being cut off, he gathered vnto himſelfe a very ſmall people, but yet truly ſanctified. Some referre this to Chriſt, but this expoſition ſeemes too farre fetched; it will agree better if wee referre it to all the faithfull, becauſe the holy ſeed is the *ſubſtance* of the Church.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *And in the dayes of Ahaz the ſonne of Iotham the ſonne of Vzziah king of Iudah, Rezin the king of* * *Aram came vp, and Peka the ſonne of Remaliah king of Iſrael, to Ieruſalē to fight againſt it, but he could not ouercome it.*

* Or, Syria.

THere is heere recited an excellent propheſie of the wonderfull deliuerance of Ieruſalem, euen when it might haue ſeemed wholie deſolate. Now the Prophet recounts all circumſtances, to the end by them the miracle might be the more admirable; that it might cleerely appeere how the Citie was preſerued by the meere goodnes of God, and not by any policies or power of men. For this people were ſo vngratefull, that vnleſſe after the deliuerāce, all theſe things had been brought to their remembrance one after another; they could not vnderſtand how they were deliuered by the hand of God. And few there were who in the preſent danger waited vpon that which *Iſaiah* had promiſed; becauſe they iudged of the publike ſtate of the kingdome and of their own alſo, according to that which they ſaw with their eyes. To the end then hee might lay forth the excellent benefit of God, he ſets all circumſtances before them, that ſo they might acknowledge out of how great danger they were deliuered when God freed them out of their enemies hands. As touching our ſelues, let vs know that this mercie was ſhewed to a people vnthankfull, to the end the Church might be preſerued; and that Chriſt at the laſt might appeare.

We muſt note that the Prophet ſpeakes of the ſecond warre which *Rezin* & *Pekah* made: and this we ſhall more eaſilie gather out of the holie hiſtorie, for in the firſt warre *Achaz* was ouercome, and a great multitude led into captiuitie, who in the end were brought back by the Iſraelites, when the Prophet had
2. *King.* 16. 5 in the name of God commanded it ſhould be ſo done. And againe the kings of Syria and Iſrael raiſed an armie and aſſailed *Achaz*, becauſe it was thought they had ſo ſpoiled them by the firſt warre, that they had left them no power to reſiſt. Whereas then he makes mention of the ſecond warre, it is to amplifie the miracle: for *Achaz* had not a competent power to reſiſt ſo great a multitude, ſeeing all the flower of his ſouldiers were caried away in the firſt warre. And howſoeuer there were now many people remaining, yet they were ſcattered; and beſides, were much affrighted with the remembrance of the diſcomforture which was very freſh in minde. And herein doth the goodnes of God and his power appeare to be ſo much the greater, that hauing compaſſion vpō ſo great a calamitie, he gaue ſuccor to his people, and in a moment drew them out from the gates of death, euen then when they had no hope of ſaluation. *Came vp.* Here is the propoſition and ſumme of ỹ whole matter. For he ſhewes of what affaires he was to ſpeake: and in few words according to ỹ vſuall maner of ſpeech in the Hebrue toong telles what he meanes to declare anon more at large, and more clearely. For from the very entrance he propounds the iſſue, to wit, that the enterpriſe of theſe two kings *tooke none effect*: but by and by after he will ſhew the reaſon why Ieruſalem could not be taken; and yet before he toucheth that, he will briefly ſhew what counſell and courage *Ahaz* had.

Verſ. 2. *And it was told the houſe of Dauid, ſaying,* * *Aram is ioyned with Ephraim: therefore his heart was moued, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the foreſt are moued by the winde.*

* Or, Syria.

HIs meaning is not that the newes of this league was brought at that time when the two kings were alreadie neere the citie, for *Ahaz* could not ſafely haue iſſued forth if the armie of the enemies had been alreadie in the field: but it is ſaid, that king *Ahaz* trembled for feare before theſe kings had aſſembled their mē of warre together. Whence it followes, that he was terrified more and more as the danger grew neerer him. *The houſe of Dauid* ſignifies the Palace and Court of the king: as if the Prophet had ſaid, *Ahaz* and his Counſellors were admoniſhed of the cōſpiracie made againſt ỹ countrie of Iudah.

As touching the words; the verb *Nachah* is diuerſlie tranſlated by the expoſitors; and becauſe it ſignifies to leade, ſome draw this ſenſe, that the Syrian brought his ſouldiers

to

to the ſuccor of the armie, and therefore they thinke there ſhould be ſome change of the letters in the word *Al:* others deriue it of *Nuach*, and tranſlate, He is at reſt. According to otherſome the letters are miſplaced, ſo as *Nachab* is put in ſtead of *Chanah*, which ſignifies to pitch the camp, and therefore I haue thought good to turne it, *Syria is ioyned*, or *combined*: for ✠ Prophet meant nothing elſe but that the *Iſraelites* and *Syrians* had made a league of warre together, to conioine their forces for the aſſailing of Ieruſalem. Alſo in the word *Ephraim* there is a figure called *Synecdoche*, much vſed in the Prophets. The whole kingdome of Iſrael is comprehended vnder *Ephraim*, not only becauſe that Tribe was the richeſt and more populous then the
2. *King.* 11. 26. reſt; but alſo becauſe *Ieroboam* the firſt king came out of that Tribe.

His heart was moued.] Here we well diſcerne that *by the houſe of Dauid*, he meanes nothing elſe but the Palace of the king, from whence ſoone after all the reſt of the people were terrified: neither could it otherwiſe be but the common people muſt needs feare when they heard that the King and his Counſell were alſo in that plight. As ſoone then as theſe newes came, all were ouertaken with ſuch an aſtoniſhment, that none could hold a ioynt ſtill. He expreſſeth this quaking by a very apt ſimilitude, which we alſo are commonly wont to vſe when we ſay, He trembled like the leafe of a tree. And this appertaineth to the ſetting forth of the miracle; for thence it appeeres that they were in a deſperate caſe, not only in other mens iudgements, but euen in their owne alſo. They had been all vndone then if the Lord had not ſpeedilie preuented the miſchiefe. We haue heere a faire looking-glaſſe, wherein we may behold the ſtrength which the wicked take vnto themſelues all the while they feele not the hand of God; and contratiwiſe how they are ſodainly ouertaken with feare, whē the Lord ſhewes them any danger; for they are ſo ſecure when all things fall out to their wiſh, that the Lord can ſcarcely bring them in ſubiection vnder his gouernment, and then they thinke themſelues alſo out of all danger. But if affliction do but a litle touch them, then they are by and by out of heart; yea, are ſo poſſeſſed with terror in their minds, that they behaue themſelues as blockiſh people, depriued of all ſenſe. And this is the puniſhment by which the Lord awakens them out of that deepe ſlumber into which they had caſt themſelues. For before, it ſeemed their eſtate was ſo firme and ſure, that they could neuer be put downe from their greatnes: but now at the leaſt noyſe they heare, they ſtraight fall into a ſwound for feare.

Such a feare is a iuſt vengeance of God, whom they would neuer haue reuerenced vnleſſe it had been drawne from them by force. Let vs learne then, that if we haue but the leaſt dramme of true faith, we muſt not thus diſtruſt God when we are in any danger. I graunt it can not be that we ſhould be free from trouble and feare when we are in danger of enemies: but wee muſt not ſo tremble and feare as being perplexed wee ſhould mooue this way & that way, as though we knew no hauen, nor place where we may ſafely fixe our footing. For this difference will euer be betweene the faithfull and the vnbeleeuers, namely, the latter ſort feele no remedie to quiet their conſciences, but the firſt do by and by flee to God, where they repoſe themſelues with great tranquillitie of minde, although they be vexed with diſquietnes for a time, as knowing that they haue a moſt ſafe refuge and hauen of reſt in him.

Verſ. 3. *Then ſaid the Lord vnto Iſaiah, Go forth now to meete Ahaz (thou and Shear-iaſhub thy ſonne) at the end of the conduit of the vpper poole, in the path of the fullers field,*

FIrſt, we ſee how the Lord remembring his couenant, preuents this wicked king, by *ſending his Prophet* to meete him. *Shear-iaſhub* the ſonne of the Prophet is ioyned with him, that he might be a witneſſe of this propheſie. And it is a probable cōiecture that this name was not impoſed vpon him at randon, but by a ſecret inſtinct of the holy Ghoſt, or by expreſſe commandement from God, to declare the future deliuerance of the people. He bare a ſeale then as it were engrauen in his name, as well of the neere exile, as alſo of their returne. It is alſo credible, that this ſigne or witnes of the propheſie was knowne among the people, for he ſhould not haue been ioyned in commiſſion with his father, vnleſſe he had ſuſteined ſome authoritie in his perſon. *The place* is ſpecified for certeintie of the hiſtorie: and it may well be that the king went carefullie to conſider of the approching of the enemie, to the end he might repulſe him, which appeareth more cleerely by the holie hiſtorie, 2. King. 16. 5. It is called, *The path of the fullers field*, for it may be the fullers were wont to waſh their clothes thereabouts; or rather it was ſome ancient place called by this name: howſoeuer it be, it was a ſigne that this miſerable hypocrite ran hither and thither with feare and terror, when *Iſaiah* was comming forth to quiet and ſecure him.

Verſ. 4. *And ſay vnto him, *Take heed, and be ſtill: feare not, neither be faint-hearted for the two tailes of theſe ſmoking firebrands, for the furious wrath of Rezin and of Aram, and of Remaliahs ſonne.*

* Or, be aſſured.

THe verb *Shamar*, which ſignifies to keepe, is here put in the coniugation of *Hiphil*, and many expoſitors take it, to take heed; although they draw it amiſſe, and to a ſenſe both conſtrained and beſides the purpoſe, as if the Prophet had admoniſhed *Ahaz* to take heed how he made warre. The ſentence is more ſimple, to wit, that he ſhould not wax faint-hearted, nor wauer doubtinglie, but that he ſhould be quiet & ſecure, therefore I haue tranſlated, *Be aſſured*. The ſenſe is then,

that *Ahaz* should take such heart vnto him, that at no hand hee suffer himselfe to boyle with impacience, neither to torment his minde with restlesse thoughts. For when men are once stricken with terror, their mindes are tossed vp & down, and haue no setled stay.

This exposition is confirmed by the words which follow, *Be still:* for these two things are
1 ioyned together: first, to stand quietly vpon his watch, to the end he may not be distracted with diuers thoughts, looking this way
2 and that way: secondly, that he be still, and of a calme and quiet spirit within. And behold here the fruites agreeable to a iustifying faith. For as the vnbeleeuers wauer and floate in vncertaintie in diuers assaults, and know not to which end to turne them: so the faithfull on the contrarie are staied, and cast themselues vpon God with quiet mindes. Impietie is neuer at rest: but where faith hath gotten strength, there we may see securitie and quietnes of minde, not trembling beyond measure.

These words then doe expresse the vertue of a true faith. Now hauing shewed the remedie whereby to appease the troublesome passions of the heart, he also forbids him *to feare:* because nothing is more contrarie to faith (who commits her saluation into the hands of God) then *feare*. But I confesse indeed that it is impossible for vs to be voyde of feare, when dangers approach. For faith makes vs not senseless. Contrariwise, the
A double feare. children of God are touched with a double feare: the first proceedes from naturall sense;
1 which feare they could not auoyde, although
2 they had a perfect faith: the other, from the weakenes of faith, because there is no man that hath profited so well therein, that there should not still remaine some reliques of distrust, against the which we must continuallie fight. This exhortation of the Prophet therefore must not be vnderstoode as if the Lord forbad all feare; but his meaning is, that the faithfull must arme themselues with such constancie, that they ouercome all their *feares*. As if he should say, Take heede thou be not cast downe: and if thou meetest with strong and sharpe assaults, be of an inuincible courage, that dangers ouerwhelme thee not: but rather manfully stay thy selfe vpon the power and goodnesse of thy God; to the end thou maiest bee able to ouercome all calamities.

And hereunto he by and by addes, that he *be not faint-hearted*, which is as much, as to melt away, or be dissolued. Also it is not without
Heb. 11. 27. good cause that the Apostle teacheth vs, that our hearts are stablished by faith. For when (in forgetting God) we suffer our selues to moulter away any thing at all, through our owne infidelitie; it proceedes first from a weake and sluggish cowardlinesse. But hee cannot be said to be delicate, or womanish, who resting himselfe vpon the spirit of God, valiantly resistes all aduersities. Whence we gather, that the Prophet meant nothing else, but that *Ahaz* should waite with an vndaunted minde, for that issue which God had promised him.

For the two Tayles.] *Isaiah* vseth a very elegant similitude here, to weaken the opinion which the Iewes had conceiued concerning these mightie Kings, whose greatnes had smitten their hearts with such terror: for their crueltie and furie was as it had been a flaming fire; sufficient to haue consumed all Iudea: yea, and it seemed that this *fire* could neuer haue been quenched. But *Isaiah* on the contrarie vouchsafeth them not so much as the name of firebrands; because that might haue seemed somewhat: but onely calles them I cannot tell what fragments or ends of firebrands not kindled, but onely *smoking:* as if a brand being taken out of the fire, should begin to moulder away, and should cast nothing else but a little light smoke. This similitude then containes a singular consolation; by which we are admonished to esteeme farre otherwise of the *violence* of the wicked, then according to the outward appearance. They seeme to be so mightie, as if they were able to set on fire, destroy, and consume all the world. Now the Lord minding to preuent and take the feare which we haue conceiued from vs, pronounceth that it is but a *little weake smoke*, of small continuance: although to our seeming it should bee such a fire as neuer could bee quenched.

We must not esteeme the violence of the wicked according to outward appearance.

Vers. 5. *Because Aram hath taken wicked counsell against thee,* and *Ephraim and Remaliahs sonne, saying:*

ALthough hee had saide before, that the threates and endeuors of the enemies against the people of God, should bee vaine and turned into *smoke*; yet hee dissembles not how many cruelties they had deuised, if God withheld them not. For by *euill counsell*, he meanes a destruction: because these two Kings had both conspired to destroy the countrey of Iudeah. And to the end he might the better expresse the same, and might also let them see it, as it were before their eyes, hee recites their counsell in the verse following.

Vers. 6. *Let vs goe vp against Iudah, and let vs waken them vp, and make a *breach therein for vs, and set a King in the middest thereof,* euen *the sonne of Tabeal.*

* Or, an entrance into it.

Let vs goe vp.] That is to say, let vs make ready an armie. Some turne the verbe *Nakitsmah*, let vs trouble or afflict: the which indeede shewes the originall of the word: but in this coniugation it signifies rather, To awaken. And howsoeuer I reiect not this first interpretation; yet notwithstanding I had rather follow the second, because it agrees best with the Text. By *Awakening*, I vnderstand, To trouble; and to practise some new stratagem: as we commonly say, raise vp sturres, that this kingdome may no longer be in quiet. As touching that which followes, many

many expound *Nanquinmah*: Let vs enter into it by force: others; Let vs ſo handle the matter, that it ſhall not be able to ſtand before vs. I haue tranſlated, *Let vs make an entrance into it*. For the verbe *Baqua* ſignifies that which we commonly ſay, let vs make a breach, or entrance. Now the meane to breake into Iudea, was either to ſtoppe the paſſages by force of armes: or by feares to ſollicit thoſe which ſhould be timerous and wauering, to reuolt: for whileſt ſubiects hold their obedience, all paſſage is ſhut vp; but when all is on a hurly burly, by ſeditions and factions; an eaſie entrance is made to paſſe euen to the ſtrongeſt and beſt fortified places. Thus theſe two Kings hoped as ſoone as they ſhould bee ariſed in Iudea, that they ſhould terrifie all the hearts of the people with their great and mightie armie, ſo as they ſhould haue neither power nor will to reſiſt. For it is not likely that hauing ſo great a multitude of men, they meant to holde any long ſiege. True it is, that Ieruſalem was well fortified: but they thought the citie would be frighted and troubled with this greate armie, and therefore would by and by yeeld it ſelfe to their mercie. Yet notwithſtanding I leaue it to the libertie of euery one, touching the interpretation of theſe words: ſeeing the Prophets meaning is plaine enough. But we cannot eaſily gather from the hiſtories who this *Thabeal* was. It is very likely that he was ſome Iſraelite; who being an enemie to the houſe of *Dauid*, theſe Kings would binde and oblige vnto them.

Verſ. 7. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, it ſhall not ſtand, neither ſhall it be.*

THat which was ſaide before, was to the magnifying of ſo rare and excellent a deliuerance. For when the Lord meanes to ſuccour vs in temptations, he ſets the greatneſſe of the danger before vs, to the end we might perceiue that hee promiſeth no leſſe than the neceſſitie requireth. Hee leſſeneth not, but rather amplifies the euils wherewith we are preſſed: then he offereth his promiſe, and ſhewes that hee is allſufficient to deliuer vs, although it ſeeme wee bee paſt recouerie. The Prophet hath followed this manner of teaching. For he might ſimply haue told them what ſhould come to paſſe, and might haue incouraged the King and the people; to the end they ſhould not bee affrighted nor diſcouraged in regard of theſe great armies: but he diſcouers the counſell and deliberation of theſe Kings; againſt which he now oppoſeth the promiſes and *decree of God*, that his admirable worke in their deliuerance might the better appeare. Behold then the ſacred anchor which onely holds vs faſt in the middeſt of all tempeſtuous temptations: whereas on the contrarie, if God ſhould take away his word from vs, we were neuer able to hold out in aduerſities. Although the King then was almoſt ouerwhelmed with deſpaire alreadie; *Iſaiah* tells him that there is nothing ſo terrible which he may not boldly deſpiſe, if ſo be that fortifying himſelfe ſtrongly vpon this promiſe of God, he patiently waite for that which he ſees not, which yet ſeemes almoſt incredible to him. He affirmes then that howſoeuer theſe men haue lifted vp themſelues as giants againſt God, yet they ſhal not bring their practiſes to perfection. And hee vſeth the word, To ariſe vp, as alſo the Latines by this ſimilitude ſignifie a worke with his goings forward. Laſtly, he affirmes that ſuch a boldneſſe ſo full of ſacrilledge, *cannot ſtand*. There is yet more vehemencie in that which he addes, *It ſhall not ſtand*: that is to ſay, it ſhall be ſo diſanulled, as if it had neuer been. We muſt note this manner of ſpeech well, by which he oppoſeth the bare and naked word of God, againſt this great haſte, and the deliberation of theſe two Kings.

The ſacred anchor.

See verſe 6.

Verſ. 8. *For the head of Aram is Damaſcus, and the head of Damaſcus is Rezin: * and within fiue and threeſcore yeere Ephraim ſhall be *deſtroyed* from being a people.*

* Or, yet 65. yeere, and *Or, broken. *Or, and ſhall be no more a people.

THe head of Syria.] As if he ſhould ſay, Theſe two kingdomes ſhall haue their limits, euen as they haue at this preſent. They aſpire to thy kingdome, but I haue ſet them bounds which they ſhall not paſſe. *Damaſcus* was the chiefe citie of Syria, as Paris is of France. Hee ſaith then that theſe two Kings muſt be content with their owne greatneſſe, and that looke what eſtate they were now in, the ſame ſhould they continue in hereafter. Now after he hath told them it is in vaine for them to endeuour at this time to amplifie their limits; he foretels the calamitie of the kingdome of Iſrael. For by the word, *To breake*, hee ſignifies that this kingdome ſhall be brought to nothing, and ſhall be no more. For the Iſraelites were carried away indeed into exile, and brought to another people: as part of Sauoy is now incorporated into the kingdome of France, and hath loſt his name. This is it which the Prophet meanes, when hee ſaith, that they ſhall bee *no more a people*: becauſe that Iſrael in this exile ſhould be mingled with ſtrange nations, and ſhould euen loſe his proper name.

Yet ſixtie fiue yeeres.] Seeing that the Iſraelites were led into captiuitie in the ſixth yeere of King *Hezekias*, and that *Achaz* raigned but ſixteene yeeres: it is certaine that this reckoning of yeeres ſhould not begin from ſ day that *Iſaiah* was ſent to bring this meſſage. For there was onely twentie yeeres to the time that the ten Tribes were caried into captiuitie. *Amos* had propheſied of it; and no doubt but as this propheſie of *Amos* was knowne, ſo alſo the period of time appointed was vnderſtoode of all, euery one knowing the number of yeeres. If we reckon then from the time that *Amos* foretold theſe things, we ſhall finde it threeſcore and fiue yeeres: for *Iotham* raigned ſixteene yeeres, *Achaz* as many. Adde thereunto ſixt of King *Hezekias*, wherein the ten Tribes were led into exile: and then take twentie ſeuen yeeres

Amos 3. 11.

wherein *Vzziah* raigned after this propheſie, and it will make threeſcore and fiue. This coniecture is very probable: neither neede we doubt but *Iſaiah* meant thus. For we haue the propheſie of *Amos*, by which the Lord admoniſhed the people, leſt they ſhould haue complained they had been ſuddainely ouerwhelmed without warning. *Iſaiah* confirmes this propheſie, and propoſeth the ſame time which was already knowne of all. Beſides, by theſe words he ſharpely galles the ſenſeleſneſſe of the people of Iſrael, in that being thus admoniſhed of the deſtruction both of their countrie and name; they not onely deſpiſed (with all boldnes) the name of God, but burned with a deſire to deuoure all Iudea: as if they meant to ſcorne this heauenly reuelation of ſet purpoſe; thinking becauſe a long time was already paſt, that they therefore had now eſcaped. The Prophet derides this their folly; namely, becauſe they imagined the word of God would waxe olde and wither away, in ſo ſmall a number of yeeres. But becauſe the Iſraelites were deafe, *Iſaiah* giues them of Iudeah a ſet time wherein to looke for the ruine of their enemies. This place alſo teacheth, that the Prophets were faithfull aſſiſters one of another, to the end they might ſerue God with one heart and affection.

Verſ. 9. **For the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliahs ſonne. If ye beleeue not, ſurely ye ſhall not be eſtabliſhed.*

* Or, In the meane while.

BEcauſe this is a repetition by which hee would confirme that which hee ſaid before, namely, that God hath limited the boundes of the kingdome of Iſrael for a certaine time; therefore I haue tranſlated, In the meane time: for otherwiſe it would bee abſurd, that the chiefe citie ſhould remaine in hir perfection after the kingdome (as hee erewhile foretold) ſhould bee brought to nought. The ſenſe then is, whileſt the threeſcore and fiue yeeres are running on, and comming to their end, Iſrael hath ſome reſpite. His chiefe citie ſhal be Samaria: let him content himſelfe with his boundes, and aſpire no higher: for ſuch ſhall his eſtate be, till he be wholly cut off, and be no more reputed a people.

Except yee beleeue it.] The particle *Ci* is put in the middeſt of the ſentence, as yeelding the reaſon of it. And therefore ſome tranſlate thus; If you beleeue not: that is to ſay, becauſe you are not beleeuers. And ſo reſtraine the firſt member to the propheſie of Iſaiah: but the ſecond, to the whole word of God, as if he ſhould ſay, If you giue no credit to my words, then your infidelitie ſhall bee knowne to all. But thus there ſhould be no difference betweene the verbe *Thaaminu*, and the other verbe *Theamenu*, which are of diuers coniugations. But the Prophet hath not changed the termination without cauſe: and it appeares by many teſtimonies of the holy Scriptures, that the verbe *Amin*, in the coniugation of *Niphal*, is taken for to ſtand, or continue faſt in his degree. I thinke then that this is as much as if he had ſaid, Behold your onely ſtay; waite quietly without being vexed in your ſelues for that which the Lord hath promiſed, to wit, deliuerance: if you waite not for it, what remaines, but that you periſh? The particle *Ci* ſignifies as much (it being alſo vſually ſo taken in many other places) as *ſurely*. He affirmes then that they cannot ſtand, vnleſſe they beleeue this promiſe: yea, his words ſound ſomewhat more bitingly; namely, that although they refuſed to giue credit vnto it, and ſhould endeuour to the vttermoſt to ouerthrow the ſtedfaſtneſſe thereof; yet would God for his part continue ſtill to bee firme and *ſure*: as alſo, that themſelues could not *ſtand*, vnleſſe they reſted vpon the promiſe here offered them. Whence we haue to gather a generall doctrine: to wit, that our deſtruction then approcheth, when we ſhall depart frō the word of God; howſoeuer we imagine our ſelues to be well and ſufficiently grounded. For our ſaluation is incloſed in the word of God: and when that is reiected, God iuſtly auengeth the wrong that is done to him therein: for hee was neere to haue ſuſtained men by his power, if they had not voluntarily plunged themſelues headlong into deſtruction: we muſt reſt confidently then vpon the promiſes of God, or elſe it is in vaine to looke for ſaluation.

Verſ. 10. *And the Lord ſpake againe vnto Ahaz, ſaying:*

BEcauſe the Lord knew very well that King *Ahaz* was ſo wicked, as he would not reſt vpon his promiſe; he therefore ſent *Iſaiah* to confirme him by adding a ſigne. For when God ſees that his promiſes ſuffice vs not, hee addes fit and conuenient ſignes according to our weakeneſſe: to the end wee ſhould not onely heare him ſpeake; but that alſo in ſeeing his hand reached forth vnto vs, we might be further confirmed by euident teſtimonies. Whereupon we ought diligently to note the vſe of ſignes; namely, to what end God ſhewes miracles: to wit, that wee might bee confirmed by them in the certaintie of the word. For when we ſee his power, if we make ſcruple to beleeue his word, hee corrects our doubting, by making vs ſee euen the thing it ſelfe: and miracles being added to the word, doe become ſeales thereof.

Verſ. 11. *Aske a ſigne for thee of the Lord thy God, aske it either in the depth beneath, or in the height aboue.*

I Vnderſtand theſe words *hic*, or *hoc*, ſimplie. He puts it to his choyce to chooſe a miracle, whether he aske it in heauen, or in earth. It may be this word *in the depth*, hath ſome greater vehemencie in this place, as if he ſhould ſay, Take thy choice, God will ſhew thee by and by that his dominion is farre a-

boue

boue all the world; yea, that it reacheth euen to the bottome of all depths, ſo as at his will and pleaſure he can raiſe the dead out of their graues. See here then a ſingular goodnes of God towards the King, and towards the people, that not only patientlie beares with their diſtruſt for a time, but thus graciouſlie ſubmits himſelfe ſo far, as to be readie to giue them euen ſuch a ſigne as they themſelues would deſire for a pledge of his power. Indeed he had not ſo much regard herein to the wicked alone, as rather to prouide for the weake which had ſome ſeed of godlines in them, to the end they might be the more aſſured that *Iſaiah* ſpake not at aduenture, ſeeing he could ſo readily ſhew a ſigne of the power of God for a confirmation of his ſpeech. The ſame goodnes of God is now diſplayed towards ſuch as he beares ſo much withall, although he haue iuſt occaſion to be angrie with them. For how great iniurie do they to him when they doubt of his truth? What is left to God, I pray you, when he is diſpoiled of that? Now although wee doubt, yet he is not only contented to pardon it, but alſo to vnderprop our diſtruſt, not with words only, but which is more, with miracles; and preſents them not only to the faithfull, but euen to the vnfaithfull likewiſe, of which wee may take a view in this king. Now if he be ſo gentle to ſtrangers, what ſhall we thinke he will be to his owne houſhold ſeruants which wait vpon him?

Verſ. 12. *But Ahaz ſaid, I will not aske, neither will I tempt the Lord.*

HE vnder a faire pretence refuſeth the ſigne which the Lord offred him, ſaying, that *he would not tempt him*: for he ſeemes as if he beleeued the words of the Prophet, demanding nothing elſe but the word. And truely as impietie is deteſtable before God, ſo doubtleſſe he greatly priſeth faith. Wherefore it ſhould ſeeme that he who reſts vpon the only word of God, deſpiſing all things elſe, is worthie of great praiſe, becauſe there is no greater perfection then to ſubmit our ſelues to God. But will ſome ſay, Do we tempt God when we receiue that which he offreth? Certainely no. *Ahaz* lied then when he refuſed the ſigne which was offred him, vnder pretence of *not tempting God*, for there is nothing better or more excellent, then to obey God. It is a great vertue in deed to aske nonothing but the word; but if God be pleaſed to adde ſomewhat more vnto it, it is then no vertue but a vice to reiect ſuch an help as a thing ſuperfluous. Yea, there is great iniurie offred vnto God in deſpiſing his liberalitie; as if that which he doth for our ſakes were vnprofitable, or as if he were ignorant what things were good and neceſſarie for vs. Wee know that faith receiues her chiefe praiſe, becauſe ſhe holds her ſelfe in obedience: but when we will be wiſe in our owne conceits, and deſpiſe the leaſt thing which is of God, we are abominable before him, what pretence ſoeuer we make before men. We muſt ſo ioyne faith to the word then, that we deſpiſe not the helps which he offreth and giueth vs for the ſtrengthening of our faith.

Obiect.

Anſ.

As for example, the Lord in the Goſpell offreth vs all things neceſſarie for our ſaluation: for ſeeing by it we be ioyned to Chriſt, the ſumme of all good things is conteined in it. But to what end ſerueth Baptiſme and the holy Supper then; ſhould we eſteeme them as things ſuperfluous? No ſurely, becauſe whoſo without flattering of himſelfe ſhall take knowledge of his infirmitie, which all from the leaſt to the greateſt ought to feele, ſuch an one will be willing to ſtrengthen his faith by theſe helps. True it is we ought to mourne and weepe that the holy truth of God (which can not lie) ſhould haue need of any prop for the infirmities ſake of our fleſh. But in regard we can not caſt off this corruption from vs at the firſt chop, whoſoeuer according to his abilitie ſhall adde faith to the word, he ſhall forthwith render perfect obedience to God. Let vs learne then to imbrace the ſignes with the word, ſeeing it is not in the power of man to ſeparate them.

The ſignes and word muſt not be ſeparated, where God hath coupled them together.

Now in that *Ahaz* refuſeth the ſigne which was offred him, he therein ſhewed his rebellion & vnthankfulnes; for he deſpiſeth that which God had preſented him for his exceeding profit. Heereby alſo it appeares after what maner we ought to require ſignes, to wit, when they are offred vs of God: he then which refuſeth them, muſt needs reiect the grace of God therewithall. Some franticke ones there are at this day who make no reckning of Baptiſme, nor of the Lords Supper, thinking them abces for little children: which yet they can not do, but they muſt therewithall reiect the whole Goſpell: for thoſe things muſt not be ſeparate which God hath ioyned together. But ſome wil aske notwithſtanding, whether it be not lawfull to aske ſome ſignes of God, for we haue an example thereof in *Gedeon*, who deſired that his vocation might bee confirmed with ſome ſigne: the Lord granted his requeſt, and diſliked not ſuch a deſire: Iudg. 6.17. To this I anſwere, that although *Gedeon* had no expreſſe commandement of God to aske a ſigne, yet notwithſtanding he was ſtirred vp to doe it by the holy Ghoſt, and did it not of his owne proper motion. Wherefore we muſt not take the like libertie to our ſelues by abuſing his example, eſpeciallie ſeeing the importunitie of men is ſo great, that they make no bones to aske ſignes of God without end or meaſure. Such a boldnes therefore is to be ſuppreſſed, to the end wee may content our ſelues with thoſe which God offereth vs. Now there are two ſorts of ſignes: ſome extraordinarie; which we may call ſupernaturall: as that whereof the Prophet wil ſpeake anon, and that which was giuen to *Hezekiah*, as we ſhal ſee God willing hereafter, Iſay 38.7. Others are ordinarie, and in daily vſe, as Baptiſme, and the holy Supper, which conteine no miracle, at the leaſt which can be ſeene to the eye, or by any other outward ſenſe. For that which the Lord miraculouſly works therein by the holy Ghoſt, can not be ſeene; but in the extraor-

Qeeſt.

Anſ.

Two ſorts of ſignes.

1

2

Extraordinarie miracles, visible.

dinarie, the miracle is visible to the eye. Now all other signes haue the same end and vse, because that euen as *Gedeon* was confirmed by that maruelous signe, so also are we confirmed by Baptisme and the holy Supper, although we see no miracle before our eyes.

Vers. 13. *Then he sayd, heare you now O house of Dauid, is it a small thing for you to grieue men, that ye will also grieue my God?*

BEcause it was an intolerable wickednes to shut the gate against the power of God which should confirme the truth of the promise vnder colour of honestie and modestie; the Prophet is iustlie offended, and sharplie rebukes these wicked hypocrites. Now howsoeuer it were an honorable thing for them to be held for the race of *Dauid* (which had been so indeed if they had walked in ỹ steps of *Dauid*) yet notwithstanding he now calles them ỹ successors of the *house of Dauid* rather by way of reproach, then otherwise. And in very deed, the ingratitude was so much the more heinous, because this fauour was reiected by that *house*, out of which the saluation of the whole world should come. Their originall therefore from whom they had so shamefullie degenerated, was a great dishonor vnto them. And wee must obserue this order heere: for we ought not to begin with sharp reprehensions, but with doctrine, to the end men may be gentlie drawen, rather then enforced by it. When the bare & simple doctrine will not serue, then we must adde confirmations: but if they will profit by neither of these, then it is needfull to vse greater vehemencie. In this maner it is that *Isaiah* thundreth here, for hauing offred doctrine and signes to the king without fruit, he now vseth the last remedie, sharplie and grieuouslie chiding this obstinate man, and not him alone, but also all the house royall, which was defiled with this impietie.

Doctrine.

Confirmations.

Reprehensions.

Is it a small thing?] He vseth comparisons betweene *God* and *men*; not that those of whom hee speakes, to wit, the Prophets and faithfull Teachers, can in deed be separated from God, for they are nothing else but the instruments of the Lord, hauing one common cause with him, as long as they discharge their duties. And the Lord testifies of them, *who so despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that heareth you, heareth me*, Math. 10. 40. The Prophet then shapes his speech according to the impietie of *Ahaz* and his fellowes, because they thought they had to do only with men. And no question but we may heare the like voyce which the wicked belch out euen amongst vs at this day: Are they not *men* that speake vnto vs? and by this meanes they thinke to make voyd the doctrine of God.

It being then an ordinarie thing amongst the prophane contemners of holie doctrine to speake thus, the Prophet acknowledgeth indeed that they were men which had this charge committed vnto them, to teach the word of God. As if he should say, be it that I am a mortall man, as you say I am, and that you haue such an opinion of the Prophets of God; yet is it a small thing for you to grieue vs, but that you will also *grieue God himselfe?* But in reiecting the signe of his admirable power which hee is readie to giue you, you reiect him. It is in vaine then for you to brag that you make no account of it, because you haue to do with men, and not with him. This then is the cause why the Prophet is so moued with anger: whence we perceiue the thing which I touched erewhile, to wit, that it is time to vse seuere reprehensions after we haue vsed all the good meanes which God hath giuen vs, and haue omitted nothing of that which was our dutie: then we must rush vpon them with greater vehemencie, and lay open that impietie which lay hid vnder these cloakes of hypocrisie.

My God.] He said before, Aske for thee a signe of the Lord *thy God*, to wit, whilest his peruersitie and rebellion was hidden: now he takes it as proper to himselfe, because *Ahaz* and those that were with him were vnworthie of the honour of so excellent a title. He shewes then that God is of his side, and not with these hypocrites, and thus testifies what his confidence is. For he shewes with what conscience he promised deliuerance to the king, as if he should say, I came not of my selfe, but was sent of God, and haue told thee nothing but out of the mouth of *my God*. All Ministers should haue the same boldnes, not in appearance only, but effectuallie rooted in their hearts. The false Prophets will brag too much of this; but it is only a vaine and impudent iangling which they keepe, with a blind confidence proceeding from presumption.

Vers. 14. *Therefore the Lord himselfe will giue you a signe, Behold the Virgin shall conceiue and beare a sonne, and she shall call his name Immanuel.*

AHaz had alreadie refused a signe which the Lord had offred him when the Prophet protested against his obstinacie and vnthankfulnes. *Isaiah* notwithstanding testifies that this shall not let nor hinder the Lord from giuing the Iewes the *signe* which he had promised and appointed. But what signe? *That a Virgin should be with child.* This place is obscure: but the Iewes themselues are partlie the cause of it, who as much as in them is haue depraued the true exposition by diuers cauils. For this testimonie toucheth them neere, in regard it conteines an excellent prophesie of the Messiah, who is heere called *Immanuel*: and therefore haue they studied by all meanes to wrest the Prophets meaning to another sense. Some of them pretend that mention is made here of king *Hezekias*, others of the sonne of *Isaiah*. Those which draw this place to *Hezekias*, are too shameleese, seeing it must needs be that he was of yeeres when Ierusalem was besieged, shewing thereby that they are altogether ignorant of the historie. But behold the iust reward of the froward, namely,

namely, that God ſo blinds them, that they are depriued of all iudgement. The like befalles the Papiſts at this day, who oftentimes make themſelues laughingſtocks when they are caried away with the ſpirit of giddines to depraue the ſcriptures. The pretence of thoſe who thinke it was the ſonne of *Iſaiah*, is altogether friuolous, becauſe we reade not that a deliuerer ſhould be raiſed vp of the ſeed of *Iſaiah* which might deſerue the title of *Immanuel*: for this title is ſo high and excellent, that it can appertaine to no man.

Others thinke, or at the leaſt confeſſe (becauſe they will not contend ouermuch with the Iewes) that the Prophet ſpeakes of ſome child which ſhould be borne then, by which Chriſt notwithſtanding was figured darkely. But they bring no reaſons of any weight, neither do they ſhew who this child ſhould be, nor yet prooue it by any teſtimonies. Now it is certaine (as hath been ſaid) that this name of *Immanuel* can propetlie agree to none that is man only, and therfore we need not doubt but the Prophet ſpeakes heere of Chriſt. But all both Greeks and Latins which haue written vpon this text are too confident in the expounding of it: for they ſimplie affirme, that Chriſt is heere promiſed of the virgin Marie, as though there were no difficultie in this place. Now the knot which the Iewes would haue vs vntie is not eaſily done, to wit, that mention is made of Chriſt heere without any cauſe. Thus they deale with vs, willing vs to cõſider well the circumſtance of the place. Ieruſalem was beſieged, the Prophet was to giue them a ſigne of their deliuerance: to what purpoſe is the Meſſiah promiſed them now, who ſhould be borne fiue hundred yeeres after? By this argument they thinke they haue woon the gole, affirming, that the promiſe touching Chriſt could ſtand *Ahaz* in no ſtead for aſſuring him of the deliuerance of Ieruſalem. And heere they crie victorie, chiefely indeed becauſe none haue anſwered them. And therefore I ſaid that the expoſitors hitherunto haue been too confident in this reſpect, for it is not a thing of ſmall importance to ſhew the cauſe why mention is made heere of the redeemer. Let vs ſee then how we may reſolue it.

King *Ahaz* refuſing the ſigne which was offred him of God, is brought at the laſt by the Prophet to the foundation of the couenant, which euen the moſt wicked durſt not reiect. The Meſſiah muſt be borne, and all looked for him, becauſe the ſaluation of all the people depended vpon him. The Prophet then hauing rebuked the king, proceeds with him againe in this maner, Thou wouldeſt faine ouerthrow the decree of God in reiecting his promiſe; but this decree notwithſtanding ſhal remaine inuiolable: thy diſloyaltie and ingratitude ſhall not hinder God from being the deliuerer of his people, becauſe at the laſt he will raiſe vp his anointed. And for the more full declaration of theſe things, we muſt obſerue the cuſtome of the Prophets, who in confirming particular promiſes, do lay this foundation, to wit, that God wil ſend the Redeemer. By this general prop the Lord euery where confirmes that which he ſpecially promiſeth to his people. And queſtionleſſe it muſt needs be that he which lookes for help and ſuccor from God, muſt therewithall bee alſo perſwaded of his fatherlie loue. But how ſhould he be fauorable without Chriſt, in whom he hath freelie adopted vs for his choſen, and alwaies receiueth vs vnto mercie? According to which S. *Paul* ſaith, That in Chriſt all the promiſes of God are yea and Amen, 2. Cor. 1. 20. As oft then as God ſent any ſuccor to his people in old time, he by and by reconciled them to himſelfe in Chriſt. And therefore when hee threatens famin, peſtilence, or ſword, he ſets the Meſſiah before their eies to giue them hope of deliuerance. Seeing this is ſo apparãt, the Iewes haue no cauſe to ſtorme heere as if the Prophet ſhould ſpeake without cauſe of a thing ſo farre remote. For whereupon did the deliuerance of Ieruſalem depend? was it not vpon the manifeſtation of Chriſt? vpon which foundation the ſaluation of the Church hath euermore been builded and vpheld.

Iſaiah then ſpeakes properlie, ſaying, Thou receiueſt not the promiſes of God; but yet will he fulfill them: yea, he will *ſend his Chriſt*, for whoſe ſake it is his pleaſure to preſerue this Citie: and howſoeuer thou beeſt vnworthie of it, yet God will haue regard of his owne glorie. King *Ahaz* then is ſhut out from the ſigne which he had before reiected, and is depriued of the benefit of which he made himſelfe vnworthie: yet is the inuiolable promiſe of God offred againe vnto him, which is ſufficientlie ſhewed by the particle *Laken*, which ſignifies *Therefore*, as if he ſhould ſay, Becauſe thou reiecteſt this particular ſigne which God offred thee; the ſame God which was ſo liberall as to offer thee a ſigne freely, will not ceaſe to giue it, although it be irkſome and cumberſome to thee. But whereas I haue ſaid, that the euent of this promiſe is made euen to *Ahaz*, my meaning is not as if God did therein comprehend him within the number of his choſen, for whoſe ſaluation God had ordeined his Sonne: but as in reſpect that the word was directed to the whole bodie of the people. For they which expound the word *Lakem*, which ſignifies your ſonnes, is conſtreined. Moreouer, the Prophet leaues this prophane king in regard of the accompliſhment of the promiſe, and hath reſpect to the people who were adopted of God. He will giue it *you* then, not to *thee*, ô curſed king, nor to thy companions, but to *you* whom he hath adopted. For the couenant which God had made with *Abraham* remaineth ſure and vnmoueable. And the Lord hath alwaies had a remnant to whom the fruits of it do appertain, although hypocrites rule and beare ſway ouer the people who are partakers thereof. So then there is no inconuenience to propound this promiſe to the viſible Church, and to ſet it in full view before their eies.

Behold a virgin.] The word *behold* hath great weight, and it is put to ſet forth the greatnes of the matter. And ſo is the Scripture wont to ſpeake of excellent and memorable things,

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to the end mens minds may be lifted vp aboue all earthlie things. The Prophet commands then ỳ thoſe which heare him ſhould be attentiue, and conſider this extraordinarie worke of God; as if he ſhould ſay, Be not ſluggiſh, but wey this great grace of God, which you ought cheerefullie to receiue; but it is hidden from you, becauſe of your dulnes. Now although the word *Alma* which ſignifies virgin, be deriued from *Alam*, which ſignifies to hide, becauſe ſhamefaſt and modeſt virgins preſſe not into publike meetings: and although the Iewes contend very much about this word, denying that it is taken for virgin, becauſe *Solomon* vſeth it for a yong maid which is beloued; we need not ſtand long in deciding this queſtion. Let vs grant them that *Alma* ſignifies a yong Damſell betrothed, and that this word is to be referred rather to the age as they will haue it (which the ſcripture notwithſtanding vſeth often when it ſpeakes of a virgin) the thing it ſelfe ſufficientlie refiſtes all their ſlanders. For what matter of admiration had the Prophet ſpoken of, if he had ſaid, that a maid ſhould conceiue by the companie of man? Truly it had been a rediculous thing to ſet this forth for a matter of wonder or miracle. But put the caſe it ſhould be ſpoké of a woman which ſhould conceiue by the helpe of man, yet all may ſee it to be a fond and ſenſeleſſe thing, that the Prophet ſpeaking to the Iewes of a new and extraordinarie matter, ſhould adde that a betrothed maid ſhould conceiue. It appeares ſufficientlie then that he ſpeakes of a virgin which ſhould conceiue by the power of the holy Ghoſt, and not according to the common order of nature. And this is that myſterie which S. *Paul* ſo highlie magnifies, to wit, that God was manifeſted in the fleſh, 1. Tim. 3. 16.

And ſhe ſhall call.] The verbe is of the feminine gender among the Hebrues. For I know not whence they haue taken it which reade it in the maſculin, ſeeing the copies which we vſe differ not one from another in this reſpect: ſo that being referred to the mother, it is certaine that ſome extraordinarie thing is expreſſed. We know that the charge is alwaies giuen to the father to impoſe the name vpon the child, in regard it is a ſigne of that authoritie and power which fathers haue ouer their children, neither belongs it to the women. But here it is transferred to the mother. Whence it follows then that he is ſo conceiued of his mother that he had no father on earth, for otherwiſe the Prophet ſhould peruert the common vſe of the Scripture, which attributes this office to mé only. Although it is to be noted, that this name was not impoſed vpō Chriſt by the wil of his mother, neither had there been any weight therein; but the Prophet meanes that the *virgin* ſhall be as it were the Herault which ſhall publiſh this name, becauſe there ſhould be no earthlie father to performe this office.

Beſides, this name was attributed to Ieſus Chriſt euen in regard of the effect, becauſe the only ſonne of God clothed himſelfe with our fleſh, and vnited himſelfe vnto vs in taking one ſelfeſame nature with vs. He is called then *God with vs*, or conioined with vs, which can not agree to the man that is not God. The Iewes in their cauilings ſay, that this name was impoſed vpon *Hezekias*, becauſe God deliuered his people by his hand. He (ſay they) who is Gods miniſter, repreſents his perſon. But neither *Moſes* nor *Ioſhua*, which deliuered the people, were ſo called: it followes then that this name *Immanuel*, is preferred farre before that of *Moſes*, *Ioſhua*, or any other; for by this name he ſurmounts all thoſe that either were before, or ſhall be after him: it being a teſtimonie of an high and excellent dignitie and authoritie wherewith hee is adorned aboue all creatures. Wherefore it appeares that not only the vertue of God is heere ſet forth vnto vs as it was wont to be by ſuch miniſters, but the vnion of the perſon, in which Chriſt appeared God and man together. Whence we ſtill perceiue, that *Iſaiah* telles vs no common matter, but ſhewes an incomparable ſecret, which the Iewes labour with tooth and naile to obſcure and darken.

A cauill of the Iewes.

Anſ.

Verſ. 15. *Butter and hony ſhall he eate, till he haue knowledge to refuſe the euill, and to chooſe the good.*

HEre the Prophet confirmes the true humanitie of Chriſt; for it was a thing altogether incredible, that he which was God, ſhould be borne of a virgin. So ſtrange a thing agreed nothing at all to humane reaſon. To the end we ſhould not thinke then that hee imagineth ſome ghoſt, hee declares the ſignes of this humanitie, by which he ſhewes that Chriſt ſhall appeare in the very true nature or fleſh of men, to wit, becauſe he ſhall *be nouriſhed after the ſame maner that other little children be.* Now the Iewes had another maner of nouriſhing their children then we haue, for they vſed *hony*, which we commonlie vſe not, and they retaine this faſhion among them yet to this day, ſo as they cauſe the Infant new borne to taſte of *butter* and *hony* before they giue it ſuck.

Till he know.] That is to ſay, till he be come to thoſe yeeres wherein he can diſcerne euill from good, and as we commonlie ſay, till he be of diſcretion: for the letter *Lamed*, ſignifies the time and terme, namely, how long he ſhall be nouriſhed after the maner of children: and this ſerues to proue his humane nature ſo much the more. By *knowledge* hee meanes that vnderſtanding and iudgement which comes after Infancie is paſt. Whereby we ſee how farre it pleaſed the ſonne of God to abaſe himſelfe for our ſakes; that he would not only be fed with ordinarie foode, but was alſo content to be depriued of *vnderſtanding* for a time, and to ſuſteine all our infirmities according to his humane nature; for this can not appertaine to the diuine nature. S. *Luke* ſpeakes of this time of Chriſtes ignorance, when he ſaith, *he profited in wiſdome, and in ſtature, and in fauour with God and men.* Luk. 3. 35. If S. *Luke* had ſaid ſimplie that Chriſt profited,

Heb. 2. 17.

profited, one might haue replied, that was in regard of men; but he expreſly addes *toward God*. It was needfull that he ſhould be like to all other little children for a time, that hee might be deſtitute of vnderſtanding as touching his humanitie.

*Or, Truely. Verſ.16. * *For before the Child ſhall haue knowledge to eſchue the euill and to chooſe the good, the land that thou abhorreſt, ſhall be forſaken of both her kings.*

MAny are heere deceiued when they will conioine this preſent ſentence with the former, as if it were ſpoken of the ſame child, and ſo make it an expoſition of the former, as if the particle *Ci* were rationall. But if we more narrowlie wey the Prophets meaning it will ſufficientlie appeare, that hauing left the generall doctrine, from which hee had made ſome digreſſion, he now returnes to the matter againe; for hauing grounded the hope of Ieruſalems deliuerance vpon the promiſed Meſſiah, now he teacheth how it ſhall be deliuered. I expound not this verſe then of Chriſt, but of all children in generall; and herein I differ in opinion from all others which thinke it ſhould be ſpoken here of ſome certaine child. But for mine owne part I take the word *Hannar* generallie, ſo as the letter *He* ſhould be added for the better vnderſtanding, rather to ſhew the age, then ſome ſpeciall child, as we commonlie ſay, *The child*, adding this article *The*, for the clearer vnderſtanding of the matter; which alſo is very vſuall in the Scripture. Now if the word *the* had marked out ſome particular child, he would rather haue ſaid, this child, as in other places. Neither is it likely that this promiſe touching the ruin of the kingdomes of Syria and Samaria (which followed not long after) ſhould be deferred fiue hundred yeeres, that is, to the comming of Chriſt: we know this were too great an abſurditie. The ſenſe then is, *Before the children which ſhall be borne hereafter ſhall know to diſcerne euill from good, the land which thou abhorreſt ſhall be forſaken.*

By *land* I vnderſtand the land of Iſrael & Syria: for although they were two Countries, yet notwithſtanding they were eſteemed but one, by reaſon of ỹ couenant which the two kings had made one with another. Some take *the land* for Iudea; but that can not agree, becauſe of the relatiue that followes. Now it is eaſie to gather from the holie hiſtorie, that theſe things came ſo to paſſe according as they are heere written. For after *Ahaz* had called the Aſſyrians to help him, *Rezin* was ſlaine by them, 2.King.16.9. *Pekah* king of Iſrael died ſoone after, that is to wit, in the twelfth yeere of king *Ahaz*: and *Hoſhea* the ſonne of *Ela* reigned in his ſtead, 2.King. 17.1. Before the children then which ſhould be borne ſoone after ſhould come to yeeres of diſcretion, *both the kingdomes were deſtitute of both their kings*, becauſe *Rezin* and *Pekah* died before that time. The word indeed is directed to *Ahaz*; and to the end he might be the more reuiued, God promiſeth him to take vengeance of his enemies; yet only to the end he might be left the more without excuſe. As touching the words, it is ſaid, that king *Ahaz abhorred* or deteſted the land of Syria and Iſrael, becauſe from thence he was aſſailed. God promiſeth then that theſe kings ſhall quicklie periſh. Some turne the word *Mipne*, Becauſe; and I confeſſe it is often taken in this ſenſe: but I expound it more ſimplie heere, as if he ſhould ſay, the land ſhall be *forſaken* and left deſtitute of the preſence of her two kings, ſo as they ſhall appeare therein no more. And by theſe words of the Prophet it ſufficiẽtlie appeares, that theſe things are to be vnderſtood of both kingdomes.

2.King.15. 30.

Verſ.17. *The Lord ſhall bring vpon thee, and vpon thy people, and vpon thy fathers houſe (the dayes that haue not come from the day that Ephraim departed frõ Iudah) euen the king of Aſhur.*

HEre the Prophet on the other ſide threatens this wicked hypocrite, who ſeemed afraid (forſooth) to tempt God, and yet in the meane while ſought help frõ thoſe whom God had forbidden him to meddle withall. *Exod.*23.32. To the end then he ſhould not lift vp his creſt too high in regard of this promiſe heere made vnto him, he denounceth his deſtruction, and teſtifies, that the help which he expected, to wit, from the Aſſyrians, ſhould be altogether for his ouerthrow. As if he ſhould ſay, Thou promiſeſt thy ſelfe wonders from the king of Aſhur, and thinkeſt that he will ſtick cloſe to thee, becauſe that (againſt the commandement of God) thou haſt made a league and peace with him; but thou ſhalt ſhortlie feele what commoditie will then redound vnto thee by tempting of the Lord. Thou mighteſt haue reſted quietlie at home, and ſo would God haue been mercifull vnto thee; but thou loueſt rather to haue help of Aſhur: well, thou ſhalt learne by experience, that their crueltie ſhall farre exceed the crueltie of all other enemies. This ſpeech of the Prophet then ſutes very well with the former; for he preſſeth the diſloyaltie and vnthankfulnes of the king the more neere, who in reiecting both the word of God and the ſigne, had made himſelfe vtterlie vnworthie of any promiſe at all. Alſo becauſe that as ſoone as hypocrites haue eſcaped any feare or danger they turne by and by to their old bias againe, he affirmes that the Iewes can by no meanes eſcape but they muſt be chaſtiſed, according as they had well deſerued. For this cauſe he ſaith expreſly, that the houſe of *Dauid* (which by a ſpeciall priuiledge ought to be exempted) ſhall be wrapped euen vnder the like calamities. For God ſo moderates his iudgemẽts, that whileſt he ſpares his Church and prouides for the ſafetie thereof, he yet in the end cauſeth the wicked (who are mingled with the good) to feele the rigor of his vengeance.

See 2.King. 16.7. and 2.Chro.28. 16.

From the day that Ephraim.] The Scripture vſeth this phraſe of ſpeech when it notes ou: 1.Kin.12.16

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any ſpeciall calamitie. The Iewes could no way be more deeplie wounded, then to ſee the kingdome not only miſerablie waſted, but alſo the bodie of this people to be rent and torne in pieces; the ten Tribes being led away captiues: and therefore the reuolt of *Ephraim* from *Iudah*, is a forewarning of an extreame ruine: for ſeeing the kingdome of Iudaes magnificence was more abaſed by this diuiſion then by any other calamitie which could haue befalne it, the Prophet ſaith that *to this time* they had not receiued a greater loſſe. Wee ſee heere (as I was about to ſay ere-while) how God opens a way to his mercie, by remembring the faithfull, and in chaſtening the hypocrites.

Wherefore we ought to conſider this his admirable counſell, namely, that the Church ſhould then remaine ſafe and ſound in the midſt of the dangers of death. Who would euer haue thought that Ieruſalem ſhould haue been deliuered from the great armie of theſe two kings? And that the kingdome of Syria then in her floriſhing eſtate ſhould afterward be brought ſo ſoone to nought? Or that the deſtruction of Samaria ſhould immediatlie approach? And in the meane while who would haue imagined that ſ Aſſyrians, vpon whom the Iewes repoſed themſelues, ſhould be more hurtfull vnto them then euer the Syrians or Iſraelites were? The Lord did all this for the conſeruation of his Church, ſo as yet notwithſtanding hee tooke vengeance vpon the impietie of king *Ahaz*.

Verſ. 18. *And in that day ſhall the Lord hiſſe for the Flie that is at the vttermoſt part of the flood of Egypt, and for the Bee which is in the land of Aſſur.*

BEcauſe the Iewes imagined to hold the Aſſyrians at their deuotion in regard of the couenant, the Prophet deriding ſuch a follie, declares, that the Aſſyrians ſhal be readie, as ſoone as God ſhall *but make a ſigne*, and ſhall driue them whither ſoeuer he thinketh good. This word *hiſſe*, is put in ſtead of commandement, as hauing reſpect to the nature of the kingdomes wherof he makes mention: for *Egypt* abounded with *Flies*, in regard that the region is hot and myrie. There muſt needs breed many Flies then where the ayre is hote and moyſt. *Aſſyria*, that had honie-Bees in great plentie. But howſoeuer hee declares that hee will bring the enemies with his *whiſtle*, alluding to the nature of the Flies, and of the Bees: his meaning is, that he wil make them come eaſilie, as if he ſhould ſay, There ſhal be no great need of much trauaile, for they ſhall *flie* as it were hither as ſoone as I ſhall haue giuen them a *ſigne*. And thus he ſhewes how readilie his counſell and ſecret inſtinct ſhall haue force and efficacie, when with his only whiſtle he ſhal conſtreine the moſt warlike people to execute his commandement.

Verſ. 19. *And they ſhall come and ſhall light all in deſolat valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and vpon all thornie places, and vpon all buſhie places.*

HE followes the Similitude; for *Bees* vſuallie deſire to make their neſts in *caues* or *valleies*, *buſhes*, or ſuch like places: as if he ſhould ſay, There ſhall not be ſo much as the leaſt corner which the enemies ſhall not fill to make their neſts therein. We neede not trouble our ſelues much in ſearching out the reaſon why he rather ſpeakes of *thornes* and *buſhes* then of other things, ſeeing the maner of ſpeech is figuratiue; & yet notwithſtanding I make no queſtion but his meaning is to ſhew, that there ſhould be no place of refuge at all left vnto them, whether they ſought to dig *caues*, or to hide them in the *deſolate valleyes*, becauſe the enemies will fill vp all the roomes in the countrie. From hence we gather once againe, as we haue alreadie noted, that nothing comes to paſſe raſhly, or by chance, but that all things are gouerned by the immediate hand of God. Secondly, that albeit the wicked beſtir them, and are caried with a blind furie to do miſchiefe, yet God notwithſtanding holds them ſhort, in making them ſeruie to his glorie. Therefore when we ſee the wicked ſet all at ſixe and ſeuen, let vs not thinke that God hath giuen them libertie to wander at their pleaſure, but let vs be moſt aſſured that he will calme and moderate their reſtleſſe boilings. This may exceedinglie comfort vs amidſt theſe tourmoiles wherein Chriſtendome is now enwrapped, and by the violence thereof ſo toſſed vp and downe, ſo that all things ſeeme to fall on heapes: for wee muſt remember that the Lord hath a ſecret reine or bridle in his hand wherewith he keepes in theſe furious beaſts, leſt they ſhould ſwallow vp all, by ranging whitherſoeuer their rage caries them: and that they can not paſſe the bounds which he hath aſſigned them.

Verſ. 20. *In that day ſhall the Lord ſhaue with a raſor that is hired, euen by them beyond the riuer, by the king of Aſſur, the head, and the haire of the feete, and it ſhall conſume the feete.*

NOw he vſeth another Similitude, and compares the enemies by whom God had determined to afflict Iudah (in his time) to a *raſor*, wherewith the beard and haires are ſhaued, and wherewith they vſe to take away the like excrements. The particle *Beth* is ſuperfluous heere, and ſignifies only (after the maner of the Hebrues) that an inſtrument is ſpoken of, and therefore I haue ſimplie tranſlated, *ſhall ſhaue with a raſor*. Now the Prophet himſelfe will by and by expreſſe his owne meaning, to wit, that the Aſſyrians ſhall be as a *raſor* in the hand of God, and that they ſhall come from farre. For which cauſe he addes, that *they are beyond the flood*: giuing thereby to vnderſtand, that the riuer *Euphrates* ſhall not hinder them from paſſing ouer to fulfil the commandements of God. Moreouer he ſaith, that not ſome portion of this

people

people only ſhall of his owne proper motion ruſh into an other mans land, tracing vp and downe without any certaine direction; but that the *King himſelfe* ſhall be their leader, to the end that Iudea may be deſtroyed by the people and King together, that ſo they may fall, and be ouerwhelmed vnder ſo heauie a burthen.

It is not without cauſe that he ſaith, this *Raſor* ſhall be *hired*: for hereby he ſets forth the crueltie of the warre which the Aſſyrians ſhould make: as if one hauing hired an horſe or a ſword, ſhould boldlie ſerue his turne therewith, making no more ſpare of it then if it were his owne. For we know that ſuch as take things vpon hire, will haue the ſeruice of the thing, according to the price they hired it for. So the Lord tels them that he will not ſpare this raſor, although the edge of it ſhould be blunted: which is as much to ſay, as he will ſend the Aſſyrians with a boiſterous and furious rage. Now if the Lord auenged himſelfe ſo ſharplie for the cauſes heretofore mentioned by the Prophet, let vs feare leſt we feele the like puniſhment; or rather let vs tremble at the *raſor* wherewith the Lord hath begun to *ſhaue* vs alreadie.

The head, and the haires of the feet.] By the *haires of the feete*, hee meanes the lower parts: for whatſoeuer is below the bellie is attributed to the feete by the figure Synecdoche, by reaſon whereof the Hebrues call vrin, the water of the feet; and couering of the feet, for eaſing the bellie. His meaning is then that the whole bodie ſhall be ſhauen all ouer, and the beard alſo. Now if wee take away theſe figures of each, and would haue a more plaine and ſimple ſenſe of theſe words, he ſignifies an vtter and vniuerſall ruin: as if he ſhould ſay, This raſor ſhall deſcend from the crowne of the head euen to the feet, and the kings and princes ſhall not eſcape this diſcomfiture, but they themſelues ſhall feele the cutting of this *Raſor*.

2. *King.* 16. 17.
2. *Sam.* 24. 4

Verſ. 21. *And in the ſame day ſhall a man nouriſh a yong Cow, and two Sheepe.*

IN theſe verſes to the end of the Chapter the Prophet layes forth the eſtate of a Countrie waſted and ſpoiled: for his meaning is to paint out as in liuely colours, and to ſet in full view before this people ſo great a calamitie, that nothing ſhall be diſcerned on which ſide ſoeuer a man turnes his eye, but the marks of an horrible waſte and deſolation. And whereas ſome thinke the Prophet promiſeth heere a mitigation of the chaſtiſements, we ſhall by and by ſee that this ſutes not with the text. And although alſo he makes mention of *a man* indefinitlie, yet notwithſtanding he ſpeakes properlie of the richeſt of them: for he giues not to euery one ſo much, but that thoſe who in times paſt had wont to nouriſh many Oxen and Sheepe, ſhould now content themſelues with a few. His meaning is then, that they ſhall all be brought to great penurie. And therefore becauſe the Prophet in his language ſaith *a man ſhall reuiue, or quicken*, ſome thinke it is as much as if he had ſaid, To deliuer from death: notwithſtanding I haue followed that which was the moſt ſimple and approued.

Verſ. 22. *And for the abundance of milke that they ſhal giue, he ſhall eate butter; for honey and butter ſhall euery one eate, which is left within the land.*

SOme expound, that they ſhal hardlie draw ſo much nouriſhment from one *Cow* as will be ſufficiēt to ſerue for one familie: for thoſe who bring vp Cattell, liue not only of the Milke, but make Cheeſes alſo, and reſerue Butter to ſell. When he ſaith then that of all the abundance which ſhall be left, one ſhall not be able to get ſo much as will be neceſſarie to ſuffice the familie; he thereby notes out (as theſe expoſitors affirme) neceſſitie and want. Others thinke that he here promiſeth increaſe, ſo that although they ſhould haue but few Sheepe and Kine, yet notwithſtanding they ſhould haue enough to maintaine themſelues. But the third expoſition agrees beſt, for it ſeemes the Prophet meane to ſay, The number of men ſhall be ſo ſmall, that they ſhall not need much milke to ſuffice them all. *Iſaiah* then hath declared in the former verſe that Iudea ſhould be ſo pilled, that there ſhould not remaine many beaſts; but now he addes, that there ſhall be yet a leſſe number of men, becauſe a *little milke* ſhall ſuffice for foode to the inhabitants that remaine in the land. This expoſition I rather receiue, becauſe a promiſe ſhould not well ſute to this place. And as for the firſt ſenſe, it is vnapt, becauſe he ſpeakes not only of thoſe that haue Cattell, but of all the inhabitants; for he expreſſly ſaith, *whoſoeuer ſhall be left*: by the which ſpeech, he ſignifies yet againe a ſmall number. His meaning then (in a word) is to ſay, that the land ſhall be ſo ruinate and diſpeopled, that they ſhall noe neede much milke nor butter, becauſe few men ſhall be left in this deſolation.

Verſ. 23. *And at the ſame day euery place wherein ſhall be a thouſand vines, ſhall be a thouſand pieces of ſiluer: * ſo it ſhall be for the briars and for the thornes.*

* Or, Becauſe

I Will not ſtand to refute the opinion of thoſe who thinke that *Iſaiah* here comforts the faithfull, becauſe the veine of the text doth ſufficientlie ſhew the contrarie, ſo as the very words cleerely ſhew, that the Prophet goes on ſtill to deſcribe the waſte and ruin of the land. Others thinke this ſhould be the ſenſe, namely, that there ſhould be buſhes and thornes in the places where the vines were, which were ſold for a thouſand pieces of ſiluer. But we ſee that this ſhould be too baſe a price, if the Prophet ſhould ſpeake of all the land in generall: For what thing were it to prize a *vine* at a ſuckle, which is the moſt precious poſſeſſion that one can haue? That were all one as if it ſhould be giuen for a piece of bread, as we commonlie

say when a thing is sold extremely vnderfoote. There is no field so barren and vnfruitefull that is not worth more, if so bee a man bee able to husband it, as they doe when a land is well peopled. Hee addes the reason of the changing of the price, whereby it appeares that he speakes of a wast and destruction. There shall be no labourers, saith he, because of the *bushes and briars*, which we see comes to passe in an extreme calamitie. I thinke also that the letter *Lamed*, which some haue expressed by the word To, signifies *Because*. For the enemies hauing pilled and made hauock of all, and no husbandmen nor vinedressers being left, the best husbanded places must of necessitie be couered with thick bushes and brambles. His meaning is therefore, that there shall be so few inhabitants, that scarcely one should be found that would bestow the least piece of siluer to buy the faireſt Lordships.

Vers. 24. *With arrowes and with bow shall one come thither, because all the land shall be briars and thornes.*

THe verb is in the singular number, yet notwithstanding we may expound it by the plurall, to wit, that the Archers shall goe through Iudea. Some thinke *Isaiah* speakes of *Bowes and arrowes*, because the enemies should be so fearefull to behold, that no man should dare to approch neere his possessions without armour. But I thinke it more probable that men shall go a hunting where the land was well manured and dressed before, because there should be caues and dennes for wilde beasts. Now this is a miserable change, to wit, when fields which in times past were husbanded and fruitfull, are conuerted into forests and bushes. And therefore by bowes and arrowes in this place I vnderstand hunting; and the sense is, that the Farmers shall not come neere their Vineyards, but the hunters: and that they shall not meddle either with planting or pruning of vines there, but others shall hunt wilde beasts in those places. So that for conclusion, he notes nothing else but an vtter desolation, by meanes whereof the whole land shall be turned topsie turuie.

Vers. 25. *But on all the mountaines which shall be digged with the mattock, there* * *shall not come thither the feare of briars and thornes: but they shall be for the sending out of Bullocks, and for the treading of sheepe.*

* Or, there shall be no feare.

IT seemes heere that the Prophet contradicts himselfe, for hitherunto he hath spoken of the consumption of the land: but now when he saith that *oxen* shall feed in the places where were thornes and briars, he describes as it were a new estate. This hath caused some to applie these words to ỹ consolation of the people. But the Prophets meaning is nothing lesse, because hee declares that the mountaines which were farre remote from the places where men dwelt, and whither men went with great difficultie, should be now fit pasture for Cattell by reason of the multitude of folks which should retire thither. And because euery one would flee to ỹ mountaines, which in former times were desert and inaccessible, they should not feare to be scratched with thornes, because there should bee inhabitants enow to suppresse them. Now this is a miserable thing, when men can no otherwise escape from death, but by running amongst the *thornes and brambles*. His meaning is then, that men shall seeke shelter and habitation in the *mountaines*, which were desert and vnhabited: because there shall be no roome left for safetie in the plaine. And thus hee portraites out the ruinous and pitifull estate of all the countrie; namely, such an horrible destruction, that the face of the land shall be vtterly changed from that it was before. When the Prophet foretold these things to King *Ahaz*, no doubt but hee contemned them. For this wicked King resting vpon his forces, and vpon the league with the Assyrians; staied himselfe thereupon, and setled himselfe againe vpon his lees: as soone as the siege (which threatned the Citie) was raised and gone. But *Isaiah* notwithstanding ceased not constantly to discharge his dutie; shewing still, that there was no succour but in God; testifying to this wicked hypocrite also, that his ruine would come from that place whence he looked for safetie and deliuerance.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Moreouer, the Lord said vnto mee; Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a* * *mans pen; Make speede to the spoile, haste to the pray.*

* Or, a common stile.

THis Prophecie containes no new matter: but is a cõfirmation of the former; wherin *Isaiah* had prophecied the destruction of ỹ two kingdomes of Israel and Syria, which was at hand. Hee had also foretold, that both Countries should lose their Kings, before the children which should be borne soone after, were able to discerne betweene good and euill; that is to say, before they should bee of discretion. But because the wicked take no warning by any threatnings, it was needefull that this prophecie should bee repeated, and confirmed by some signe: First, that be might awaken the people; God commandeth this Prophecie to bee published and written, to the

end

See the end of the Preface before this Propheeie.

end all might take knowledge of it. We haue ſaid heretofore, that the Prophets were wont after they had receiued commandement to publiſh any thing to the people, to comprehend the ſumme of it in few wordes; and then fixed it to the gates of the Temple: as we may gather from the booke of *Habacuk*; wherewith if wee conferre this place, the thing ſhall bee manifeſt enough. But here is a more particular thing: for hee not onely commands the prophecie to bee written; but hee requireth a great and *large roll*, to the end it might bee read a farre off. For by how much ſmaller the letter is, ſo much the more difficult and obſcure it is to reade. Heereunto appertaines that which immediately followeth, touching the *Stile of a common perſon*. The word *Enoſh*. is taken for a man of any trade; to the end all, yea the ſimpleſt ideots might reade that which ſhould be written.

Hab. 2. 2.

Make haſte.] This ſhort and cutted manner of ſpeech hath much more vehemencie in it, then if hee had ſtood to dilate the matter at large. For euery one was able to carry home foure words to his houſe; and in them to take knowledge of the ſwiftneſſe of Gods wrath; as alſo to bee the more neere, and in good earneſt touched with his iudgement, no leſſe then if hee had felt it with his finger. Laſtly, the Lord would not ſtriue with words, becauſe it was now no time to pleade; but rather to repreſent the matter by an outward ſigne. By an example then he ſets the vengeance of God before their eyes; whereof the Prophets had ſo often told them in vaine before: to the end it ſhould pierce the more deepely into their hearts, and ſhould remaine engrauen in their memories. So that as oft as one ſhould but mention theſe words, *haſte to the ſpoile*; they ſhould alſo call to mind the deſtruction of *Iſrael* and *Syria*, and be further certified of it. Now becauſe the Prophet prophecied in the former chapter of the comming of Chriſt; many vnaptly expound this of him: to wit, that being furniſhed with an heauenly vertue, hee came to diſpoile the prince of the world; and therefore haſteneth to the pray. Although this hath ſome ſhew of wit, yet it can by no means agree to the text. For the true and plaine ſenſe declares, that the Prophet ſaith not any new thing, but confirmeth that which hee had ſaide before.

Chap. 9. 14.

Verſ. 2. *Then I tooke vnto mee faithfull witneſſes, to record, Vriah the Prieſt, and Zechariah the ſonne of Iebereehiah.*

THe Prophet vſeth a noune and verbe deriued from one roote, and the meeting together of the words hath elegancie: as if we ſhould ſay, I haue witneſſed my ſelfe with witneſſes. Now becauſe this matter was of great importance, *he tooke witneſſes* with him, as men were wont to doe in things of conſequence. Hee calles them *faithfull*; that is to ſay, true and meete: and yet notwithſtanding one of them was a curſed and wicked apoſtata, who to flatter the King, built an Altar like vnto that at *Damaſcus*; and openly conſented to all horrible impietie and abomination. I know there are others who are indeed of a contrarie opinion: but if wee conſider the circumſtance of the time well, we ſhall finde it to be euen that ſame *Vriah*, who like a trencher-chaplaine, conformed himſelfe to the vngodly humour of the King; as the holy hiſtorie witneſſeth. Whereas they thinke it was ſome other, becauſe *Iſaiah* calleth him *faithfull*: it is too weake a reaſon; for the Prophet did not ſo much looke to the man, as to the office which he exerciſed; in regard whereof, hee was ſufficient to be a witneſſe in this caſe. He meant not to ſay then, that *Vriah* was a good man; but that his perſon was not to be reiected, in regard of the authoritie of his office; but was in reſpect thereof, a witnes free from all exception; as they ſay. Moreouer, I thinke this prophecie was fixed to the doores of the Temple, in the preſence of *Vriah* and *Zechariah*, who were taken to be *witneſſes* to it. For hee ſpeakes of no viſion, but of a commandement of God, which hee indeed did and performed: to the end theſe words might be as a common prouerbe in the mouthes of all the people.

2. Kin. 16. 11

Verſ. 3. *After I came vnto the Prophteſſe, which conceiued and bare a ſon: Then ſaid the Lord to me; call his name Maher-ſhalal-chaſh-baz.*

I Make no queſtion but this which followes happened to the Prophet in viſion, to ſeale vp the former prophecie. It ſeemed then to *Iſaiah*, that he had the company of his wife; and that by this copulation he begat a ſon vpon whom this name is impoſed. There were no abſurditie if we ſhould confeſſe that the Prophet had the company of his wife; and that hee did indeed beget a child, to whom this name was giuen: neither would I much contend with him which ſhould be of ſuch an opinion. But becauſe it is not very likely that this name was impoſed vpon any man, there being no teſtimony of it: I rather incline this way, to think that this viſiõ was offred to the Prophet, as a confirmation of the former prophecie. He calles not his wife a *Propheteſſe*, as the wiues of Kings are called Queenes, by way of honour: but becauſe ſhe was a publike perſon in this viſion. *Iſaiah* therefore out of doubt, doth of ſet purpoſe turne away the mindes of the faithfull from thought of any carnall copulation; that they might ſo much the more attend to this ſacred myſtery. For howſoeuer it be a thing lawfull in it ſelfe to beget children in mariage; yet notwithſtanding nature it ſelfe teacheth, that the act is a matter of bluſhing, or ſhamefaſtnes, which ſeeketh to do it ſecretly.

Verſ. 4. *For before the child ſhall haue knowledge to crie My father, and my mother, hee ſhall take away the riches of Damaſcus,*

maſcles, and the ſpoile of Samaria, before the King of Aſsur.

HEre followes both the expoſition of the obſcure words of *Iſaiah*, as alſo of the viſion adioyned vnto it. For ſeeing God meant to ſpeake briefly, it was needefull it ſhould bee intelligible. I referre not the word *child* to the ſonne of the Prophet, but to all thoſe that ſhould bee borne ſoone after; as I haue
Chap. 7.14. ſaid heretofore. He threatens then, that the two kings of *Iſrael* and *Samaria*, ſhal be cut off before thoſe children ſhall be of any growth. *In the preſence of the King of Aſsur.* That is to ſay, according to his deſire and will. Wherein it may bee hee meetes with the ancient manner of thoſe which triumphed: before whoſe chariot they vſed to carrie the ſpoiles of the enemies. Thus the ſpoiles of *Damaſcus* and *Samaria* ſhall bee borne before the King of *Aſsur*. From hence it appeares yet better that the Prophet meant
1 nothing elſe but to foretell the ruine of the
2 kingdome of *Iſrael* and *Syria*: Firſt, for the comfort of the faithfull, and ſecondly, to ſcorne at the fooliſh feare of this curſed King, which could not endure that the Lord ſhould ſuccour him. He had not onely reiected the promiſes; but alſo the ſigne which was offered him. This is the cauſe why the Prophet doth ſo much the more reproue the impiety of this king, and of al the people: as if he ſhould ſay, I ſee that thou art reſolued to beleeue nothing: but yet is the Lord determined to aſſiſt his choſen. For thou ſhalt ſhortly ſee ſudden and vnexpected changes, by which God will deliuer his people. And yet it is certaine that theſe things are not directed ſo much to the King, as to the faithfull. Whence we are to note, that the ſeruants of God doe not alwaies ſpeake ſo that the hearers doe by and by beleeue their ſayings. *Iſaiah* ſpeakes heer to the wicked, whom he profited nothing at all. Why then doth he direct his ſpeech vnto them? To the end hee may conuince them more and more, and to lay their infidelity in their diſh: as alſo that the goodnes of God might be the better knowne. For who would not haue thought but ſuch an impietie would haue ſhut vp the gate of all Gods mercies from them? yet notwithſtanding the Lord by his goodnes ouercomes both the peruerſitie of the King, and of the people. Now yee ſee the Prophets drift, to wit, that whileſt he reprocheth the wicked with their pride, he ſhewes them notwithſtanding that God is alwaies like himſelfe.

Verſ. 5. *And the Lord ſpake yet againe vnto me, ſaying,*

6. *Becauſe this people hath refuſed the waters of Shiloah which runne ſofily, and reioyce with Rezin, and the ſonne of Remaliah.*

TO the end *Achaz* ſhould not waxe ſecure, nor reſt himſelfe vpon a vaine hope, the Prophet ſuddenly breakes off his ſpeech touching the common ſaluation of the faithfull, and doth againe ſet the threatnings and chaſtiſements before the vnbeleeuers. Some thinke that hee ſpeakes here againſt thoſe which onely ſought after newes: as indeede it comes to paſſe, that the common people for the moſt part are not contented with the preſent ſtate, but deſire to heare of a new King. And that often happens to manie, which wee ſee befall thoſe that are ſicke; namely, they hope to be better, when they haue changed their place. The wills of men are ſo peruerſe, that when things fall not out as they would, they looke after nothing but a change in the ſtate, greedily purſuing after tidings therof, thinking to receiue ſome reliefe by it. But I thinke the meaning of the Prophet is to be ſtretched further, and is not to be referred only to thoſe who asked after a change: but that it is rather a generall ſpeech comprehending all eſtates: for impietie, and the contempt of God had almoſt ouergrowne the whole land.

He ſpeakes not then of any ſmall number or of a particular faction; but of the whole aſſemblie of the people: and ſeeing they were almoſt all of them degenerate, he very iuſtlie reprooues them all. I confeſſe indeede that he excepts a little remnant of the faithfull, of whom he will make mention by and by. Now the offence is, that the people diſtruſting their owne weakeneſſe, deſired greater riches and forces. He ſaith then, that they deſpiſed the *waters of Shiloah*, becauſe the Iewes made no reckoning thereof, and were diſcontented with their owne eſtate. He adds, that they delighted to looke to *Rezin*. Others tranſlate, with *Rezin*: but the particle, *ת*, expreſſeth their peruerſe deſire better. His meaning then is to ſay, that the Iewes ſeeing themſelues deſtitute of great gariſons, looked vnto others, and longed for the riches of the kingdome of Iſrael. For when they conſidered their pouertie and weake eſtate they trembled, and truſted not in God at all; but only in outward helpes. They thought they ſhould be in great ſafetie, if they could obtaine a Prince equall in power to the King of *Iſrael*. Thus they reioyced in other mens riches; and deſired them.

Verſ. 7. *Now therefore, behold the Lord bringeth vpon them the waters of the riuer, mightie and great*; euen *the King of Aſsur with all his glorie, and he ſhall come vp vpon all their Riuers, and goe ouer all their bankes.*

HE ſpeakes in the preſent tence, to the end all ſhould lay it the neerer to heart. *Behold, the Lord brings vpon you violent waters.* We muſt note the ſimilitudes which the Prophet vſeth: for the ſpeech is much more elegant, then if he had ſpoken barely and nakedly without them: and it is as if hee had ſaid, Becauſe the people are not contented with their condition, but are euer luſting after the riches and wealth of another, I will

ſhew

ſhew them what it is to haue a mightie King. As for example, if ſome few people ſubiect to a poore and obſcure Prince, hauing mightie neighbours that were ſubiects to a King of great renowne ſhould ſay, Oh, what a goodly thing were it to bee the ſubiects of ſuch a puiſſant King, to be vnder the gouernment of the Emperor, or of ỹ King of France, who haue an inuincible power! Should not God haue iuſt occaſion to chaſtice ſuch a wicked deſire? For by how much the more mightie Kings are; ſo much the more doe they oppreſſe their people: they will be vnder no controll, but will do whatſoeuer they liſt: adde alſo, ỹ they know not the meaſure of their power, but according to their ſtrẽgth they giue themſelues licence to doe what them liketh. The Lord reprooues this vnbridled deſire of the Iewes, that in diſtruſting their owne ſtrength, they looked not to the Lord, but to the riches of mightie Kings. Now this reprehenſion hath much more grace vnder theſe figures, then if he had ſpoken without them.

Shilo, as S. *Ierom* ſaith, was a little fountaine, whence proceeded a riuer running ſoftly thorow the middeſt of Ieruſalem. And becauſe this little riuer was inſufficient to defend them, they deſired and asked after thoſe great riuers which inuironed, and greatly inriched the cities. For there is nothing which brings more renowne and riches to a countrie, then theſe great nauigable riuers, by which one may fetch in and carrie out all ſorts of merchandize, the more eaſily. He compares *Euphrates* then, (which is ỹ moſt renowned riuer in the East) with *Shiloah*; and followes the ſame ſimilitude: vnderſtanding by *violent waters*, the Aſſyrians, which ſhould waſte *Iudah*, and ſpoile it wholely, as it were with a deluge. I wil ſhew you, ſaith the Lord, what it is to wiſh for theſe mightie and violent waters. 2. *King.* 18.

And ſhall come vp.] This place ought to be dilligently obſerued. For wee haue all of vs a diſtruſtfulneſſe naturally rooted in vs, ſo as when the helpe of man failes, wee are out of heart. Let God make what promiſe hee will, we cannot be reſolued of the truth of it: but haue our eies fixed vpon our owne feebleneſſe, and being beſotted, we lie like blocks in our feares. And therefore haue we neede to ſeeke a remedie for this vice. *Shiloah* then; that is to ſay, the vocation or condition to which God hath called vs, with promiſe of bleſſing; ſhould be vnto vs a ſtrong defence, although we ſee it not before our eyes; and that we ſhould preferre the ſame our eſtate before the power of the greateſt Kings of the world. For if wee relie vpon the ſuccour of men, and place our confidence in riches and abundance of ſiluer; we muſt looke for the chaſtiſement which the Prophet threatneth in this place. The holy hiſtorie witneſſeth that theſe things came to paſſe; ſo as he which ſhall reade therein, ſhall haue no great need of an expoſition of this place. The Aſſyrians whom the Iewes called to their ſuccour, deſtroyed them: and this was a iuſt puniſhment of their diſtruſt. Wherein wee haue a faire looking glaſſe to behold the ende of ſuch luſtfull people, who could not content themſelues with the promiſe of Gods aide and ſuccour. Let vs then looke to our ſelues, and let vs bee warned by this deſtruction of the Iewes.

The Church for the moſt part is in ſuch caſe, that ſhe is alwaies deſtitute of the helpe of men, leſt whileſt we be too well ſtabliſhed in our outward eſtate, wee ſhould haue our eies dazled with our riches and ſtrength, and ſo ſhould fall to forget God. We muſt learne to reioyce in our weakeneſſe, and to content our ſelues therewith; to the end we may depend vpon the Lord for ſuccour: ſo as the *ſmall and low waters* be better pleaſing vnto vs then all the great and *boyſterous riuers* of the Heathen: let vs not therfore enuie the greatneſſe and power of the wicked. To this purpoſe it is ſaid in the 46. Pſal. The ſtreames of the riuer ſhal reioyce ỹ city of God; the ſanctuary of the moſt high is in the midſt therof, therefore it ſhall not mooue: God wil helpe it right early, the Heathen make a noiſe, the kingdoms ſhaked, and the earth trembled: The Lord of hoſtes is with vs, &c. If any ſhall obiect that the helpe and ſuccour of men is not to be deſpiſed: the anſwere is very eaſie: to wit, that the Prophet condemnes not ſuch helps here; but that curſed feare which driues vs into deſpaire: as when we are ſo affrighted, that no promiſe of God whatſoeuer can hold vs in our places. Now we muſt yeeld God this honour to content our ſelues with him alone, although all things elſe ſhould faile vs; ſeeing we are aſſured that he is alwaies redy to relieue vs. And then it is all one whether we haue outward helps, or whether we haue them not. For if we haue them, it is in our liberty to vſe them; if wee haue them not, let vs be content: and let one God onely ſuffice vs for all neceſſities. For hee is ſufficientlie able to fulfill his promiſes of himſelfe, and needeth none of mans helpe: therefore wee may boldlie commit our ſelues ouer into his onely cuſtodie and ſafegard. Obiect. Anſ. Let this be wel obſerued.

The Verbe *Kalaq*, which ſometimes ſignifies to paſſe; is as much in this place, as to ſpoile and cut off: as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid; Hee ſhall not onely ſlightly paſſe thorow *Iudah*, but ſhall alſo ouer-flow it; ſo as he will drowne and deſtroy it wholly. For he will *ſpread himſelfe all ouer the land in all places*. He addes,

Verſ. 8. *And ſhall breake into Iudah, and ſhall ouerflow and paſſe thorow, and ſhall come vp to the necke; and the ſtretching out of his wings ſhall fill the the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.*

THis ſimilitude is taken frõ a mã, who entering into a riuer, goes forward by degrees til at lẽgth he come *vp to the neck*. So ſhal *Iudah* be inuironed with this boiſterous flood; to wit, with the Aſſyrian: in ſuch ſort, as he ſhall *wade into it vp to the necke*. Now he ſpeakes this of *Ieruſalem*, which was the chiefe and capitall

Citie in the kingdome: for when the Assyrian arriued there, it was no hard matter to destroy all Iudah. *The breadth of thy land.* That is to say, ouer all the parts of it. The Prophet goes on still with the similitude of his prophesie, and shewes how great the violence of the Assyrian will be, and he amplifies his fiercenes and turbulencie by the same similitude, to wit, of a *raging streame*, which hauing broken all ramparts that could be set before it, ouerflowes and spreads euery way, ouercaries and beares all downe before it. For he followes his denunciation against the Iewes, as he began to do in the two former verses. And as he had threatned the Israelites and Syrians with destruction, so now he likewise threatens the Iewes with the same. For the better vnderstanding whereof, we must consider the context which *Isaiah* disposeth very fitlie. He had directed his speech before to others, because *Ahaz* was vnworthie of it. The Lord shall giue *you* a signe, and this we haue handled in the former Chapter. He therewithall addes the meanes whereby to preserue Ierusalem, to wit, by the sodaine mutations which should happen to Israel and Syria. This was confirmed in the beginning of this Chapter as well by expresse commandement, as by vision. Now hee comes to the Iewes, who should not thinke to escape without punishment; as also that they should not be too much lifted vp with the fall of their enemies: for he shewes that their reward is very neere, and that they shall be chastised for their impietie and disloyaltie, because they despised the Lord, and would not be satisfied with his *promises, signes*, and benefits which were offred them in all fulnes and abundance.

Quest. *Immanuel.*] Some aske why the Prophet rather turnes his speech to *Christ*, then to call it Gods holy land: for no doubt but by the name of *Immanuel* he meanes Christ. It should seeme that this was said to expresse the indignitie of the offence so much the more: because Iudah was not only consecrated vnto God, but also had the pledge of his saluation in the person of the Mediator; and therefore should be a great indignitie vnto them to be

Ans. destroyed by an Infidell king. But I thinke rather the Prophet addes this *word*, to giue some hope againe to the faithfull, and to comfort them in so great a calamitie, for they might haue been out of heart, seeing the countrie so cruellie wasted and spoiled. His meaning is to say then, that this destruction shall not hinder the comming of the Redeemer (of whom he had made mention before,) As if he had said, The land shall be thine, *O Immanuel*, thou must dwell and remaine in it. This then is added in stead of a consolation, giuing them to vnderstand that the land being pilled and destroyed, shall yet notwithstanding be rather *Gods* then mans. And this turning and applying of the speech to the second person, hath great vehemencie; because by this meanes he hath recourse to the promised redemption: to the end the Lord may moderate his anger in the midst of these horrible calamities.

Vers. 9. *Gather together on heapes ô ye *people, and ye shall be broken in pieces, and hearken all yee of far countries: gird your selues, and you shall be broken in pieces: gird your selues, and you shall be broken in pieces.* *Or, peoples.

THe Verb *Raaf* signifieth to bruise, or to breake, whether it descends from the word *Raa*, or from *Raah*. But because *Raah* signifies to conioyne or assemble, some had rather take it in this sense; which also agrees best with the argument and context of the Prophet. For whereas some translate, Breake you, to wit, either the kingdome of Iudah, or the Assyrians; it seemes too cõstrained, & too farre fetched. But it appeeres that ỹ Prophet describes the counsels and enterprises by which they thought to cut off the Church of God, because he by and by addes, *Gird your selues.* Also in the beginning of ỹ next verse, Take counsell. The word then of *Assembling*, propetlie agrees to this place, vnlesse any had rather take the word to Breake by a figure; to which I willinglie yeeld, and so the word amounts to as much as to heape vp, or (as we commonlie say) to pack vp hard together, because things which are pressed, are also consequẽtlie pressed with violence and thrust together. He meanes then not only an heape, but an heape well pressed together: as if he should say, Gather your selues close together, as if you were some very thick heape. This signification as it seemes agrees very well to the circumstance of this place; and that which is added afterward tends also hereunto, Arme you, *Gird your selues.* But the Prophet incourageth himselfe with trust and confidence, after he had made mention of Immanuel, that is to say, God, who was to assist his people. And by the selfesame meanes conceiued a new hope against the enemies, who although they might seeme to haue obteined all their desires when they had spoiled the countrie: yet should the Lord be conqueror, and would maintaine his owne against the crueltie of their aduersaries. And thus withdrawing his mind from the contemplation of this calamitie, he turnes it to *Christ*, and in beholding of him, he so fortifies himselfe, that he is bold to triumph ouer his enemies, as if he had alreadie ouercome them. We are to place the Prophet then as it were in the watch-tower, from whence on the one side 1
he beholds the discomfiture of the people, and from the other the Assyrians conquering 2
and ouerflowing in all pride. Then being 3
comforted by the sight and name of Christ, he forgets all his afflictions, as if he ailed nothing; and being deliuered out of all miserie, he turnes himselfe against the enemies which God should destroy soone after. And this we ought diligentlie to obserue, that hauing now to wrastle against the same temptations in these afflictions which the Church indureth, and with ỹ burthen wherof she is almost ouerwhelmed: that we forthwith cast our eies vpon Christ, by beholding of whom we may triumph ouer Satan, and all sorts of enemies.

Queſt. Anſ.

O yee peoples.] Wherefore makes he mention of *peoples*, ſeeing the Aſſyrian only ſhould deſtroy the land of Iudea? I anſwere, that the Armie of the Aſſyrian was compoſed of diuers nations, for he had ſubiected the Chaldeans; together with many others: and therefore this Monarchie comprehended diuers countries, notwithſtanding, he hath alſo an eye to the Iſraelites, Syrians, and Egyptians, and to all other enemies whomſoeuer which had ſet themſelues againſt the Church of God. Neither ſpeakes he of one plague wherewith the Church was afflicted only, but of the perpetuall combates which the choſen people ſhould ſuſteine from time to time. For the better vnderſtanding whereof we muſt ioyne the verſe following: where in the latter end it is added, *becauſe the Lord is with vs.* For behold the foundation of our deliuerance, to wit, *God with vs.* Let men conſpire, let them plot, conſult, and determine, all ſhall be in vaine, becauſe there is no counſell againſt the Lord. Let vs begin then at this foundation, if we meane to be ſtrong in deede.

The ground of comforting our ſelues in the daies of trial. Prou.21.30.

But we are to examin whether it be lawfull for all to reioyce on this maner; the wicked bragge in deed that God is *with them*: neither make they any bones to triumph and glorie in his name, and yet is their glorie vaine and to no purpoſe. As touching the faithfull, their valiant mind is grounded vpon the word of God, and proceeds from a true faith, liuely ingrauen in our hearts: by meanes whereof we dare boldly triumph ouer all our aduerſaries. As alſo S. *Paul* teacheth, who incourageth all the faithfull by this doctrine, *If God be with vs, who ſhall be againſt vs?* Rom.8.30. Let vs then in the firſt place looke that we haue the *Lord with vs*; which can not be done, but we muſt imbrace the promiſes by faith: which if we haue, then ſhall not our reioycing be in vaine. Whereas he ſpeakes to a nation ſo farre off, to which this voyce could not reach, the reaſon thereof is euident enough, to wit, that the faithfull might know the efficacie of the word, and might vnderſtand that the Aſſyrians with all their preparations ſhould be gouerned by it, although they were very farre remote: as if he ſhould ſay, It is true that you deſpiſe God, but he can eaſily keepe you back a farre off, and beate downe all your rage.

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Gird you &c.] The repetition is not ſuperfluous, for it is much more hard to looke for the ſuccor of God againe after we haue once been deliuered; then to imbrace the promiſe of one only deliuerance. And further, although the firſt aſſaults of the enemies do not much aſtoniſh vs, yet notwithſtanding whē we ſee them obſtinate in their malice; their hardnes of heart weakens vs, of the which we haue dayly experience. For if any danger preſents it ſelfe, we can looke for ſuccor from God for a brunt, but if we fall thereinto the ſecond time, we quaile: and ſuch is our wofull vnthankfulnes, that we can hardlie be brought to beleeue that God will aſſiſt vs once more. So then, we are out of heart if happely we fall into dāger oft times, thinking ſurely that God will be wearie at the laſt, if he do vs good and ſuccor vs euery day. *Iſaiah* therefore would preuent this weakenes of men, that when we haue been aſſailed once or twice by enemies well prouided and furniſhed: yet notwithſtanding to remaine couragious and inuincible ſtill. And if it fall out that being once circumuented they yet double their forces, neuer ceaſſing to weary vs, yet let vs not therefore wax faint or out of heart, becauſe God is able to deſtroy and cut them off to day and to morrow, euen as oft as they imagin our ouerthrow.

We muſt not content our ſelues to haue put our confidence in God for once or twice, but we muſt hold out for euer, as it is in Chap.26.4.

And in this place alſo we are aduertiſed of our eſtate & condition, to the end we might learne to be alwaies vpon our watch, and readie to ſuſteine new aſſaults: and not to thinke we are therefore diſcharged when we haue reſiſted once, becauſe Satan is neuer idle, but is euer buſie in his charge, not ceaſſing day nor night to procure our ruin. He ſolicits and ſtirres vp his ſouldiers, and ſets them on fire with new luſts. But albeit we muſt of neceſſitie enter into the combat often, yet let vs be aſſured to obteine the victorie. Let vs fight then with cheerefulnes; and keepe our ſtanding firme in the battell.

1.Pet.5.8.

Verſ.10. *Take counſell together, yet it ſhall be brought to nought: pronounce a decree, yet it ſhall not ſtand: for God is with vs.* *

*Hebr. Immanuel.

HAuing ſpoken of the *force* of the enemies, he comes now to their *counſels*; as if he ſhould ſay, Howſoeuer the enemies are mightie not only in weapons and ſtrength, but alſo in *counſell and wiſdome*, yet ſhall they loſe all their labour. This aduertiſement therefore was very neceſſarie. For it often happens that we contemne our enemies, how mightie or well armed ſoeuer they be, becauſe they want counſell, and are rather caried with blind furie, then led by reaſon: he aduertiſeth therefore that all the craft and ſubtilties whereby the enemies ſhall indeuor to ſnare the people of God, ſhall in the end turne all into ſmoke, and therefore that they ſhall bring nothing to paſſe, although they haue all meanes readie, and that nothing be wanting in their *power, counſels*, and policies.

He addes, *Pronounce a decree*, that the ſenſe might be the more cleere. I haue tranſlated Appoint, or Decree a decree. This appertains either to the inſolencie of the enemies, or elſe it is the concluſion of their counſell: for after a thing is determined, the *Decree* followes. He affirmes, that all this ſhall vaniſh into ſmoke. Thus it appeares what the Prophet meanes, and what vſe we are to make of this place. Now this may ſerue vs as a ſhield wherewith we may beate back all the darts of the enemies, whether they be furniſhed with weapons, riches, power, credit, authoritie: or whether they be indued with wiſdome, counſell, policie, wit, foreſight, aptnes of inuention, or boldnes: for if ſo be we haue *God with vs*, we are then moſt ſtrong, and very well appointed; and conſequentlie, all that

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the enemies shall plot and deuise, shall forthwith vanish away into nothing. We haue in the former verse at large explained the reason which he addes, namely, *That God is with vs:* yet I doubt not but in saying *Chi Immanu-el*, he respects the name which he imposed vpon Christ before: and although he shewes that God assists his people, yet notwithstanding because the Maiestie of God in it selfe would not suffice for our comfort and consolation, he considers God himselfe, *in the person of the Mediator*, for whose sake alone he hath promised to assist and helpe vs.

Vers. 11. *For the Lord spake thus to me in taking of mine hand, and taught me that I should not walke in the way of this people, saying,*

HEere the Prophet wrastleth against another kinde of temptation, to wit, against the infidelitie of the people. And to speake more plainely, we are to note that he had two temptations, one without, the other within. 1 The outward came in regard of open enemies, as the Assyrian, who hauing almost consumed all, so astonished the people by spoiles and cruelties, that he saw nothing but vtter 2 subuersion. The inward was, because this holy people who bragged they were the chosen people of God, did put their confidence in the help of man, rather then in the Lord: this was a very dangerous temptation. For hereby it seemed that all passage for the promises of God was wholly shut vp, which were dayly offred them, and alwaies whetted vpon their memories. What could the Prophet imagine in such a perplexitie, but the vtter subuersion of this froward people, who ceased not maliciously to reiect the grace of God which was so neere vnto him? The Lord therefore hereby armes the Prophet and his disciples against such a temptation.

As if he had taken me by the hand.] See heere an elegant similitude, which the expositers haue not vnderstood as I thinke. He alludes to fathers, or masters, who vsually put their hand vpon their children or schollers to hold them in, and to constraine them to obey, when they profit nothing by words. Thus the Lord *holds* in his Ministers, who are readie sometime to leaue al, because they think their labor is but lost: he then holds the back I say, in *laying his hand vpon the*, to the end they may continue to execute their office. They who faithfullie serue the Lord haue sufficient experience how needfull this is for them, and haue a proofe of it euery day. There is no temptation more burdensome, then when 2 they who ought to shew themselues faithfull, reuolt: in a word, when it seemes that faith is banished out of the world. It is very necessarie then *that God should take vs by the hand*; for wee are not only vnstable, and subiect to lightnes, but also naturallie inclined to euill more then we ought, although we be not drawne thereunto by any whomsoeuer. But if any naughtie custome be ioined herewithall, then can wee hardlie bee masters of our selues. It is certaine that wee should fall downe backward at euery push, were we not vpheld by an admirable power of God, to fixe our constancie in an assured hauen. Let euery one of vs exercise himselfe diligentlie with the consideration hereof. For although we are well perswaded of the truth of all this, yet notwithstanding when we should put it in practise we faile, and cast our eies rather vpon men then vpon God. In regard whereof we ought to be so much the more carefull to profit in this doctrine, and to pray vnto God, that he *will hold vs in*, not only with his word, but also *with his hand*. And herewithall let vs consider how prone we are to follow an euill course, for when we see wicked examples we run after them with might and maine, and of an example make a law: so that if so be some march afore, we thinke we are permitted to follow after, and to do as they do, especiallie when a wicked custome hath gotten the vpper hand, and that the matter rests vpon the constancie of one or two only. Euery one also couers himselfe with this faire vizard of a generall consent; the which all will confesse to be wicked and naught in it selfe. And which more is, where is he to be found that is not pushed forward as with a whirlewind to follow custome? euen as if it were in the power of a people to bring in their corruptions, in stead of good lawes. This hath not been the fault of one age alone, but it hath the swinge as much or more euen at this day then euer heretofore. Yea, this corruption is ingrauen in all men by nature, namely, to hold an error as a law. From thence haue proceeded all the superstitions that euer were, and those which are now in the Papacie, so as if one would seeke the originall, we shall finde they came from no other spring, but from that which one of them hath drawne in after another, by one and the same error. And thus are all intangled in the nets of Satan, so as euen at this present the common consent of men is the chiefe corner stone of such inuentions. Behold the weapons wherewith each one of them defends himselfe: We are not alone (say they) we follow an infinite multitude.

A common consent, the chiefe corner stone of humane inuentions.

Vers. 12. *Say ye not a confederacie to all them to whom this people saith a confederacie, neither feare you their feare, nor be afraid of them.*

FIrst, we must consider what the state of this people then was: they saw themselues destitute of great forces, and too weake to susteine warre against so mightie enemies. See what it was which made them set their eye and affections so stronglie vpon strangers, for they thought themselues vtterlie vndone, vnlesse some aid came vnto them frō other places. It is in this sense that I take the word *Conspiracie*, because they thought they stood in neede of their *Confederates*. But because the word Conspiracie is taken both in the good and euill part, and sometimes in

Hebrue

Hebrue ſignifies as much as Band, I take it in the better ſignification. Others are of a contrarie opinion, and expound, Behold thine enemies the kings of Iſrael and Syria, who haue conſpired among themſelues. But I rather agree with thoſe who referre theſe words to the couenant and aſſociation which many vnbeleeuers would contract with the Aſſyrians. The Lord then admoniſheth *Iſaiah* not to regard the counſels of the wicked, although all the people ſhould approue of it, and that euery one of them ſhould yeeld to the deſire of his companion. Wee may alſo giue a double interpretation: for ſome reade it apart, as if the Prophet in the ſecond member ſhould condemne the corrupt maners of the people. But wee muſt reade and conioine theſe two members, Be not aſtonied if your fellow citizens plot together from day to day to make vnlawfull couenants, agree not you with them. Moreouer, although God ſhould haue ſpoke but to the Prophet alone, and not to the multitude of thoſe who profited by inſtruction to turne their mindes leſt they ſhould become vnfaithfull in aduenturing raſhlie after others; yet notwithſtanding the plurall number *Say yee not*, ſhewes, that all ſ faithfull were taught in his perſon.

Feare not.] Here we ſee from what fountaine the giddie counſels whereby men skirmiſh among themſelues proceede; to wit, from this, that their minds are ſo foreſtalled with *feare*, that they are caried hither and thither without any diſcretion at all. The chiefe cauſe why the Iewes deſired ſo much to be confederate with the Aſſyrians, is diſcouered in this place, that is to wit, being terrified aboue meaſure, they thought they could ſaue themſelues by no other meanes; and ſo this blinde feare hindred them from expecting help and ſuccor from the Lord: this is the cauſe which made them thus to long for this *confederacie*. True it is there was like occaſion of feare as well to the faithfull, as to the vnfaithfull, but they feared not all after one maner. For the faithfull tooke heart of grace becauſe they knew God had the care of their ſaluation, and being armed with the promiſe of God, comforted themſelues as oft as the name of *Immanuel* came into their minds. But the wicked ſurprized with feare, thought of nothing but of refuge from the Aſſyrians: they cared not for Gods helpe, neither yet retired themſelues vnto him. The Lord forbids not the faithfull to feare, for they are vnable to abſteine from it; but he commands them to ouercome this faithleſſe feare which ouerwhelmes the wicked. Let vs not gaze here and there then after their example: and leſt wee plunge our ſelues headlong into deſperation in ſeeking vnlawfull helps, let vs aboue all things take heed that *feare* depriue vs not of true iudgement.

The difference betweene the feare that is in the faithfull and that of the wicked.

Now the remedie of this miſchiefe is this, that we be reſtrained by the word of God, from whence proceeds all peace and tranquillitie of minde. And in conferring the eſtate of this people with our owne, let vs learne to runne for refuge to the name of God, which ſhall be as an inuincible fortreſſe and tower vnto vs. It alſo appeares againe by theſe words, *feare yee not* &c. put in the plurall number, that the Lord ſpake not to the Prophet alone. Likewiſe S. *Peter* drawes a generall doctrine from this place, 1. Pet. 3. 14. admoniſhing vs not to feare the feare of the wicked; but to put our confidence in God, and to haue our eies alwaies fixed vpon him, thereby to remaine conſtant, although heauen and earth ſhould be mingled together. And if euer the admonition of the Apoſtle *Peter* were neceſſarie, it is now in our great neede: for wee ſee all things ouerthrowne, turned as it were topſie turuie, and mingled together with an horrible confuſion: to the end then that we be not troubled, the Lord puls vs from fixing our eies vpon men, that being attentiue to the voyce of his word, we might continue immoueable. True it is that Saint *Peter* takes this word of *feare* in the paſſiue ſignification, and *Iſaiah* in the actiue. The Apoſtle exhorts the faithfull to be conſtant, and not to tremble at the threats and terrors of wicked men: and the Prophet condemnes this feare which moued the Iewes to ſeeke confederacies with the prophane. But becauſe it was not ſ Apoſtles meaning to expound this place, or to alleage it word for word, but only to allude to the ſenſe of the Prophet, there is no abſurditie in this diuerſitie.

Prou. 18. 10.

Verſe 13. *Sanctifie the Lord of hoſts, and let him be your feare, and let him be your dread.*

WE haue ſaid alreadie that the cauſe of ouer great feare in dangers comes frō hence, that men lift not vp their eies nor affections to God, and therefore the Prophet now applies a ſouraigne remedie to aſſwage ſuch immoderate feares, to the end ſuch as feare imminent and preſent dangers might learne to yeeld that honour vnto God which vnto him belongeth. *Sanctifie the Lord of hoſts*, ſignifies as much as to magnifie and exalt his power, to the end we ſhould call to mind how he gouernes the world; and that the beginnings and iſſues as well of good things as of euill, are in his power. Whence it followes, that God is robbed as it were of his honour and holines if we goe not directlie vnto him when we are in any perplexitie. This maner of ſpeech therefore hath great weight, for we are taught that God can not be more contemptuouſlie deſpiſed, then when we are ouercome of feare: as if he were not exalted high aboue all creatures, to order and diſpoſe of the euents of things. Contrariwiſe, after that by his ſuccor we haue ouerpaſſed and ouercome the dangers by a conſtant faith, then is he adorned rightlie with that ſoueraigne authoritie which is due vnto him, becauſe vnleſſe we be moſt aſſured that he hath infinit meanes readie in his hands which we are ignorant of for our deliuerance, it is all one, as if wee eſteemed him ſome dead idoll.

It is to very good purpoſe alſo where he addes, *That God himſelfe* ought to be the *feare*

and

and dread of the people; to the end they might know that they should receiue a iust and due recompence of their wickednesse and contempt of his Maiestie, when they trembled like cowards, and were so amazed for the present dangers. Now, although hee ioyne *dread and feare* together; yet his meaning is not that the Iewes should so tremble at the mention of Gods name, as to flee from his presence: but he placeth these two words together, onely because he requires a sonne-like reuerence of his Maiestie: as also to note a constant perseuerance therein. His meaning is then, that they shall be free and dispatched from trouble of minde, if so bee his feare bee so liuely engrauen in their hearts, that they neuer depart from it. And truely, whosoeuer hee be that subiecteth himselfe willingly vnto God, setting his feare onely before his eyes, to hold himselfe by meanes of this bridle, in his duties; such a one shall feele by experience, that there is no place of refuge more safe, then vnder the shadowe of his wings. But in regard that the wicked cease not to prouoke his wrath against them by their outragious libertie; hee auengeth himselfe worthily vpon such a careleſſe securitie, vexing their mindes with a continuall vnquietnesse.

God would not haue vs so to feare him, that we should flee his presence.

Vers. 14. *And hee shall be as a sanctuarie: but as a stumbling stone, and as a rocke to fall vpon to both the houses of Israel; and as a snare and as a net to the inhabitants of Ierusalem.*

HE promiseth a secure and quiet conscience vnto the true seruants of God; because the Lord will easily appease all terrors, in keeping them vnder the shadow of his wings. Now he alludes to the word *Sanctifie*, which hee vsed heretofore: for the word which signifies *Sanctuarie*, Tower, or fortresse, is deriued of that which signifies, *to sanctifie*. He meanes to affirme then, that God askes nothing whereof he offereth not a like mutuall recompence. For whosoeuer they are that doe *sanctifie* him in their hearts; shall also proue by experience, that he is a most certaine *Sanctuarie*, and hauen of safetie for them. But howsoeuer there bee some correspondencie betweene God and vs in this *sanctification*; yet notwithstanding it is in a diuers respect; because wee are said to *sanctifie him*, when wee attribute vnto him all praise and glorie, and depend altogether vpon him: but he on his part is said to *sanctifie vs*, when hee deliuers and keepes vs in all dangers. Now because very few are found who obey him, resting themselues wholly vpon his promises, the Prophet meant to arme the faithfull against all such temptations. For they were in danger to be carried away by such and so wicked examples as by a kinde of whirlewinde. Behold now the Prophets meaning; as if he should say; The Lord will bee a most safe and faithfull gardian vnto you: and howsoeuer others spurne against him, yet be not you afraid; but continue you constant in your places.

1

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There is also in this place a secret opposition: because the *Sanctuarie* is as a Tower situated in an high place, for the defence of the faithfull; and for the destruction and ruine of the vnfaithfull, in regard they rashed vpon God with a foolehardinesse. But wee shall hereafter see more cleerely how this was accomplished; partly vnder *Hezekias*, partly also from the time of the captiuitie of *Babylon*: and yet notwithstanding, Christ was therewithall prefigured, who was to bee a *rocke of falling*, and not a fortresse of defence to the Israelites. *Isaiah* aduertiseth the faithfull of this *fall*, to the end they should conforme themselues to this warning.

To the two houses.] The Iewes doe fondly and senselesly rent this sentence, instead of diuiding it aright. For they say, that God shall be partly a sanctification; and partly an offence to the Israelites: as if by the *two houses*, he should distinguish betweene the faithfull and the vnfaithfull. But hee rather commands the faithfull not to bee discouraged, although almost all the multitude of both the kingdomes, do hinder them from following of God; but that in forsaking all impediments, they should goe on with cheerefulnesse through the thickest of them. The Prophet might haue said in a word, hee shall be a stumbling stone to *Israel*: but hee meant to expresse it more fully: for hee comprehends the whole people, and saith, that God shall be their ouerthrowe. The people were diuided into two Kingdomes; to wit, *Ephraim* and *Iudah*; and therefore hee names both the one and the other. I grant that some were excepted out of this number: but he speakes heere of the whole body in generall.

This is an excellent place, and cannot bee too oft called to minde; especially in this time wherein we now liue, wherein wee see the estate of religion almost quite abolished in Christendome. Many boast that they are Christians, who yet are farre off from God, and to whom also Christ is a stone of offence.

The Papists proudly brag of his name, although they prophane his whole seruice by their superstitions, and despightfully dishonour him. As touching those who haue the pure worship of God established in the midst of them, there are very few who imbrace the doctrine of the gospel with a sincere affectiō.

On which side then soeuer wee turne our eyes, wee can see nothing but wofull temptations euery where. And therefore let vs set this most profitable aduertisement before vs; to wit, that it is no new thing to see the greater part, yea, almost all those who boast themselues to be the seruants of the Church, yet to spurne against God. And in the meane while, albeit we be but as a little handfull of people in respect of them; yet must wee rest our selues constantly notwithstanding vpon the Lord.

To the inhabitants of Ierusalem.] This is the second amplification. For hauing made mention of both the kingdomes, hee names the principall

principall or head place of them both. Now howſoeuer the whole Country was degenerate; yet notwithſtanding it ſeemed that the Lord had his chiefe reſidence there. Hee ſhewes then that God is a ſtone of offence, and a rocke to fall vpon; not onely to the common people, who were diſperſed abroad in the Countrie and villages; but alſo to the greateſt; as to the Magiſtrates and Miniſters who were in Ieruſalem: yea euen in this holy place (I ſay) where God intended that the remembrance of his name ſhould eſpecially be honoured. The which Dauid alſo witneſſeth when he ſaith; that the maſter builders whom God had ſet on worke, reiected the chiefe corner ſtone: Pſal.118.22. Ieſus Chriſt alleadging this place againſt the Iewes, ſhewes that *Mat.21.42.* theſe words were ſpoken of him. I deny not but this fell out in *Iſaiah* his time; but much more in the time of Chriſt: for impietie & rebellion increaſed by little & little, euen till it came to the height. So then as wel the great, as the ſmall, who had alwaies obſtinately reſiſted God, did yet more licentiouſly ouerflow at that time; ſo as being come to the top, in the day of their deſtruction, they were wholly forſaken of God, whoſe Sonne they had wilfully reiected. And from hence we gather a teſtimonie of the eternall Godhead of Chriſt: Saint *Paul* ſhewing that it is God himſelfe of whom the Prophet heere ſpeakes: Rom.9.33. Now hee mentions no new God; but him who created heauen and earth, and who manifeſted himſelfe to *Moſes*. It is God himſelfe then, by whom the Church hath been alwaies gouerned.

A teſtimonie proouing the Godhead of Chriſt.

Verſ.15. *And many among them ſhall ſtumble, and ſhall fall, and ſhall bee broken, and ſhall be ſnared, and ſhall bee taken.*

HE continues to threate the wicked as he did heretofore; and denounceth, that all thoſe which would not reſt vpon God, ſhould not eſcape vnpuniſhed. Now the threatning is this; After they haue *ſtumbled*, *they ſhall fall*; and in the end, *ſhall be broken*. This agrees with the former Similitude, in which he compares God vnto a *ſtone*. Chriſt alludes thereunto, comprehending both the members: Whoſoeuer falles vpon this ſtone, ſhall bee broken; and vpon whomſoeuer it ſhall fall, it ſhall grinde him to powder: Matthew 21.44. That which followes afterwards, *They ſhall bee ſnared and taken*, agrees to the Similitude following; wherein he compares God to a *net* and *ſnare*. Let not the wicked thinke themſelues then ſtronger then God, or wiſer then hee: for they ſhall feele in the end, both to their coſt and ruine, that he is the ſtrongeſt and wiſeſt. Therefore it muſt needes follow, that they bee brought to nought; becauſe they ſhall be *broken* to powder in an inſtant: or elſe ſo enwrapped, that they ſhall neuer winde themſelues out. Now theſe things are not proper vnto God otherwiſe the accidentally, if we may ſo ſpeake: for his proper office is rather to draw men vnto him, and to giue them aſſured ground of their ſaluation; which was very well knowne and ſeene moſt cleerely in Chriſt. In regard whereof, Saint *Peter* ſaith, that howſoeuer many vnbeleeuers ſtumble at him, yet that their falles ought not to hinder our faith, that it ſhould not alwaies march on; becauſe to vs Chriſt is a choſen and pretious ſtone: 1.Pet.2.4.

Verſ.16. *Binde vp the teſtimonie, ſeale vp the law among my Diſciples.*

THE Lord now turnes his ſpeech to the Prophet, and incourageth him againſt he ſhould fight againſt Apoſtates and rebels; to the end he might execute his office boldly and conſtantly; which was not a little needefull. For *Iſaiah* had tried the great rebellion which was in the people: ſo as if he had looked onely vpon the preſent eſtate, to wit, the infidelitie of the people, and the labor which hee beſtowed in vaine, hee might forthwith haue been vtterly out of heart. For this cauſe the Lord purpoſed to confirme and ratifie his vocation afreſh vnto him: and not for his ſake alone, but for all their ſakes alſo which ſhould obey his doctrine. And howſoeuer few ſhould giue credit to the ſame; yet doth the Lord witneſſe notwithſtanding, that his doctrine is *ſtaled vp to thoſe few*: and that for their ſakes *Iſaiah* was not to giue ouer teaching, neither yet that the others ſhould ceaſe their walking in the obedience of faith. Now he compares the doctrine of the word to *Sealed letters*, which many might hold and handle; but yet notwithſtanding could not bee read nor vnderſtood but of a ſmall number; that is to ſay, of thoſe to whom they were directed. And thus there are very few who vnderſtand the word of God, (for they are the elect onely) howſoeuer it be offered to all in generall. The word of God then is ſealed vp to thoſe that profit not by it; and yet ſo ſealed, as that the Lord opens the ſame notwithſtanding to his choſen by his holie Spirit.

Some deriue the verbe *Tſur*, which ſignifies to Binde, of the verbe *Natſar*; and tranſlates, Keepe. Now although this bee of no great importance; yet notwithſtanding it appeares by the other word *Seale*, that the expoſitiõ which I haue followed is the beſt: for the ancients were wont to binde a threed about their letters, and then to ſet the ſeale vpon it. Now from hence wee gather a moſt profitable doctrine: to wit, that the Paſtours and Miniſters of the word, ought to continue conſtant in their office, although it ſeemes that all reuolt, and that nothing is to be ſeen in men but outrage and rebellion: becauſe the Lord will euer reſerue vnto himſelfe, ſome diſciples which will profit in the reading of his letters; howſoeuer they be cloſed and ſhut vp to others. The Prophet will vſe the ſame Similitude, Chap.29.11. where hee ſaith, that the word is like to a cloſed booke: but there mentions the wicked onely: but heere hee ſpeakes of the *Diſciples*, amongſt whom

whom his doctrine should not be vnfruitfull.

Quest. But some will demand; whether the Prophet should leaue the people so, as to withdraw and shut vp himselfe apart with his disciples, who made some benefit of his warnings? Ans. I answere: This was not the Prophets intent; for it was the will of the Lord that he should preach publikely and manifest his message vnto all. And because he spake as to deafe eares, & might therfore lose his labor, and so bee discouraged in seeing no fruit to come thereof; the Lord heereby incourageth and strengtheneth him, to the end he should go on forward still, although all things were in a manner desperate: that so, contenting himselfe with the small number of his disciples, he might be more couragious in his ministerie then euer before.

Vers. 17. **Therefore I will waite vpon the Lord, that hath hid his face from the house of Iaakob; and I will looke for him.*

*Or, So.

So I will wait.] I had rather translate the Hebrew particle *Vau*, in this sense; because the Prophet retires himselfe apart as it were, hauing receiued consolation from the Lord: as wee haue seene heretofore. It is as much then as if hee had said; Seeing the Lord is pleased to haue some Disciples, amongst whom his doctrine should bee sealed, *I will wait*, although hee *hath hid his face from Iaakob*. That is to say, although hee hath reiected and cast off his people. This place is worthy our obseruation; in the meditation whereof, wee ought continually to be much encouraged: yea, if so be the Lord proceede so farre, as that he hath turned his face away from his people, and should reiect those who make profession of his name: yet for all this, must wee *wait vpon* him with inuincible patience. This is the only remedie wee haue. The word *waiting*, hath great emphasis in it, as if hee should say; Yet notwithstanding will not I turne away from the Lord; I will still persеuere in faith. He yet augments the matter when he addes, *So* I will wait. Seeing our faith is wont to stagger and faint when offences doe happen. It is greeuously shaken when we see our selues forsaken of our companions, and that the sworne enemies of the Church doe proudly vsurpe the title of it: for offences for the most part doe cause vs to turne away from God, filling vs with such perplexed thoughts, that we are ready to call the truth of his word into question. This consolation then is very necessary, as well in the calamities wherewith the Church is oppressed, as in the troubles wherewith shee is tossed by the disloyaltie of others.

Vers. 18. *Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath giuen mee*, are *as signes and wonders in Israel, by the Lord of hostes which dwelleth in Mount Zion.*

HEere the Prophet not onely testifies, that hee will wait in patience; but also shewes what his constancie is; proposing himselfe, with his disciples and those which remained with him, to open view. As though hee should say, Although others recoile, yet Lord behold I am readie to doe thee seruice; and I also bring those with mee, whom thou hast vouchsafed to saue miraculously by my labours. Hee shewes an inuincible manfulnesse then, and protests that he will continue in the faith and obedience of the Lord, although all should reuolt.

By Children, hee vnderstands seruants and ministers; following therin the vsual custome as well of the Hebrew tongue as of the Latine. Now he speakes of the Disciples whom he mentioned before. Whence it appeareth, what their dutie is, who would bee reputed the true disciples of the Lord; to wit, that they protest with *Isaiah*, to be teachable, and readie to hearken, and that they be readie to obey, as soone as the Lord shall speake. The teachers also ought to bring their disciples with them, and not to send them alone before them: they ought to march in the first ranke, and to shew them the way by their example; as was said in the second Chapter, verse 3. otherwise they should haue no authoritie in teaching. The Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, applies this place to Iesus Christ, and from thence drawes an admonition, which ought to serue vs as a sharpe spurre; to the end wee should not thinke to follow *Isaiah* alone for our leader and Doctor, but Christ himselfe; and to bee so much the more encouraged to run our course with greater alacritie. *Heb. 2. 13.*

Which the Lord hath giuen me.] The Prophet shewes heere of whom it is that we hold our faith; to wit, of God and of his free election. For *Isaiah* preached to all publikely, admonishing euery one, and soliciting all without exception, to draw neere vnto the Lord: but the word profited those onely *which God had giuen him*. By the word *Giuen*, hee meaneth those whom God drew inwardly by the secret instinct of his holie Spirit; for otherwise the externall voyce should haue sounded in the eares of the people in vaine: and thus it is said that the elect are *giuen* to Christ of God his Father: Ioh. 6. 37. Whereby we perceiue, that the promptnesse of faith depends not vpon the will of man; but that some few among many doe beleeue, because (as S. *Luke* saith) they were ordained before vnto life: Act. 13. 48. Now God is wont to call them whom he hath predestinate; and sealeth vp the testimonie of their adoption effectually in them, to the end they may giue themselues to teachableneſse and obedience. Such a thing is the *gift* then whereof *Isaiah* speakes in this place. But this agrees fitly vnto Christ, to whom the Father offereth and giueth Disciples; as it is said in Iohn; No man commeth vnto me except my Father draw him: Iohn 6. 44. Whence it followes, that he is appointed our gardian to preserue vs vnder his protection vnto the end: and therefore he saith; That none of those whom the Father hath giuen him, shall perish: Ioh. 17. 12. *Ioh. 10. 29.*

Signes and wonders.] Some referre this to miracles

miracles amiſſe: for the ſenſe is farre otherwiſe, namely; That all the faithfull ſhall not onely be hated, but alſo bee had in execration; ſo as they ſhall be eſteemed monſters; and that not amongſt ſtrangers and open enemies, but euen *in Iſrael* it ſelfe; whereof wee haue experience at this day. The Papiſts on the one ſide abhorre vs more then Turkes or Iewes; nay, more then dogges and ſwine. Now although this be odious, yet muſt wee not be much aſtonied thereat; for this propheſie of neceſſitie muſt euen now bee fulfilled. The Prophet found it by experience amongſt his owne people: as all thoſe haue likewiſe done, which haue followed his doctrine. But wee finde not onely this hatred towards vs in the Papiſts alone, but euen in thoſe who would ſeeme to haue profited moſt in the Church: and the greater part of theſe abhor vs, mocke vs, and eſteeme vs as very monſters; onely becauſe we trouble our ſelues ſo much, and are ſo carefull for the ſaluation of the Church, of Gods honour, and of life eternall. But yet let vs not bee afraid to put our ſelues into dangers, to incurre hatreds, enuies, taunts, baniſhments, want, hunger, nakedneſſe; and laſt of all, death it ſelfe for all this. To them indeede they are monſtrous things; for how cã they taſte of theſe ſoueraign good things with any reliſh, whileſt they pamper themſelues, and are ſo carefull for their quiet and eaſe? But to the end their flouts may not aſtoniſh vs, we muſt arme our ſelues with this exhortation of the Prophet.

Now to the end hee might ſhew how vaine and friuolous the conſpiracie of the wicked is, hee ſtoutly triumphs ouer the pride of the whole world, by placing *the Lord of hoſts* as oppoſite againſt them: as if he ſhould ſay; I paſſe nothing at all that men abhorre and deteſt me, ſeeing I am aſſured that God is on my ſide. When hee alſo addes, that the Lord *dwelleth in mount Zion*; theſe words carry great weight. For though the people were couered vnder an infinite heape of vices and wickedneſſe, yet they gloried as if they onely were holy to the Lord; and in abuſing his promiſes, they condemned the true ſeruants of God, which reproued them. On the contrarie, that the Prophets might pluck this pride & vain confidence away frõ them, they teſtified that they were the Miniſters of the onely true God; whom this people notwithſtanding falſly bragged to worſhip in *Mount Zion*. Now God did not ſo chuſe his dwelling place there, as if being tied to that, he would therefore allow a baſtard and newfound ſeruice: but would be ſought and ſerued there, according to the rule of his word. And therefore *Iſaiah* taking the God which *dwelled in Mount Zion*, on his ſide, taxeth and ſharpely galleth the hypocrits, who fooliſhly and proudly bragged as oft as they cried, *The Temple of the Lord*: because it was rather an idoll wherein they gloried; contrary to Gods word. Now although they ſnatched the promiſes to themſelues, yet they falſly alleadged them againſt the true ſeruants of God; as the Papiſts at this day doe againſt vs. The Prophet then adorneth God with this title, to the end hee may vnmaske thoſe hypocrits, which made no conſcience vainely to oppoſe the name of the Temple againſt the expreſſe word of God. And in this regard *Iſaiah* now ſaith; Take vs for monſters as it pleaſeth you, yet notwithſtanding God will approue of his owne: you cannot abhor them, but you alſo therewithall reiect the God of *Abraham* and *Dauid*, whoſe ſeruants we are.

Ier. 7. 4.

Verſ. 19. *And when they ſhall ſay vnto you, Enquire at them that haue a Spirit of diuination, and at the Soothſayers, which whiſper and murmur; ſhould not a people enquire of their God, from the liuing to the dead?*

BVt if they ſay.] The Prophet goes on with his ſpeech; to wit, that all the faithfull being armed with the authoritie of God, ſhould not onely as with a buckler, but as with a wall of braſſe, conſtantly reſiſt all impietie. He admoniſheth them then to continue ſtedfaſt, and not to be ſhaken, if any ſhould offer to ſolicite them to ſuperſtition and idolatrie. Hee vſeth the plurall number, to ſhew that it was a vice common among all eſtates, which had ouerflowed euery where: as if he ſhould ſay, I ſee very well what will come to paſſe, you ſhall be in great danger: for thoſe which remaine amongſt you, will indeuour to turne you aſide from the true God, becauſe themſelues being wicked, will alſo deſire to haue you become like them. Herewithall he ſheweth how wickedly they were reuolted from the law and couenant of God, in that they were not aſhamed to ſolicite others to ſeeke vnto Sorcerers and Enchanters, whoſe verie names ought to haue been abominable and accurſed vnto them.

A people.] Some reade this altogether in the perſon of the wicked; as if vnder pretence hereof, they would deceiue the ſimple: to wit, that there is no nation whatſoeuer, without oracles & reuelations, but euery one aſketh counſell at his gods, or at leaſt, of the Magicians and Soothſayers. Yet notwithſtanding, mee thinks the opinion of others is more ſound, who thinke that *Iſaiah* teacheth his diſciples how they ſhould anſwere, if ſo be any ſhould ſolicite them to idolatrie. And yet this doth not ſufficiently open the meaning of this place: for commonly it is expounded as if it were a compariſon, from the leſſe to the greater; What? doe the Gentiles aske counſell at their gods, which notwithſtanding are falſly ſo called; and ſhall wee not make more account of him whom wee know to be the true God, eſpecially ſeeing he hath manifeſted himſelfe ſo to be vnto vs, and that by ſo infinite teſtimonies? Is it not a foule ſhame that the heathen ſhould make more reckoning of their gods, then we doe of our God? But I rather expound this of the Iewes themſelues, who are called *People*, by way of excellencie; becauſe they were adopted of God. Neither is it materiall that the Prophet vſeth ỹ word *Elohim*, Gods, in the plural number,

ber, for the ſame word is taken in the like ſenſe in the ſingular.

This text is a buckler wherewith we ought to beate backe all thoſe ſuperſtitions which glide ſo ſmoothly thorowout the world. And if others doubt and ſtand in a mammering whether they ſhould aske counſell at *dead idols*, or at Saints departed; yet let vs alwaies haue this anſwere readie at hand; That wee ought to aske counſell of God onely. Now the Prophet alludes to the place in Deuteronomie; where the the Lord forbids that they ſhould goe to *Enchanters or Sorcerers*: Deut. 18. 10. And leſt they ſhould alleadge the examples of the heathen, who had their Soothſayers and expounders of dreames, and obſerued the flying of the fowles, hee addes in 15. verſe, that they ſhould not want a Prophet, neither ſhould they be left deſtitute of neceſſarie doctrine. It was the will and pleaſure of God then, that they ſhould wholly depend vpon his word, and onely learne from thence whatſoeuer was expedient for them to know, and ſo to yeeld him loyal obedience.

As touching that which followes, *from the liuing to the dead*, ſome expound it otherwiſe, and interpret *for* in ſtead of *from*: and then the ſenſe is this; Will yee aske counſell at the dead for the matters of the liuing? But in regard this ſenſe is conſtrained, it ſhould bee more proper it may bee, to expound it thus, The Lord will be our maſter, and for this end hath ordained his Prophets, that wee ſhould learne his will of them: for the Prophet is the mouth of the Lord. It is not lawfull then to goe vnto the *dead*, to whom this office was not giuen: and adde hereunto alſo, that the Lord mindes not to vſe the ſeruice of the dead to teach vs. But yet, when I haue well conſidered the text ſomewhat more narrowly, I had rather tranſlate the Hebrew word *Bead*, From; to wit, frō the liuing to the dead: as if he ſhould ſay; that one onely God ought to ſuffice vs, as well for the *liuing* as for the *dead*. Whether thou conſidereſt the heauen, the earth, or the loweſt parts thereof, thou ſhalt finde that one God onely ſufficeth vs. Me thinks this ſenſe is moſt proper, and eaſie. The Prophet then armes the faithfull againſt the deuiſes and plots of the wicked, which otherwiſe might haue cauſed them to reuolt; to the end they might content themſelues to haue God onely for their Maſter; and that they ſhould not doe him that iniurie, as in forſaking his doctrine, to giue themſelues to other teachers; but rather caſting off all other things, they ſhould onely depend vpon the truth; the which hee repeates and confirmes immediately.

Verſ. 20. *To the Law, and to the Teſtimonie, if they ſpeake not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.*

THis place is diuerſly expounded. For ſome take it to be a forme of an oath, as if the Prophet ſhould Sweare by the law, that thoſe were apoſtataes, which drew others to the like apoſtaſie with them. But I take it otherwiſe; namely, that we are rather brought *to the Law, and to the Teſtimonie*; becauſe the particle *Lamed*, ſhewes that this is the true ſenſe. The *Teſtimony* is conioyned with the *Law*; not as if they were diuers things, but for the plainer vnderſtanding. As if hee ſhould ſay; *To the Law*, which containes the Teſtimonie of Gods will toward you. Laſtly, we muſt take the word *Teſtimony*, for an epithite; to the end wee may know what the vſe of the Law is; namely, that God manifeſts himſelfe therein, and ſhewes what a one he will be towards vs: and laſtly, hee there ordaines all things which are needefull for vs to know. This then is an excellent commendation of the *Law*, which containes the doctrine of ſaluation, and the rule of a right and happy life. And this is the reaſon why hee iuſtly forbids vs to turne from it in the leaſt iot; as if hee ſhould ſay, Forſake all your ſuperſtitions, after which theſe runne ſo violently. They were not content with God alone, but ſought a thouſand inuentions: for what will ſatisfie him that forſakes the Lord? Chriſt ſpeakes alſo in this ſort; They haue *Moſes* and the Prophets, let them heare them: Luke 16. 29. For although *Abraham* bee brought in ſpeaking there, yet is it a perpetuall oracle which proceedes out of the mouth of God.

Wee are inioyned then to *heare the Law and the Prophets*, to the end we ſhould not be carried vp and downe after the curioſities of mans braine; neither to deſire the knowledge of any thing by meanes of the dead. For if the Law and the Prophets ſufficed not, the Lord would not forbid vs to vſe other meanes. And hereby we learne, that whatſoeuer is added to the word of God, ought to be condemned and reiected. Why ſo? Becauſe it is the Lords wil that we ſhould wholly depend vpon his word, and that all our wiſdome ſhould bee limited within the bounds thereof. If we then liſten vnto others, we ſnatch vnto our ſelues a libertie which he hath forbidden vs; and in ſo doing, wee offer him great outrage. Now whatſoeuer it is which men ſhall bee bold to ſet vp of themſelues, will bee found nothing elſe but a corrupting of this word. Let vs therefore reiect all other teachers, if we minde to obey God. And he alſo ſhewes further, that we ſhall then be well armed againſt all idolatries and ſuperſtitions, when wee relie vpon the *Law of the Lord*. For as S. *Paul* calles the word, The ſword of the Spirit: Epheſ. 6. 17. ſo alſo by it ought we to bring Satan and all his inuentions to nought. Retire we thither then, when the enemies ſhall aſſault vs; that being armed therewith, wee may fight valiantly, and at the laſt, ouercome and put them to flight.

All our wiſdome ſhould be limited within the bounds of Gods word.

If they ſpeake not, &c.] I will not recite all the diuers expoſitions of this place, becauſe it would be too tedious. And indeede, the true expoſition ſeemes to mee ſo ſure, that it may eaſilie refute all others. The common interpretation is, that the wicked doe therefore

aduance

aduance their lies, and ſet their wiles to ſale, becauſe there is no light in them: that is to ſay, becauſe they are depriued of common ſenſe. But for mine owne part, I expound it, that the faithfull are heereby exhorted to be of good incourage: ſo as if the vnfaithfull agree not to the true doctrine, they doe nothing elſe herein but ſhew their blindneſſe. And therfore muſt we contemne their blockiſhneſſe, to the end it may bee no let nor impediment vnto vs: as alſo Chriſt admoniſheth that we ſhould boldly let ſuch blinde guides alone, leſt we be moued with their blinde obſtinacie. They are blinde, ſaith he, and leaders of the blinde. Will you wittingly periſh together with them? Matth. 15.14. For this cauſe the Prophet commands that ſuch authoritie be giuen to the word of God, to the end wee may boldly deſpiſe the whole world, if they ſhould gainſay it: for by the authoritie thereof, wee may condemne the Angels themſelues, if they ſhould fall into ſuch a ſinne. If an Angell from heauen ſhould preach any other doctrine, let him be accurſed; ſaith *Paul*, Gal. 1.8. How much more boldly then may wee condemne men which reſiſt God? And this maner of ſpeech alſo which the Prophet vſeth, hath great waight, *if they ſpeake not according to this word:* becauſe ſuch a one is iudged blind, who readily and without reſiſtance imbraceth not this ſentence; namely, That wee muſt not bee wiſe beyond the Law of God.

We muſt not be wiſe beyond the law of God.

Verſ. 21. *Then hee that is afflicted and famiſhed, ſhall *goe to and fro in it: and when he ſhall be hungry, he ſhall euen fret himſelfe, and curſe his King and his gods, and ſhall looke vpward.*

*Or, ſhall paſſe by this Country.

LEſt the faithfull ſhould ſuffer themſelues to be enwrapped in the common errors, hee addes how horrible the puniſhment is which threatneth the wicked when they ſhall be once reuolted from God, and alſo ſhall inforce themſelues to draw others to the ſame reuolt with them. The place is ſomewhat obſcure, but the cauſe thereof proceeds of this, that ſome haue not weighed ỹ words as they ought to haue done. Now the verb *Abar* hath great weight: for by this word *To paſſe*, he ſignifies the giddineſſe which cauſeth men to wander, ſo as they are altogether diſquieted, not being able to ſtay lõg in any place whatſoeuer. We muſt ſupplie a noune to the verb indefinit, to wit, The Iewes ſhall paſſe. By the pronoune *in it*, he vnderſtands the countrie of Iudea, which the Lord had preferred aboue all other regions: and therefore this may be well inough vnderſtood, albeit the Prophet hath not expreſſed it. As if he ſhould ſay, I haue promiſed indeed that this region ſhould be the perpetuall heritage of my people, but they ſhall be as reſtles vagabonds; and it ſhall fare with them as with thoſe who being driuen out of their countrie, being afflicted with peſtilence, famine, and all maner of miſeries, do ſeeke euery where for ſome place of abode better then their owne, but can no where finde it. Thus theſe words are oppoſed to that ſingular benefit of God, whereof *Moſes* makes mention ſo often, to wit, that they ſhould dwell perpetuallie in Iudea: for he foretelles here that they ſhall be *vvanderers* and vagabonds not in their countrie, but in a ſtrange region, ſo as in whatſoeuer place they ſhould ariue, they ſhould be aſſailed and vexed with infinite calamities.

Gen. 12.15. & 17.8.

Aſſamiſhed.] It ſeemes the Prophet ſpeakes of the Iewes conuerſion, as if he ſhould ſay, After they haue bin thorowly humbled with Gods iudgements, they will come to repentance: and queſtionleſſe this is the true remedie whereby God for the moſt part heales the obſtinacie of men. Notwithſtanding if any thinke that by the word *hunger* the Prophet deſcribes the wrath and ſtubborne yelling of the wicked, it muſt be obſerued that he not only comprehends hunger and thirſt, but (by the figure called Synecdoche) all other calamities alſo. By the word *To fret*, he ſignifies that which we haue in our common ſpeech, they *fret*, or chafe. The meaning is, that they ſhall begin to be diſpleaſed in themſelues, and ſhall alſo deteſt all thoſe ſuccors in which they truſted before: and this in deed is the beginning of conuerſion; for in proſperitie we flatter our ſelues, but being oppreſſed, we abhorre whatſoeuer is about vs. Now if any had rather referre this to the reprobate, then this word *fret* ſhall note out that gall and bitternes which rather pricks them forward to a furious raging, then to a calme and quiet humbling of themſelues.

They ſhall curſe their king.] By *king*, ſome vnderſtand God. And *Zophonie* takes *Malchom* in this ſenſe, Zoph. 1.5. that is to ſay, their king. But I here put a diſtinction between *king* and God, for the wicked are firſt blinded with the falſe truſt which they put in Idols, and by and by after they ground and eſtabliſh their ſtrength vpon earthlie things. The Iewes hauing a *king*, were puffed vp with his glorie and power: and when *Iſaiah* preached, the wicked exaſperated the king againſt him, and they moued all the people to imitate their king, who was as it were the ſtandard-bearer. In as much then as they were puffed vp as wel in regard of their idols as of their king, he ſhewes that they ſhall be oppreſſed with ſo many calamities, that they ſhall be conſtreined *to curſe their gods, and their king*. And behold heere the beginning of repentance, namely, to deteſt and put farre away all impediments which turne vs away from God.

Lifting vp their face on high.] He heere deſcribes an affrighted and perplexed conſcience, which vexeth the afflicted ſo long till they haue learned to lift vp their eyes boldly on high. It is ſome beginning of repentance, as I haue touched a little before, to endeuor to ſeeke true remedies, hauing been inſtructed and awakened by calamities and chaſtiſements. But we muſt goe a ſtep further, to wit, that reſting our ſelues vpon God only we gaze not here and there, neither yet be toſſed to and fro with all winds. To be ſhort, *Iſaiah* threatneth the Iewes with an vtter

ruine, becauſe they were become ſo deſperate, that a light and eaſie ſtroke of Gods hand had not ſufficientlie tamed their rebellion. Yet notwithſtanding we may expound this in the good part, to wit, that the Iewes ſhould *lift vp their eies* at the laſt vnto heauen:

Verſ. 22. *And when he ſhall looke to the earth, behold trouble, and darkenes, vexation and anguiſh, and he is driuen into darkenes.*

BVt then we muſt reade this 22. verſe apart, and ſo the ſenſe will be, that the Iewes ſhall conuert vnto God, becauſe they ſhall be deſtitute of all meanes on earth, and ſhall perceiue nothing but horrible calamities on which ſide ſoeuer they turne their eyes. Now theſe ſpeeches are partlie ſimple, and partlie figuratiue: for by *darknes* and obſcuritie he meanes nothing elſe but aduerſitie, after the maner of the ſcripture phraſe: but he addes *driuen*, amplifying it greatlie by this word *affliction*: for if one puſh him forwards which is in darknes, he ſtumbleth and hurts himſelfe very greatly. His meaning is then, that to one ſore affliction the Lord wil adde another more grieuous, to humble them more and more. For his intent is nothing elſe but to ſhew that the iudgements of God ſhall be ſo horrible, that they ſhall be conſtreined in deſpite of their teeth to caſt vp their *eyes to heauen*.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Yet the darkenes ſhall not be according to the affliction that it had whē at the firſt he touched lightly the land of Zebulon, and the land of Nepthaly; nor afterward when he was more grieuous by the way of the ſea beyond Iordan in Galile of the Gentiles.*

HE begins to comfort ỹ afflicted with hope of a mitigation of the chaſtiſements, leaſt they ſhould be ſwallowed vp with ſo great an heape of calamities. Many draw theſe words to a cleane cōtrarie ſenſe, ſaying, that it is a threatning which preſageth a more heauie affliction to the Iewes, then that wherewith they were chaſtiſed by *Tiglath-pelezer*, or by *Salmanazar*. The firſt did them much euill, and the ſecond more then the former: for he caried the ten tribes away captiue, and aboliſhed the name of *Iſrael*. Some thinke then that the Prophet in this place foretels of a more heauie calamitie then euer they yet taſted of, which being compared to the two former, ſhould much ſurpaſſe them. Although I am not minded to reiect this expoſition becauſe it is ſomething probable; yet notwithſtanding I am of a contrarie opinion, albeit this firſt hath the fairer ſhew: the Prophet meant to take all pleaſures from the hypocrites, leſt they ſhould imagine that this deſtruction which was to ouerflow all, ſhould be like ſome little ſpoile which might paſſe away by and by as the former afflictions had done; and ſo ſhall we take the particle *Ci* in his proper ſignification. But me thinks the naturall ſenſe of the place will agree better if we ſay, that it is a conſolation, wherein the Prophet begins to moderate that which he had formerlie ſpoken of theſe horrible *darknes*, and *driuing* forward: and in mitigating the bitternes of theſe chaſtiſements, he comforts and drawes them to hope that God will ſhew them mercie; as if he ſhould ſay, And *yet*, euen in this cruell deſtruction which the Iewes ſhall vndergoe, the darknes ſhall not be ſuch as it was when the land of Iſrael was firſt afflicted by *Tiglath-pelezer*, and then a little more ſeuerely by *Salmanazer*: for the faithfull might haue growne out of heart in ſuch diſtreſſes, if they had not had ſome conſolations to haue cheered and comforted them. The Prophet then ſpeakes vnto them, to the end they ſhould not thinke themſelues vndone, and declares vnto them that the rods wherewith God meant to beate them ſhould be more eaſie then the firſt. We ſhall eaſily diſcerne hereafter by the context how proper and naturall this expoſition is.

2. *King.* 15. 29. & 17. 6.

But why ſaith the Prophet that this deſtruction which will lay all things waſte, ſhall yet notwithſtanding be more gentle and ſupportable? for Ieruſalem ſhould be razed, the Temple broken downe, the Sacrifices aboliſhed, which notwithſtāding in former warres remained wholie vntouched? this then ſhould ſeeme the cruelleſt, and the others but light in compariſon. We muſt obſerue that there is a certaine promiſe added to this, which was not to the others; now it is by this promiſe only that temptations may be ouercome, and the iudgements made more light: this (I ſay) is the only remedie which ſweetneth our euils, ſo that thoſe who are deſtitute thereof muſt needs fall into deſpaire. If the Lord confirme vs by this meanes, giuing vs hope of his helpe, there is not the greateſt affliction which we ſhall not eſteeme very light. This may be illuſtrated by a ſimilitude: It may fall out that a man ſhall drowne himſelfe in a little riuer, if he fall thereinto with his head downward; the which notwithſtanding in the midſt of the ſea might haue been ſaued, if he had had ſome planck or boord which might haue brought him to the ſhore. So alſo the little calamities will ouerwhelme vs if we be deſtitute of the grace of God; whereas being grounded

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Anſ.

grounded vpon the word of God, we can eſcape and come forth out of an extreme ruine ſafe and ſound.

As touching the words, ſome take *Muaph* for an adiectiue, as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, It ſhall not be darkened: but the relatiue of the femenin gender which followes a little after, hindreth from referring this vnto men. The opinion of thoſe who ſay it is a noune ſubſtantiue is better, & therefore I haue thought good to tranſlate word for word: There ſhall be no darkenes in Iudea according to the time, &c. Whereas ſome expound the verbe *Hekal*, as if the earth had been oppreſſed and burdened with people led into captiuitie; this is vtterlie wide from the Prophets meaning, neither agrees it to the ſcope of the Text: for it is ſaid, by and by after, that the neighbor region was burdened with a ſecond warre: no doubt then but this verbe anſwers to the former, *Hariſhon*. Becauſe then that *Tiglath-pelzer* aſſailed but a little portion of the kingdome, it is ſaid that the warre which he made is but light in compariſon of that of *Salmanazar*. He alſo ſaith *by the way of the ſea*, becauſe Galile was neere the riuer of the Mediterraneum ſea, on the other ſide it was inuironed with the flood Iordan. It is called *Galile of the Gentiles*, not onely becauſe it was neighbour to Tyre and Sidon, but alſo in regard many nations were mingled there amongſt the Iewes; for after *Dauid* gaue this countrie to king *Hiram*, it could neuer be ſo quiet but the Gentiles would alwayes occupie ſome part of it. 1. *King.* 9. 12.

Verſ. 2. *The people that walked in darknes haue ſeene a great light: they that dwelled in the land of the ſhadow of death, vpon them hath the light ſhined.*

HE ſpeakes of things to come, and yet notwithſtanding vſeth the time preſent, that in this deſtruction of the Citie, and in the captiuitie and ruin thereof, the people might behold the *light* of God. The ſumme is then, that euen in the midſt of *darknes*, yea of death it ſelfe, they were neuertheleſſe to hope, ſeeing God is able ſufficientlie to giue life to his people when they ſhall be thought as good as dead. It ſeemes that S. *Matthew* in alledging this place turnes it to an other purpoſe: for he ſaith this propheſie was fulfilled when Ieſus Chriſt preached by the ſea ſide, Math. 4. 15. But if we rightlie conſider the Similitude, S. *Matthew* hath iuſtlie applied this place vnto Chriſt, and hath obſerued the true ſenſe. Although it ſeemes our expoſitors can not tell how to make it hang together: for whereas they ſimplie affirme, that this appertaines to the kingdome of Chriſt, they yeeld no ſufficient reaſon of it, neither doe they ſhew how this agrees to this place. If we will haue the true ſenſe then, we muſt call to mind what hath been ſaid heretofore, namely, that the Prophet in ſpeaking of the returne of this people from the captiuitie of Babylon, preſented not one age or ſeaſon before his view, but comprehended all others, euen to the comming of Chriſt, who brought a full and perfect libertie with him to his people. For the deliuerance from Babylon was as an entrance and beginning of the reſtauration of the Church, not to eſtabliſh it for ſome few yeeres, but till ſuch time as the Meſſiah ſhould come, who brought ſaluation, not to mens bodies only, but alſo to their ſoules. We ſhal finde this maner of ſpeech to be very familiar with *Iſaiah*, after we haue proceeded further, and ſhall be a little better exerciſed in reading of his propheſie.

The Prophet then hauing ſpoken of the captiuitie of Babylon, which ſhewed a very great calamitie to come, declares that it ſhall yet be more light then that which Iſrael had ſuſteined at the firſt, becauſe the Lord had moderated and limited a certaine end to this calamitie, to wit, the ſpace of 70. yeares, which being paſt, the *light* of the Lord ſhould ſhine againe vpon them. By this hope of deliuerance then he cheares vp the hearts of ſuch as were caſt downe with feare, to the end they ſhould not be diſcouraged. And thus he hath put a difference betweene the Iewes and the Iſraelites, who had not any certaine hope of ſo neere a deliuerance. For howſoeuer the Prophets had giuen a certaine taſte of the mercie of God to a ſmall number of the faithfull amongſt the people of Iſrael, yet notwithſtanding becauſe the deliuerance of this people was as an ouerplus, and depended vpon the deliuerance of Iudah, the Prophet iuſtlie affirmes that a *new light* is offred, in as much as God hath determined to redeeme his people. Saint *Matthew* alſo rightlie ſpreads the beames of this *light* ouer *Galile*, and the land of *Zabulon*. *Ierem.* 25. 11. 12. *and* 29. 10.

Darknes and the ſhadow of death.] Heere he compares their exile in Babylon to *darknes and death*, becauſe thoſe which were deteined therein were poore and miſerable, and were altogether like *dead men*: as alſo *Ezechiel* out of their mouth declares, namely, that the dead ſhould riſe out of their graues, Ezech. 37. 11. 12. Their condition then was ſuch, as if no brightnes or ſparkle of light had ſhined vpon them. Yet notwithſtanding he ſhewes that this ſhall be no hinderance at all, that they ſhould enioy the light, and recouer their firſt libertie againe: which libertie he ſtretcheth not to a little ſpace, but euen vnto Chriſt his time, as hath been alreadie ſaid.

And hence we obſerue how ỹ Apoſtles were wont to alledge ỹ teſtimonies of ỹ Prophets, and to ſhew the end and true vſe of them. As S. *Paul* alledgeth the teſtimonie of Hoſea, I will call them my people which were not my people, Rom. 9. 26. Hoſea 1. 10. Where he appropriates this to the calling of the Gentiles, although it be properlie ſpoken of the Iewes: and ſhewes that it was fulfilled when the Lord did incorporate the Gentiles into his Church. Thus when this people were in this baniſhment and incloſed therein as in a ſepulcher, they differed nothing from the heathen. And in regard they were in one and the ſame condition, it is good reaſon that this teſtimonie ſhould appertaine to the Gentiles as well as to the Iewes. Neither muſt it be re- How the Apoſtles are wont to alledge teſtimonies out of the Prophets.

ferred to an externall miſerie only, but to the *ſhadow of eternall death*, vntill Chriſt ſhine vpon vs by the doctrine of his word, which is the cauſe why *Paul* ſaith, Awake thou that ſleepeſt and ſtand vp from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall giue thee light, Epheſ. 5.14. If then we extend the beginning of the deliuerance from the returne out of Babylon vntill the comming of Chriſt, from whom proceeds all bountie and libertie of good things, we ſhall haue the true ſenſe of this place, which otherwiſe hath not been expounded clearely enough by the expoſitours.

Verſ. 3. *Thou haſt multiplied the nation and increaſed their ioy: they haue reioyced before thee according to the ioy in harueſt, and as men reioice when they diuide a ſpoile.*

THis place is ſomewhat obſcure, as well in regard of it ſelfe, as alſo becauſe of the diuerſities of interpretations: for it ſeemes abſurd to ſay that *the ioy was not increaſed*, ſeeing he by and by addes, *They reioiced*. For this cauſe the Iewes ſay that the particle *Lo* is not negatiue here, as if one letter were put in ſtead of another, to wit *Aliph* for *Kaui* as alſo that this is found in the ſcripture, albeit very ſeldome: and this they publiſh, becauſe they can not make the text hang together as they would. Some referre this to *Sennacherib*, becauſe his ſo great an armie brought him no matter of ioy, but rather of ſorow. Others not amiſſe expound it of the Church: but they giue no reaſon for it, for they thinke the Prophet ſpeakes this becauſe the faithfull are ſubiect to many miſeries and troubles thorowe out their whole life. Others drawe out a ſenſe further from the purpoſe, to wit, that the Gentiles which ſhould increaſe the Church, ſhould not bring any ioy to the Iewes, nor to the auncient Synagogue. But I cannot approue any one of theſe interpretations. And therefore I expound it thus: that euen as in the beginning of the Chapter the Prophet ſaid, the benefit of this redemption ſhould be greater then all the reſt, although it ſeemed not ſo in regard of the ſmall number of thoſe which ſhould returne home into their countrie: ſo now alſo he repeates the ſame compariſon againe: or at the leaſt, another euery way like vnto it: namely, that the grace of God ſhould ſhine much more then it did when he multiplied the people. For if we compare the eſtate of the kingdome of Iudah, before the captiuitie of Babylon, with that which followed after the returne; wee ſhall well perceiue that it gained at that time more than it loſt before.

Exod. 23. 8.

2. King. 19. 35.

There returned but a ſmall handfull of people indeede, in compariſon of the great multitude which had been led captiue thither. Moreouer, they inhabited not freely in their owne countrey, but by way of lone: and they were to pay tribute to the Perſians, ſo as they held not any appearance in a manner of their firſt dignitie. Who would not then haue preferred the flouriſhing eſtate which was in the houſe of *Dauid* before this? Yet notwithſtanding the Prophet affirmes, that this laſt eſtate, howſoeuer it appeared much leſſe, and more miſerable, is yet neuertheleſſe to bee preferred before the firſt flouriſhing eſtate and glorie of it. Hee ſhewes alſo that there ſhall bee greater ioy then, than when there was abundance of all ſorts of riches and good things: which *Aggæ* likewiſe witneſſed, to wit, that the beautie of the laſt Temple ſhould be greater than the firſt; although to outward view it ſhould ſeeme farre otherwiſe. It is as much then as if *Iſaiah* ſhould haue ſaid, There was neuer *greater ioy*, no not when the *multitude of people* was much more: for howſoeuer we be few, and a ſmall number, yet notwithſtanding thou haſt ſo reuiued vs by the light wherewith thou haſt ſhined vnto vs, that there was no ioy in the former eſtate comparable to this. For this deliuerance was as an entrance of the true and perfect ſaluation, which was at the laſt brought and offered by Chriſt.

Hagg. 2. 10

Before thee.] His meaning is, that the ioy ſhall not be light nor momentanie. For men often reioyce; but it is with a vaine and a falſe ioy which brings nothing in the end but ſorrow and teares. Now he declares that the roote of this ioy ſhall be ſo ſtedfaſt, as it ſhall neuer periſh nor be mooued. And hereunto appertaines the particle *before thee*, becauſe there is nothing that glads the hearts of the faithfull more, then when God cauſeth the light of his countenance ſweetely to ſhine vpon them. They are not caried hither and thither with a franticke and blinde ioy, after the manner of the children of this world, but their full and perfect ioy is to repoſe themſelues in the louing fauour of God. It may be alſo that the Prophet alludes to that ſentence which is ſo often found in the bookes of *Moſes*: Thou ſhalt reioyce before the Lord thy God, Deut. 12. 12. For although hee there ſpeakes of the Tabernacle, yet may this manner of ſpeech be fitly applied to the preſent purpoſe, namely, that the ioy of the godly ſhall not bee prophane, but ſhall ariſe from hence that they know God, and by faith behold him to bee the author of their ſaluation.

The faithfull are not caried away with a blind ioy, as the children of this world are.

Leuit. 23. 40

Others expound it ſomewhat more ſtrictly, as if the faithfull ſhould *reioyce before God* in their conſciences, becauſe in the world they finde nothing but ſorrow and continuall cauſe of griefe. Now although this be true, yet notwithſtanding wee may gather a leſſe conſtrained ſenſe from the circumſtance of the place, to wit, that the faithfull which ſhould be miraculouſly deliuered, ſhould reioyce with true gladneſſe, becauſe they were aſſured by this deliuerance that God was their father, and therefore might boldly reioyce, as being for euer exempt from all euill, when they ſhall be receiued into his protection. This ſets forth a perpetuall *ioy* then, as I ſaid ere while.

The ſimilitudes which he addes of the *harueſt*, and *ſpoyles*, whereby he amplifies the greatneſſe of this ioye, are cleare enough of themſelues. To conclude, it appeares by this

this place, what profit Chriſt brings vnto vs; to wit, a ſtedfaſt & perfect ioy, which can by no meanes whatſoeuer, bee plucked away from vs; no, not although we be aſſailed with waues and ſtormes, yea and preſſed with all manner of anguiſhes. For howſoeuer we be weake and feeble, yet muſt we reioyce and be of good courage: for our ioy conſiſts not in multitudes, neither in riches nor outward appearances; but in a ſpirituall felicitie which wee obtaine by the preaching of the Goſpell.

Ioh. 16.10. What maner of ioy it is which Chriſt brings vs.

Verſ. 4. *For the yoke of their burthen, and the ſtaffe of their ſhoulder, and the rod of their oppreſſion haſt thou broken as in the day of Midian.*

HE ſhewes the cauſe of this ioy; to wit, that the faithfull being deliuered from an horrible and cruell *tyrannie*, ſhould eſteeme of this benefit euen as much as if they had been drawne out of the iawes of death. Now to the end this fauour might bee the better illuſtrated, *Iſaiah* ſets forth the vile and inſupportable ſlauery wherewith the Iewes were oppreſſed: and hereunto belongs this heaping vp of wordes, *heauie yoke, rod of the ſhoulder, ſtaffe of the oppreſſor*, or, *exactor*. For although wee bee ouertender and delicate when afflictions preſſe vs; yet notwithſtanding as ſoone as the bitterneſſe is paſt, we by and by forget them. To the end then that this redeemed people might keepe the ſingular benefit of God in remembrance, and in a reuerend regard, the Prophet would haue them to conſider how hard and lamentable this ſeruitude was, wherein they groned and bowed vnderneath heauy burthens, when as the *ſtaffe* neuer moued from off their ſhoulders, being preſſed by a Tyrant which inſulted ouer them: for which cauſe they might well reioyce and bee glad of their deliuerance.

And hee yet extolles the excellency of this fauour by another circumſtance, in regard that God did openly diſplay his arme and power in their deliuerance, euen as it were from heauen it ſelfe. And therefore he brings in an antient and memorable example: that as God had in times paſt diſcomforted the hoſt of the *Midianites*, by a wonderfull and incredible meanes, without the ſtrength and ſuccours of men: ſo now alſo he would diſplay euen the very ſame power; to wit, that he will deliuer his people from vnder that tyrannie which ſhall oppreſſe them, without the helpe of any man: euen then, when none of the poore Iewes ſhall dare to lift vp their finger (as they ſay.) We muſt alſo obſerue, that God ſo ſuccours his, that ſometimes hee ſerues himſelfe of ordinary meanes: but when hee ſees that theſe meanes will bee hurtfull vnto men, and hinder them from looking to the hand of their deliuerer; he then works alone and by miracles, leſt any thing ſhould ouer ſhadow or hinder men from the manifeſt beholding and knowledge of his power. Thus the arme of the Lord appeared from heauen in this victorie of *Gedeon*, where the enemies were cut off without any helpe of mans hand at all. For what had *Gedeon* but a noiſe of broken pitchers, with which hee ſhould very hardly haue ſcarred a ſort of poore miſe: hee had a little handfulof mé againſt a great hoſt: and in ſtead of all ſorts of weapons, they had vaine and ridiculous ſcarcrowes.

Iudg. 7.22.

Why God deferres ſometimes to ſuccour vs by meanes.

Iudg. 7.16. 19.21.

For this cauſe he compares the future deliuerance of the people to this other deliuerance, and ſheweth that the manifeſt power and vertue of God ſhall bee knowne vnto all in this laſt, as well as in the victorie of *Gedeon*. Some expound this place ſimply of the Law; which may well be called a heauie yoke & a ſtaffe burthening the ſhoulder. But this expoſition agrees not with the text; For ſo it might ſeeme that the Prophet ſpake from the purpoſe, which were as much as to offer violence (as it were) to this place. Let vs hold the meane then whereof I haue ſpoken before; to wit, that God hauing brought his people out of Babylon, cõtinued on this benefit ſtil euen vnto the comming of Chriſt. This is the ſenſe then; Thou haſt taken off theſe *burthens*, vnder which thy people was vniuſtly and cruelly oppreſſed. 1

Others apply this to the deſtruction of Ieruſalem, which was vnder *Veſpaſian*. But they haue no ground for it. Almoſt all the Iewes referre this to *Hezechies*, when the Lord deliuered the Citie from the ſiege of *Senacherib*, and did cut off his hoſt. But this interpretation cannot agree, becauſe *Hezechias* raigned not tyrannically ouer the Iewes. Moreouer, the Lord deliuered his people then out of the danger, and from the feare wherein they were, and not out of any ſeruitude. Whence it appeares, that the Prophet looked further off; and that our expoſition is both true, and ſutes beſt with the text. 2 3 2. *Kin.* 19. 35. *Chap.* 38.36

Verſ. 5. **Surely euery battell of the warriour is with noiſe, and with tumbling of garments in blood: *but this ſhall bee with burning and deuouring with fire.*

* Or, Although. * Yea.

ALmoſt all the expoſitours agree in this, that *Iſaiah* meant to oppoſe all other victories to that which God ſhould giue vnto his people. For other conquerours obtaine victorie in ouerthrowing their enemies: but here the Lord ſhall ouercome by his immediate hand. He expounds this ſpeech then, *As in the day of Madian*, more fully. The Lord ſaith, hee ſhall not vſe many mens helpe in this worke: but ſhall winne the victory from heauen. Now when God workes thus himſelfe alone, hauing reiected all impediments, wee can cleerely diſcerne that he is the author of our life and ſaluation. Seeing alſo there is an oppoſition which ſhewes the difference betweene the common manner of warfare, and the miracle of deliuerance, the coniunction *vau*, which is in the midſt of the verſe, ſhould be reſolued into a particle aduerſatiue: as if he ſhould ſay; Enemies are wont to bee put to flight by a furious fight: but God will worke otherwiſe, becauſe hee will cut off the *Verſe* 4.

enemies of his Church, as if he shot forth his lightnings, and should send downe *fire* from heauen vpon them. Wee may well receiue their opinion who expound it, With a breath; namely, that all warriours shal be astonished, and, In burning of fire. But the first sense agrees best, and is confirmed euen by the Prophets owne words. It appeares also that the Prophet speakes not here onely of that deliuerance which the people receiued vnder *Cyrus*, who gaue them libertie to returne into their Country; but wee must apply these things also to the kingdome of Christ.

Vers. 6. *For vnto vs a childe is borne, and vnto vs a sonne is giuen, and the gouernment is vpon his shoulder:* and **hee shall call his name Wonderfull, Counseller, The mighty God, The *euerlasting father, The Prince of peace.*

*...ncy. Or, his name shall be called. *Or, of the world.

ISaiah shewes now the finall cause, wherefore this deliuerance was to bee preferred before all other benefits of God; because hee will not onely bring his people out of captiuitie, but will also establish Christ in his royall throne; vnder whose Kingdome there shall be seene a soueraigne and an eternall felicitie. And thus he shewes that this deliuerance shall be no temporary or perishable benefit, seeing hee comprehends the whole time wherein the Church should be preserued vntill the comming of Christ. Neither is it any meruaile if the Prophet passeth forthwith from the returne of the antient people, to the full & whole restauration of the Church, which notwithstanding should not come to passe many ages after. For we haue said heretofore in the seuenth Chapter, verse 14. that all the promises of saluation are grounded vpon the Mediator, for whose sake onely God is mercifull vnto vs: and therefore the Prophets were often wont to propound this pledge and earnest penny, as oft as they would encourage the faithfull, and raise them vp to a comfortable expectation of deliuerance. And thus it came to passe, that the returne from the captiuity of Babylon, was a beginning of that restauratiõ of the Church, which in conclusion happened in the perfection thereof; to wit, when Christ appeared: in regard whereof, there is no absurditie in this so continuall a progresse of time. And therefore *Isaiah* teacheth, that they were not to stay their mindes in the beholding of the present benefit, but to consider the end, and thereunto to referre all these things: as if they should haue said; Our happinesse consists in our deliuerance from death; not to leade our liues onely in the land of Canaan; but rather that we should aspire to the kingdome of heauen.

2. *Cor.* 1. 20. All the promises of saluation grounded vpon the Mediator.

This place admonisheth vs, that we should not swallow vp the benefits which wee receiue from God, so as wee should forthwith put them to forgetfulnesse; but ought rather to lift vp our mindes vnto Christ: for otherwise it will bee but a flashing and vaine ioy; because such benefits will not make vs taste the sweetenesse of the loue which God our Father beares vs, vnlesse his free election ratified in Iesus Christ goes before. Lastly, the Prophet would not haue this people to rest in the pleasure of that one outward and transitory deliuerance, which they obtained; but that they should consider the end thereof; to wit, the conseruation of the Church vntill such time as Christ the onely Sauiour and redeemer should appeare. For hee it is who ought to bee the matter and end of all our ioy.

To rest in the enioying of outward benefits, without hauing an eye vnto Christ, will proue but a vanishing ioy in the end.

A childe is borne to vs.] The Iewes doe impudently wrest this place: for they expound it of *Hezekias*; who was born notwithstanding before this prophesie was published. But hee here speakes as of a new and rare matter; yea, which more is, it is a promise to confirme the faithfull in the hope of a thing to come; whence wee may truely gather, that such a *child* is here spoken of as should be borne afterward. He is also called the *Sonne* of God. I deny not but the name of *Sonne* stretcheth very far in the Hebrue tongue, but it is when some other word is ioyned therewithall. Euery man is the sonne of his Father: those who haue attained to the age of an hundreth yeeres, are called Sonnes of an hundreth yeeres: the wicked are called Sonnes of iniquitie: those which are blessed, Sonnes of blessing. Heretofore in the fifth chapter, verse 1. *Isaiah* called the fruitfull hill, the Sonne of the Oliue. But this word Sonne by it selfe, can be vnderstoode of none but of the Sonne of God. And here it is attributed vnto Christ by way of excellencie, to the end we might know that by this marke he is separated from all other men. Neither is there any doubt but the Prophet had respect to that famous Propheſie which was so often in the mouthes of all; *I will be his Father, and he shall be my Sonne*, Psalm. 86. 27. as it is said in the second Psalme, *Thou art my Sonne*, this day haue I begotten thee. For had it not been a thing commonly knowne, that the Messias should be the sonne of God, the Prophet had vnaptly and to little or no purpose mentioned the name of Sonne barely and simplie. This title therefore depends vpon the Propheſie before going: from whence the Apostle concludes, that Christ is more excellent then all the Angels, and is exalted farre aboue them, Heb. 1. 5.

Chap. 63. 20.

2. *Sam.* 7. 14.

Moreouer, although Christ should be contemptible in the person of a *little child*, yet notwithstanding his dignitie is adorned with the title of *Sonne*. I confesse indeede that he might also haue been called the Sonne of *Dauid*: but it is better referred vnto God. Now the other titles following (we know) doe in no sort belong to *Hezekias*. And I will hereafter refute at large the cauils wherewith the Iewes arme themselues to corrupt this place. Let them barke as long as they will, yet is the thing cleare and most apparent vnto all such as will iudge thereof peaceably, and with sound iudgement. There is also great weight in this which he addes, that this sonne *is giuen to the people*: to the end the Iewes might know their

their ſaluation, and alſo the ſaluation of the whole Church was incloſed in the perſon of Chriſt. And this gift is one of the principall articles of our faith, for the birth of Ieſus Chriſt ſhould little auaile vs vnleſſe hee were giuen vnto vs. Now in the verſes following, *Iſaiah* ſhewes what this child, and his condition ſhall be.

Chriſts birth ſhould little auaile vs vnleſſe the Father had giuen him vnto vs.

His gouernment is laid vpon his ſhoulders.] It is vtterlie friuolous to thinke (as many do) that the Prophet alludes to the Croſſe of Chriſt. He bare his Croſſe vpon his ſhoulders, and thereon triumphed gloriouſlie ouer ỹ prince of the world. But ſeeing it is heere ſaid, *That the gouernment is laid vpon his ſhoulders*, in the ſame ſenſe as it is ſaid, that the key of the houſe of *Dauid* is laid vpon the ſhoulders of *Eliakim*, as we ſhall ſee in the 22. Chapter, we haue no need to coine new inuentions without a foundation. Me thinks heere is rather a cloſe oppoſition betweene the gouernment which the redeemer ſhould beare vpon his ſhoulders, and the *yoke* which was mentioned before, verſe 4. wherewith the tyrants oppreſſed the poore captiues. This expoſition agrees well, and is not ſubiect to any cauill whatſoeuer. The Prophet ſhewes then that the Meſſiah ſhall in nothing reſemble thoſe fooliſh kings who giue themſelues to laſciuiouſnes, neuer taking thought for the diſcharge of their duties, for he ſhall be ſtrong and mightie to vndergoe the burthen impoſed vpon him. Thus he extolles the maieſtie and excellencie of Chriſt, becauſe he ſhall obteine honor and authoritie by his owne power, and ſhall not execute his office with his fingers ends only, but with his whole ſtrength.

Iohn 19. 17. 18.

His name ſhall be.] Although the verbe be of the actiue ſignification, yet notwithſtanding becauſe it is taken indefinitlie, I haue been bold to render it in the neuter gender: for it is as much as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid in the plurall number, They ſhall call. This maner of ſpeech is in vſe amongſt vs Frenchmen, ſaying, * They ſhall call. For whereas the Iewes referre this vnto God, and reade it thus, Wonderfull, Counſeller, The mightie God, The eternal father, and Prince of peace, ſhall giue him his name; wee ſee eaſily that they do this of ſet purpoſe, and with an affectation of darkning the glorie of Chriſt: for were they not ſo obſtinate as to deſire to ſpoile him of his Deitie, the text would run exceeding well as our men haue turned it. Beſides, what need was there to adorne God with theſe epithites, if the Prophet had only meant to ſay that he ſhould giue the name to Meſſiah? For the epithites which are wont to be giuen to God are either perpetuall, or applied to the matter which ſhall be handled, which we ſee is not ſo in this place. Furthermore, it were a peruerting of order, to put the name of God in the middeſt of diuers epithites, but it ſhould rather be put before the verb *Shall call*, to wit, *The mightie God ſhall call*, &c. Moreouer, I ſee not how the name of *Counſeller*, can ſimplie agree vnto God: for it muſt be referred to thoſe which are aſſiſtants or counſellers to kings, or ſome others.

* On appellera.

If any cauiller will yet reſt himſelfe too obſtinately in this wrangling of the Rabbins, he ſhall do nothing elſe but manifeſt his impudencie. Let vs follow that which is plaine and cleare.

Wonderfull.] We muſt note, that theſe titles be no vaine things, but fitlie applied to the preſent occaſion: for the Prophet teacheth what a one Chriſt ſhall ſhew himſelfe to be towards the faithfull. Now he diſputes not of his incomprehenſible eſſence, but extols his vertues, whereof we ſhal haue experience by faith. Which we ought ſo much ỹ more to keepe in mind, becauſe men for the moſt part content themſelues with the bare name of Chriſt, without conſideration of his vertue and efficacie; the which indeed we ought euermore chiefly & principallie to weigh and conſider. In the firſt epithite he prepares the minds of the faithfull to the conſideration of a very rare thing, to wit, that they ſhould expect ſome more excellent and greater matter from Chriſt, then that which we ſee in the courſe of Gods ordinarie workes. As if he ſhould ſay, There are ineſtimable treaſures, & *wonderfull things* hidden in Chriſt. And the very truth is, that his redemption farre ſurpaſſeth the worke of the creation of heauen and earth. So then the ſumme is, that the grace which God hath manifeſted in Chriſt is more excellent then all other miracles.

1. Wonderfull. These titles giuen to Chriſt be no vaine things.

Men are wont to content themſelues with the bare name of Chriſt, without conſideration of his power.

The ſecond epithite ſignifies, that the redeemer ſhall come adorned and decked with all wiſedome. But heere we muſt call that to mind which I haue touched before, namely, that the Prophet diſputes not in this place of the hidden and ſecret eſſence of Chriſt, but of that vertue which he manifeſted towards vs. He calles him not *Counſeller* then becauſe he knowes and vnderſtands all his Fathers ſecrets, but rather in regard he iſſued out of his Fathers boſome, and therefore performed all the parts of the office of a ſoueraigne and perfect Teacher: ſo as it is not lawfull for vs now to be wiſe further then his Goſpell; to the praiſe whereof alſo this appertaines, for therein the wiſedome of God is fullie contained, as Saint *Paul* alſo often ſhewes; and therein alſo Ieſus Chriſt manifeſts and declares whatſoeuer is neceſſarie for our ſaluation; and that ſo familiarly, that he ſpeakes no more to his diſciples as vnto ſeruants, but as vnto friends, Iohn 15. 14. 15.

2. Counſeller.

Iohn 1. 18.

1. Cor. 1. 24. 30. Epheſ. 1. 17. Col. 1. 9.

The mightie God.] *El* is one of the names of God, which notwithſtanding is deriued from might or power, ſo as ſometimes it is added in ſtead of an epithite. But here we may perceiue it is a proper name, becauſe *Iſaiah* contents not himſelfe therewith, but hath added the epithite *Gibbor*, which ſignifies ſtrong. And truly if Chriſt were not *God*, it were ill done to reioyce in him; for it is written, Curſed is he that truſteth in man, Iere. 17. 5. The maieſtie of God then muſt of neceſſitie ſhine in him, that in him we may place our confidence, becauſe we can not reſt vpon any creature without high ſacriledge. He is called the *Mightie God* then, for the ſame reaſon that he was heretofore called *Immanuel*, Chap. 7. 14. For if in Chriſt we only find fleſh,

3. The mightie God.

and

and the nature of man, our reioycing ſhould be friuolous and peruerſe, and the ſtay of our hope ſhould be grounded amiſſe, and without any ſtedfaſtneſſe. But if ſo be he ſhew himſelfe to be a *God* to vs; yea a *mighty God*, then may wee boldly and ſecurely repoſe our confidence in him. There is alſo very great reaſon why the Prophet calles him the Mighty and Strong: for we haue to fight againſt the diuel, death, and ſinne; enemies that are farre too *mighty* and *ſtrong* for vs to deale withall, who would quickly maſter vs, if wee were not clothed with the inuincible ſtrength of Chriſt. By this epithite then wee are taught that Chriſt is ſtrong enough to vphold our ſaluation, to the end wee ſhould deſire none but him: for he is *God*, and wil ſhew himſelfe *ſtrong* for vs. This application is the key of this place, and of others like vnto it; to wit, that we diſtinguiſh betweene the incomprehenſible eſſence of Chriſt, and that power by which he manifeſteth himſelfe *vnto vs*.

If Chriſt bee God, yea a mighty God, then wee may boldly repoſe our confidence in him. *Eph.6.12.*

Chriſt is a ſtrong God for vs.

Eternall Father.] The Greeke Tranſlator hath added, To come: and in my iudgement hath rightly expounded it; for it ſets forth the Eternitie: vnleſſe wee had rather ſay, that a perpetuall and continuall order of times and ſeaſons ſhould agree better, leſt the heauenly life, which is yet hidden from vs, ſhould needleſly bee reſtrained to this place. It is true that the Prophet alſo comprehends that; yea, and admoniſheth vs that Chriſt ſhall come to make his elect immortall: but becauſe the faithfull being yet in this world, muſt paſſe from death to life, this time to come, is referred to the eternall eſtate of the Church. The name *Father*, is taken for Author; becauſe Chriſt maintaines his Church in all ages, and giues immortalitie as to the whole body thereof in generall, ſo to euerie member in particular. Whence wee learne, how fraile and brittle wee are, being out of him. For be it that wee liue very long, according to the manner of men, what ſhall become of this old age at the laſt? Let vs therefore lift vp our mindes to that eternall and bleſſed life, which wee poſſeſſe by faith and hope, although wee ſee it not viſibly with our bodily eyes.

4. Eternall Father.

The Prince of peace.] Behold the laſt epithite; whereby the Prophet declares, that Chriſt ſhall bring full and perfect felicitie with him at his comming; or rather a quiet and bleſſed ſecuritie. For the word *peace* ſignifies as much oftentimes amongſt the Hebrewes, as proſperitie, in regard that among all bleſſings, none are found better or more deſireable then *peace*. The ſumme is, that all thoſe who will ſubiect themſelues vnder the gouernement of Chriſt, ſhall leade a quiet & a happy life vnder his obedience. Whence it followes, that where this King raignes not, mens liues are moſt miſerable and full of troubles. But herewithall wee muſt obſerue, that the nature of this *peace*, and of this *kingdome* are both alike. For it hath his principall ſeate in the conſciences of men: otherwiſe it muſt needes be that wee ſhould be alwaies in conflicts, and exerciſed through continuall aſſaults. And therefore *Iſaiah* doth not promiſe an external peace only, but ſuch a peace whereby wee may enter againe into fauour with God, from whom we were vtterly eſtranged and enemies before. Being iuſtified by faith, we haue peace with God, ſaith S. *Paul*, Rom. 5.1 Now after Chriſt hath quieted our conſciences, this very peace ſhall haue the chiefe place in our hearts, ſo as we ſhall carry our ſelues patiently vnder all afflictions: and beſides, from this fountaine we ſhall ſee outward proſperity to ſtreame downe vnto vs, which is nothing elſe but an effect of the bleſſing of God.

5. Prince of peace.

Phil.4.7. Col.3.15.

Now to the end we may apply this doctrine to our vſe; as oft as wee are vexed with any diffidence, and that all meanes doe faile vs, yea when all things ſeemes in a confuſion before vs, let vs remember that Chriſt is called *wonderfull*; becauſe hee hath incredible meanes in his hands to aide his withall, and is able by his power to ſurmount farre aboue all that we can imagine. And when we ſhall be deſtitute of counſell, let vs remember that hee is that *Counſeller*. And if our power and ſtrength doe faile vs, yet let vs remember that he is the *mighty God*. And when we ſhall ſee new feares euer and anon to terrifie vs, and that many deaths doe enuiron vs on all ſides, let vs reſt and relie vpon his *eternitie*; whereof hee is not called the *Father* for nothing. And let vs learne to ſweeten all the miſeries of this world euen by this remedie. And if it fall out that wee bee toſſed vp and downe with diuers tempeſts, and that Satan labours to diſquiet our conſciences, let vs remember that Chriſt is the *Prince of peace*, who can eaſily quiet all our troubles. And thus theſe epithites ſhall confirme vs more and more in the faith of Chriſt, and ſhall fortifie vs againſt Satan and hell it ſelfe.

1. Wonderfull.
2. Counſeller.
3. The mighty God.
4. The eternall Father.
5. Prince of peace.

Verſ. 7. *The increaſe of his gouernment and peace ſhall haue none end: hee ſhall ſit vpon the throne of Dauid, and vpon his kingdome, to order it and to eſtabliſh it with iudgement and with iuſtice, from hence forth euen for euer: the zeale of the Lord of hoſts will performe this.*

HE here begins to expound and confirme that which he had ſaid before, where he called Chriſt The Prince of peace; to wit, that his *gouernment* muſt endure for euer, and that there ſhall be *no end* of his dominion, nor of his peace; which alſo was repeated by *Daniel*. The Angell *Gabriel* in like manner had reſpect hereunto when he brought the meſſage to the Virgin; or rather hee expounded this place, becauſe it can bee vnderſtood of none but of Chriſt. He ſhall raigne, ſaith he, ouer the houſe of *Iacob* for euer, *and of his Kingdome there ſhall be none end*. Luke 1.33. Now wee ſee by experience, that the greateſt dominions in the world, doe quickly fall to the ground through ſudden mutations, no leſſe then if they were built vpon yce. We may alſo know both by hiſtories and examples of things which fall out euery day, how variable and vnſtable

Dan.7.27.

Earthly kingdomes vnſtable, Chriſts kingdome eternall.

vnſtable earthly kingdomes are. There is none but this gouernment onely then, which is immutable and eternall.

Now this ſpreading and *perpetuitie* whereof *Iſaiah* here ſpeakes, containes two members: for it referres it ſelfe as well to the time, as to the ſtate thereof. Now albeit the ſtate of Chriſts Kingdome be ſuch, as it ſeemes euer & anon likely to periſh: yet notwithſtanding God contents not himſelfe onely to defend and keepe it, but doth alſo *enlarge* the bounds thereof farre and wide; and then vpholds it, and cauſeth it to ſtand faſt *for euer* and euer. Which we are diligently to note, to the end the continual aſſaults wherewith the Church is aſſailed, doe not ſhake our faith; becauſe we are here aſſured, that amidſt theſe furious threats, yea amidſt the very ſwords of the enemies, *the Kingdome of Chriſt ſhall ſtand ſtedfaſt* by the inuincible power of God: ſo as in deſpite of the whole world, it ſhall flouriſh *for euer*. Indeede we muſt not iudge of the ſtedfaſtneſſe thereof by the appearance of worldly things, but by the promiſe; which makes vs certaine of the eternity and continuall increaſings of this kingdome.

We muſt not iudge of the ſtedfaſtneſſe of Chriſts Kingdome by worldly things.

The *eternitie* of *peace* is added to the *gouernment*, and not without cauſe, ſeeing the one cannot be ſeparate from the other: adde alſo that it ſhould be impoſſible for Chriſt to be a *King*, but by meanes thereof hee muſt hold his ſubiects in a happy and quiet *peace* vnder him, and alſo inrich them with all manner of bleſſings. But in regard they are ſubiect daily to infinite ſorts of troubles, bearing many hard brunts, yea tremble and are preſſed with feares and perplexities; therefore they ought to apprehend this *peace of Chriſt*, which hath the chiefe ſeat in the heart: to the end they may continue ſafe and ſound, yea and may ſtand faſt in the midſt of the ſhakings of this whole world.

Whereas the letter *mem*, placed in the word *Lemarbeh*, is cloſe, contrary to the common maner of the writing of the Hebrewes; ſome thinke it ſignifies the bondage wherein the Iewes ſhould bee till the comming of Chriſt. Others thinke that by this ſigne, this people were excluded out of the fellowſhip of the kingdome, becauſe of their diſloyaltie: and for mine owne part I reiect none of theſe expoſitions. But yet can wee ſcarcely affirme that the Prophet wrote thus; notwithſtanding becauſe it hath been giuen vs from hand to hand, and that the Rabbines are ſuch diligent obſeruers euen of the leaſt pricke or point, wee cannot thinke that this was done vnaduiſedly.

If we grant that the Prophet wrote thus of ſet purpoſe, mee thinks it is an aduertiſement very profitable to the faithful, leſt they ſhould imagine that the Kingdome of Chriſt was to flouriſh in outward pompe; alſo leſt hereupon they ſhould forge any carnall triumphs through a vaine hope; but might rather bee aſſured onely amidſt ſo many afflictions, that the Kingdome of Chriſt ſhould grow, no man perceiuing how; becauſe they had a promiſe thereof made vnto them.

Vpon the throne of Dauid.] Becauſe the Lord had promiſed *Dauid* that the redeemer ſhould be borne of his ſeede, and that the kingdome of *Dauid* was nothing but a little ſhadow of a more perfect and happy eſtate which God had determined to eſtabliſh by the hand of his Sonne, the Prophets are accuſtomed to call Chriſt the *Sonne of Dauid*; to the end they might bring the people backe to the remembrance of this ſo memorable a miracle. For howſoeuer the name of ſo holy and renowned a King was for iuſt cauſe pretious and honourable; yet notwithſtanding the faithfull much more eſteemed the promiſe touching the reſtoring of ſaluation which was promiſed vnto *Dauid*; yea and the very remembrance of this propheeie was famous amongſt all; ſo as there was none, no not the ſimpleſt which did not reuerence it, being aſſuredly perſwaded of the truth of it. I will not heape vp together all the teſtimonies wherein the Prophets promiſe the afflicted that they ſhall be reſtored in the perſon of *Dauid*, or of his Sonne. For they ſometimes ſay, that *Dauid* ſhould be King, who yet notwithſtanding was dead long time before. So *Iſaiah* in this place ſhewes that hee propounds nothing of his owne head, but onely refreſheth their memories with the conſideration of that which God had in times paſt promiſed touching the eternitie of this Kingdome. By the way then, hee toucheth that which *Amos* had handled more fully; to wit, that the throne of Chriſt which had been ouerthrowne for a time, ſhould be ſet vp againe, Amos 9.11.

2. Sam. 7.12, 13.

Ier. 23.5. & 33.15.

Ier. 30.9. Ezech 34. 23, 24. & 37.24. Hoſea 3.5.

Iſaiah alſo deſcribes the eſtate of this kingdome, but it is vnder a ſimilitude taken from earthly kingdomes. For he ſaith; that Chriſt ſhall be a King, who ſhall *order and eſtabliſh his kingdome by iudgement and by iuſtice*. Theſe indeede are the two meanes whereby worldly gouernments doe flouriſh and ſtand ſtedfaſt; which on the contrary doe by and by fall to ruine, when they are gouerned by violence and tyranny. Therefore in regard that *iuſtice* is an excellent defence and fortreſſe of kingdomes and gouernments, and that the felicitie of the whole people depends thereupon; the Prophet by this particular teacheth, that the Kingdome of Chriſt ſhall bee an example and paterne of an excellent gouernement.

Iuſtice the fortreſſe of Kingdomes.

But this *iudgement* and *iuſtice* whereof hee heere ſpeakes, appertaines not to outward policie; becauſe wee muſt hold the proportion which is between the kingdome of Chriſt and the conditions of it. Now it being ſpirituall, it is eſtabliſhed by the power of the holy Ghoſt. Laſtly, all this ought to be referred to the inward man; to wit, when we are regenerate of God to be made truely righteous. The outward iuſtice indeede followes forthwith: but it is neceſſary that this renouation of the ſpirit and heart doe goe before. We are none of Chriſts then vnleſſe wee bee giuen to vprightneſſe and equitie, bearing that righteouſneſſe in our hearts, which he hath engraued and fixed there, by his holy Spirit.

Chriſts Kingdome ſpirituall.

We are none of Chriſts vnleſſe we be giuen to vprightneſſe.

Where it is added, *from hence forth*, it ſeemes it ſhould rather be referred to the perpetuity

of

of iuſtice and doctrine, then to the eternitie of the Kingdome; to the end wee ſhould not thinke his lawes reſemble thoſe of Kings and Princes, which continue in compariſon but three daies, or a very ſmall time, and are ſometimes renued, that a little while after they ſhould come to nothing; but that wee might know how the vertue and power thereof endures for euer. For they are eſtabliſhed as *Zachariah* ſaith (in his ſong) that wee might ſerue God in *holineſſe and righteouſneſſe* before him all the daies of our life. For as Chriſts Kingdome is perpetuall, becauſe himſelfe dieth not; ſo alſo iuſtice and iudgement endures for euer, and cannot be changed by any time.

Luke.1 75.
Rom.6.9.

The zeale of the Lord.] By *zeale*, I vnderſtand a burning affection and care which God will manifeſt in the conſeruation of his Church, by remouing all difficulties and impediments which otherwiſe might hinder the deliuerance of it. For euen as when wee enterpriſe ſome difficult and hard matter, our affection, vehemencie, and ardent deſire ſurmounts all the hinderances which lie in our way to breake off or let our indeuours: ſo *Iſaiah* ſhewes that God will be inflamed with a rare and ſingular deſire to ſaue his Church, that if the faithfull in their vnderſtandings cannot comprehend the promiſe which hee erewhile made them, yet they ſhould not ceaſe therefore to be of good comfort, becauſe the way and courſe which God holds, is wonderfull and incomprehenſible. Laſtly, hee ſignifies that the Lord will not come with a light and ſlowe arme to deliuer his Church, for hee will alwaies be inflamed with an ineſtimable loue which hee beares to his faithfull ones, and with the care of their ſaluation.

Verſ. 8. *The Lord hath ſent a word into Iacob, and* *it hath lighted vpon Iſrael.*

*Or, is fallen.

HEere followes a new prophecie. And as I thinke, this Sermon is diuided from the former, becauſe the Prophet ſpeakes now of the future eſtate of the Kingdome of Iſrael, which was then aduerſarie to the Iewes. Now wee know that the Iewes were terrified with the forces and power of this Kingdome, and not without cauſe: eſpecially when the Iſraelites made a league with the Syrians, becauſe the Iewes were too weake to reſiſt their power. Wherefore for the comfort of the faithfull, hee ſhewes what the eſtate of the Kingdome of Iſrael ſhall be. He takes *Iacob and Iſrael* for one and the ſame: but this variety hath his elegancie; when hee ſhewes that the wicked ſhall gaine nothing by their deuices, in ſeeking to winde themſelues out of Gods iudgements, and to blot out the remembrance thereof. He alludes to the ſpeech of thoſe, who thinke to eſcape by ſcoffes and taunts, turning whatſoeuer the Prophets doe threaten, vnto ſport and matter of merriment: as if ſome wiſe man would ſtriue to beate backe a tempeſt, by blowing againſt it with his mouth. It is a yeelding of the thing vnto them then by way of derision; as if hee ſhould ſay, You are of opinion that God will bring euery thing to paſſe which hee hath threatned, vpon others: but all the menaces which he pronounceth againſt *Iacob*, ſhall alſo fall vpon *Iſrael*.

The verbe *To ſend*, is taken, To appoint, or ordaine. The particle *Beth*, ſignifies, *into Iacob himſelfe*. For the *word of God* muſt abide and reſt there; becauſe it cannot be, that the ſame ſhould vaniſh away without his fruit. So then he teacheth that in this place, which he will repeate hereafter in other tearmes, *My word ſhall not returne to me in vaine*: Chap. 55.11. becauſe looke what hee hath once decreed, is neuer publiſhed but it fructifieth. For by the word to *fall*, he ſhewes the certaine effect and euent of the thing: as if he ſhould ſay, I imagine not, neither doe I foreſhew theſe things out of mine own braine; but it is God which hath ſpoken, who can neither change, nor be deceiued.

Verſ. 9. *And all the people ſhall know*, euen *Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, that ſay in the pride and preſumption of their heart.*

BY the word *people*, I vnderſtand not the Iewes, but rather the Iſraelites: as alſo that herewithall the Prophet looſeth this knot, by naming *Ephraim* expreſly. He addes *Samaria* thereunto, which was the capitall citie of this people, or of ỹ ten Tribes; becauſe the ſtrong and beſt furniſhed Cities, which think themſelues out of all danger, are for the moſt part much more proud then others. For they thinke by agreeing with the enemie, to bee alwaies able to eſcape out of danger, although all the reſt of the Country villages be deſtroyed. And therfore *Iſaiah* threatens, that it alſo ſhall bee enwrapped in the very ſame deſtruction with others. Hee ſaith alſo, that *all* ſhall feele, that the propheſies which are come out of the mouth of God, ſhal not bee pronounced in vaine. And by the word *To know*, which is to bee referred to experience it ſelfe, hee priuily taxeth their infidelitie; as if hee ſhould ſay, Becauſe I ſpeake but to deafe eares, and to ſuch as make none account of my admonitions, experience ſhall make you wiſe; but yet too late.

Which ſay.] Heere the Prophet inueighes againſt the obſtinacie and rebellion of this people; who hauing been chaſtiſed many times with the rods of God, and that very ſharpely, were yet notwithſtanding ſo farre off from repentance, that they hardened their hearts more and more, as if they had been made fat with blowes. Truely thoſe who mocke thus proudly at the Lord, cannot bee brought within compaſſe, till they be wholly ouerwhelmed. Now ſuch a conſpiracie doth manifeſtly prouoke God to anger, and that of ſet purpoſe. This is the cauſe why the Prophet ſaith, that this proceeds from *pride and preſumption*: whence it followes, that it is iuſt with God to apply to hard and knottie wood, hatchets harder then it.

Verſ. 10.

Verſ. 10. *The brickes are fallen, but we will build it with hewen ſtones: the wilde figtrees are cut downe, but we will change them into Cedars.*

THeſe were the words of the rebellious, and deſpiſers of the calamitie which was befallen them, as though it had bin for their profit; becauſe they take occaſion thereby to decke their houſes and fields the more richly. *We will build more ſtately ones* (ſay they.) *The houſes of bricke are fallen*, that we may dwell in excellent palaces. *The trees are cut downe*; but we will *plant them with more fruitfull ones*. This vice hath not raigned in one age alone; for wee ſee the like obſtinacie euen now in the world. With how many calamities hath Europe been afflicted within theſe foure hundred yeares? with how many ſcourges hath it been called to repentance? and yet notwithſtanding wee perceiue not that any one of them hath done it any good: but exceſſe contrariwiſe increaſeth day by day, the voluptuous inflame themſelues, mē perſeuere in their vices and wickednesſe with greater boldneſſe then euer before. In a word, it ſeemes that afflictions are euen prouocations to pride and exceſſe: what muſt we looke for then, but to be broken with harder blowes then any of the former?

The ſtate of Europe.

Verſ. 11. *Neuertheleſſe, the Lord will raiſe vp the aduerſaries of Reſin againſt him, and ioyne his enemies together.*

*Or, gather his, &c.

BEcauſe the Iſraelites were puffed vp with the confederacie which they had with *Syria*, and thought that all things ſhould fall out according to their wiſh, *Iſaiah* threatens a ſudden change which ſhould cut off all their hope, and ſhould wholly ouerthrow all their plots. For the Aſſyrians roſe vp ſoone after, and made warre with the *Syrians*. And *Rezin* being ſlaine, the eſtate of that kingdome was wholly ouerthrowne. He amplifies the matter when hee addes, *he will gather together*. For his meaning is, that the Lord will aſſemble and mingle diuers enemies together, whom he will ſend to deſtroy the King of Syria; as indeed the army of that great Monarch of the Aſſyrians was compoſed of diuers nations.

*Or, Syria.

Verſ. 12. **Aram before, and the Philiſtims behind, and they ſhall deuoure Iſrael *with open mouth: yet for all this his wrath is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.*

*Or, with all the mouth.

2. *King.* 16. 9 THe Prophet ſhewes what this change ſhall be, and what ſhall come to paſſe after the death of *Rezin*, who banded himſelfe with Iſrael againſt Iudah: to wit, that whereas 2. *King.* 17. 3 the *Syrians* were friends to the Iſraelites before, they ſhould preſently after the death of their King, become their enemies, and make warre vpon them, which alſo came to paſſe. And this is his meaning when he ſaith that *Syria ſhall be before*. For their expoſition who by *Syria*, vnderſtand them of the Eaſt; and by the *Philiſtims* them of the Weſt, is not agreeablee. The plaineſt ſenſe is, that the enemies ſhall nuiron and aſſaile them on all ſides, becau e thoſe whom they thought to enioy as faithfull friends, ſhould riſe vp round about them to ouerthrow them. Where he ſaith *before*, and *behind*, it anſwers to the common maner of ſpeech, ſo as we need not ſeeke a new or ſtrange expoſition. Let vs learne by this example what it is to put confidence in the power of men, and in confederacies with Princes, and eſpeciallie when we wax ſecure, being ſnared with vnlawfull bands: for whē the Lord will, thoſe who before were on our ſide, in an inſtant ſhall band themſelues together for our deſtruction: and the remedies which we ſhall take to be profitable, ſhal be hurtfull vnto vs, and ſhall compaſſe vs round *before, and behind*. We muſt alſo obſerue, ỳ God manifeſts not his plagues all at once, but when we ruſh againſt him obſtinately, and prouoke him more and more, then he augments and redoubles alſo his blowes, and ſends new chaſtiſements, to the end he may tame and breake our rebellion and ſtubbornes. *With all the mouth*, ſignifies the ſame which wee haue in our common phraſe of ſpeech, With full mouth, as if he ſhould ſay, Iſrael ſhall be expoſed as an open pray vnto his enemies, ſo as he ſhall be deuoured *with open mouth*, as of the Syrians; ſo of the *Philiſtims*.

What it is to put confidēce in confederacies.

Yet for all this.] This is a harder ſentence then all the reſt, and ought to haue terrified the vnbeleeuers more then any thing whatſoeuer. For although they haue ſuffred many puniſhments, *yet are they not at an end*: he hath ſtill new rods readie prepared againe for them, becauſe by going on in their rebellion they draw the wrath of God more and more downe vpon them. For men take occaſion to become vtterlie obſtinate and to ouerflow in all euill whilſt they ſuffer but ſome light puniſhment, thinking they ſhall ſuffer no more, and ſo become the more ſtiffenecked. They alſo perſwade themſelues they ſhall be deliuered from the iudgement of God, imagining that all his rods are ſpent or worne, ſo as they giue themſelues the bridle, and ſhake off the yoke, as if they were whollie eſcaped out of his hands. For this cauſe *Iſaiah* threatens that *the hand of the Lord is ſtretched forth ſtill*, that they ſhould not ſuppoſe they were able to eſcape the ſame.

Now he rather vſeth accuſation, then doctrine, although the threatnings tend alſo to this end that the doctrine may be the better vnderſtood. But becauſe he had to deale with deſperate people who had profited nothing at all for any blowes they had receiued, therfore it is that he ſhewes the end of their calamities is not yet accompliſhed: ſo that although God ſeemed to ceaſe ſtriking for a time, yet notwithſtanding he had not ſpent all his ſcourges, but had his hand ſtill ſtretched out to afflict them with a new plague.

Vers. 13. * *For the people turneth not vnto him that smiteth them, neither do they seeke the Lord of hostes.*

* Or, but yet.

THey expound this as if the Prophet yeelded a reason why God ceased not to strike them blow vpon blow with new chastisements, to wit, because the people are so obstinate and stifnecked, that they will not come to an acknowledgment of their faults, nor to amendment. For wherefore should God giue place to the obstinate, in whom he sees no repentance? so it might seeme they were stronger then he. This is the cause then why he continues to smite them more sharply. And seeing Israel amended not for any correction whatsoeuer, his destruction was iust: such was their extreme obstinacie, that not so much as any one of them were moued, or *turned* any whit, although they had been chastised and beaten so often. This forme of chiding is terrible. For when the Lord not only admonisheth vs with words, but pricks vs forward, and constreines vs by his works, namely, by diuers chastisements, and yet we remaine obstinate, not enduring that hee should pluck vs from our wicked delights: is it not a signe of a desperate malice; and can one thinke or speake of a thing more horrible? It is too much when men submit not themselues to his doctrine as soone as it is propounded vnto them: but the sinne is yet greater when they are not moued by any reprehensions; but greatest of all is their sinne when they harden themselues against *the rods of God*, yea kick and wince, or by their brutishnes inflame the wrath of their Iudge more and more against them: neuer calling themselues to account wherefore they are smitten, nor what it is to which the Lord thereby calles them. When the remedies then profit nothing, what should we thinke, but that the malice of such is become incureable and past all hope of amendment?

Now this reprehension appertaines not to the Israelites only, but to vs also. For the Lord hath alreadie chastised all the world in such wise by diuers plagues and calamities, that there is almost no part thereof free. And yet notwithstanding it seemes that all haue obstinately cõspired against God, in so much that albeit he do his vtmost, yet they are alwaies like themselues, neuer ceasing to goe on still in their leaudnes. The Lord then may iustly take vp this complaint against vs. And the truth is, that he speakes now to vs by his Prophet *Isaiah*: neither ought we to looke for another Prophet which should threaten new chastisements, seeing our case differeth in nothing from that of the Israelites, being guiltie of the same iniquities with them.

When he saith, that *they haue not sought the Lord*, he therein expounds the first member of the verse; for God smites, to draw such vnto him as recoile back from him. And yet it seemes notwithstanding that by this meanes he driues men farre off from his presence: but because his propertie is to draw those out of their graues whom we thinke he hath ouerwhelmed with his chastisemẽts, he humbleth poore sinners by fearing them only, to the end they should returne vnto him. And truly the beginning of our conuersion, yea the only rule of good life is, *to seeke God*. If we seeke any other way, we goe vtterlie awrie. But let vs now see what it is *to seeke God*, or how we ought to do it. For hypocrites will alwaies alledge this for themselues, that they carefullie humble thẽselues before the Lord to obteine remission of sinnes by prayer, fasting, teares, and other outward shewes of sorrow. But God will be sought farre otherwise, to wit, The Sinner being humbled before him in good earnest, must willinglie receiue the yoke of obedience which before he had shaken off, and whollie imploy himselfe in his seruice, whom he before despised.

How the Lord will be sought.

Vers. 14. *Therefore will the Lord cut off from Israel head and taile, branch, and rush in one day.*

15. *The ancient and the honorable man, he is the head: and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the taile.*

HIs meaning is, that the vengeance of God shall be vniuersall, and that it shall wrap all estates in it: for the whole people was corrupt, and the contagion thereof had so inuaded the whole countrie, that there was nothing whole nor sound amongst them. Now then when impietie hath thus gotten the swinge, men begin to flatter themselues, and euery one thinks to frame goodly excuses when they haue many to beare them companie; and imagine that they haue sufficient reasons to defend themselues withall, when they make comparison of themselues with others. This is the cause then why he denounceth this vengeance against *all in generall*, because they were all alike infected with a common disease. By *branch* he vnderstands the mightie and strong: by *rush*, or *reede*, the weakest; that is, the people of base estate, who in a maner had no wealth at all. He shewes then, that the wrath of God is readie prepared, which shall spare neither *weake* nor *strong*, neither *small* nor *great*, because there was none which were pure and cleane from the common contagion of filthinesse.

But in the next verse hee expounds that which he spake allegorically of *head* and *taile*, plainely and without figure; and saith, that the *ancient* and *honourable* which swayed the common affaires, and had the managing of the Commonwealth, are the *heads*: to whom he ioynes the *false Prophets*, which he comprehends vnder the word *taile*. Now he explaines both the first part of the former verse, making no mention at all of *branch* and *rush*. But wee may yeelde a good reason why hee omitted this. For his meaning was to presse them chiefely which sinned most, and thereby drew others to sin also by their example, because they were respected in regard of their estates. Hee brands the Prophets with this name of *taile*, not that they were abiects and contemptible, as some thinke: but his meaning is to expresse the lowest part of the body.

dy. The magiſtrates and Iudges are in the *head* or higheſt ranke, becauſe they are promoted to the chiefeſt place: he puts the *falſe Prophets* in the *taile*, becauſe they abuſed the people by their cunning and hypocriſie: as if hee compared the one to lyons or beares, and the others to foxes. We are heere admoniſhed not to ſleepe in our vices, although iniquitie raigne in all eſtates; yea although there ſhould not be a man left that were pure and vpright. For by how much the more wickedneſſe increaſeth, ſo much the more will the wrath of God bee kindled both againſt ſmall and great. Which wee ought to take good heede of in this deluge of all miſchiefes which wee ſee at this day; namely, leſt when the wrath of God ſhall once beginne to burne, that all things bee not vtterly conſumed by it.

Verſ. 16. *For the leaders of the people cauſe them to erre: and they that are led by them are deuoured.*

OThers tranſlate, They which bleſſe thee, or ſpeake bleſſedly: as if hee ſhould ſay, There is no greater peſtilence amongſt people then flatteries, which nouriſh al licentiouſnes of diſſolutions. But yet I will follow that reading which I haue approued of before; where wee met with the very ſame word: Chap. 3. 12. Now his meaning is, that the gouernours and magiſtrates, whoſe office it was to leade and hold the people in good order, and in an honeſt courſe of life, gaue liberty and licence to all to doe what them liſted, ſuffering them to follow vice and wickednesſe; and that in regard thereof, they were worthily eſteemed ſeducers and corrupters: for the corruption flowed from them vpon all the people, as from the head into the members. Magiſtrates and Paſtors are choſen to repreſſe the diſſolutions of people; to ordaine that which is good and right; and eſpecially to maintaine the honour of God. If they contemne theſe things, they are rather to bee eſteemed impoſtors then Paſtors: becauſe they bring in horrible confuſion. And when euery one gouernes as he liſts without any order; what is to be expected but ſome woful euent? Whereas the people bee ſo chaſtiſed for their offences, wee muſt not therefore ſay, that the gouernours ſhould looke for leſſe puniſhment: for they made none account of the charge which was committed vnto them, and in ſo doing, were the cauſe of all thoſe euils.

The duty of Magiſtrates or Miniſters.

When hee addes, that thoſe *which are led, are deuoured*: although by this particle his meaning is to ſay, that wicked Princes, and thoſe who *rule* as they liſt, cannot but bring all things to ruine: as alſo becauſe the *teachers* deceiue and abuſe the people, in ſtead of ſhewing them the right way, becauſe the people *periſh* through their owne default: yet notwithſtanding he therewithall ſhewes, that neither the one nor the other is to be excuſed: as if the wicked gouernours ſhould ſerue as a couert for their faults, as commonly men are wont to imagine. For if the blind leade the blind, as Ieſus Chriſt ſaith, they ſhall both fall into the ditch, Matth. 15. 14. It being certaine that there was none of them all who was not willingly *miſled*. And therfore thoſe onely who tooke delight to bee deceiued, were *deuoured* by the wicked and diſloyall *leaders*.

Verſ. 17. *Therefore ſhall the Lord haue no pleaſure in their young men, neither will hee haue compaſſion on their fatherleſſe, and of their widowes; for euery one is an hypocrit, and wicked, and euery mouth ſpeaketh folly: yet for all this his wrath *is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out.*

*Or, ſhall not be, &c.

HEere *Iſaiah* ſhewes more plainely how horrible this vengeance of God ſhall be againſt all eſtates. So farre off is it that the guilty ſhould ſaue themſelues, that euen *children*, *young men* and *widowes*, ſhall not eſcape; although they haue been wont to ſpare ſuch, and that in the cruelleſt warres. Which mercy, hiſtories doe ſhew hath been practiſed euen by the very heathen at the ſacking of Cities. But the Lord ſhewes heere, that he will haue neither reſpect to *age* nor *ſexe*. Although yet another ſenſe will not bee amiſſe; to wit, that though the battels depriue many women of their husbands, and *children of their fathers*; yet that God will not *ceaſe* for all that to chaſtiſe both *widowes*, *children*, and *fatherleſſe*. But becauſe this ſenſe concernes the principall point very little, I therefore ſtay not my ſelfe in it. Now to the end they ſhould not accuſe God of crueltie, hee therewithall ſhewes good cauſe why hee ought to be thus ſeuere towards them; becauſe they ſhall bee found *wicked*, and therefore worthy to bee equally caſt headlong into deſtruction, and that by a moſt iuſt ſentence.

Hypocrites.] I minde not to differ from the common opinion touching this word, although *Chanaph*, ſignifies a *wicked* one, diſloyall, & corrupt. For it ſeemes he toucheth the chiefe ſpring and fountaine of all euils; ſaying, that there was no ſparke of the true feare of God amongſt them. Hee ſpeakes not of ſome light diſſimulation then, but of an inward contempt which benummes mens conſciences, ſo as they cannot be moued by any admonitions at all: as if hee ſhould ſay, They are wholly ſunke deepe in their rebellion. But for as much as iniquitie drawes the hands, feete, and other parts of the bodie with it, after it hath once gotten poſſeſſion of the vnderſtanding: therefore the Prophet addes, that they *are all wicked*. In the third place hee affirmes they ouerflowed ſo farre, as without bluſhing to boaſt of their ſins. The word *Nebalah*, which ſome tranſlate *folly*, hath oftentimes a larger ſignification among the Hebrewes: for it is taken for villanie, wickednesſe, and frenſie. The Prophet therefore as I thinke, meant to ſay, that they are ſo giuen to iniquitie, that there need none other witnes to be take againſt thé, then their own togues.

Gen. 34. 7. Ioſh. 7. 15.

Yet for all this &c.] He againe repeates this sentence, which indeed ought often to be repeated, because it sufficeth not to be once instructed how grieuous the iudgemẽts of God are against the vngodlie, seeing we easily and quicklie forget them; and thereof it comes that we soone cast off all care and feare. And besides, a false opinion beguiles and blindfolds vs, which is, that after God hath chastised vs only once, we think his power is spent. Wherfore as oft as God corrects vs, it is good we hold vs to this principle, namely, that by ỹ first, God threatens vs with a greater calamitie, vnlesse we repent betimes. And seeing the Lord reiterateth this admonition so oft, let vs learne thereby to set it alwaies before our eies; to wit, that the wrath of God is not yet appeased, although it seemes he hath sharplie corrected mens iniquities. What are we to iudge then when hee giues vs but a fillip and away? as at this day indeed we haue been afflicted; but what is it in regard of these extreme calamities wherewith this people were oppressed; and yet the Prophet threatneth that the Lord prepareth new rods for them? What will become of vs then? Truelie the Lord will doe his office, and will alwaies bee like himselfe. If this terror do not awaken vs, our blockishnesse is intollerable. I haue translated the verbe *To turne*, in the time to come; to the end the sense might bee the more cleere: for although he speakes as of a thing past, yet notwithstanding he threatens a cõtinual succession of punishments to ỹ rebellious.

The first stroke God giues vs is a forerunner of a greater, vnlesse we preuent the same by timely repentance. *See Leuit.* 26.18.21. 24.28.

Vers. 18. *For *wickednesse burneth as a fire; it deuoureth the briars and the thornes, and will kindle in the thicke places of the forrest: and they shall mount vp like the lifting vp of smoke.*

*Or, vnbelicfe.

THe Prophet taxeth the wicked, who make a trade of discharging themselues of their faults to lay them vpon God. For either they seeke starting holes by perswading themselues that they are innocent, or they extenuate their sinnes, if they be conuinced; as if God were too rigorous. And the truth is, that they will neuer confesse God to bee iust in correcting them, vnlesse it bee by constraint: and albeit they dare not excuse themselues openly, yet they fret and grumble inwardly. The Prophet minding to represse such a stubburnnes, compares the calamities to a *fire*; but he addes, that the *impietie* of men is the wood and fewell which kindles Gods wrath: as if he should say, They all of them cry out and complaine that the wrath of God burnes fiercely, and yet they consider not in the meane while, that they kindle and enflame the same by their sinnes, as with bellowes, and that these sinnes doe adde new matter daily to this fire: yea euen they themselues *burne and consume inwardly in the fire of their iniquities.*

That which he saith of the *briars* and *thornes*, is as much as if hee had said; that this flame should spread it selfe throughout all the quarters of Iudea. Now he expresseth two things 1

together; to wit, that the chastisements of the wicked did proceede from the iudgement of God; and yet that the fault is wholly in the sinners; to the end they might not mutter as if God had dealt cruelly with them. But his manner of speaking hath an elegant degradation: for experience shewes, that when the fire is kindled in any low place, it increaseth by little and little, and then spreads it selfe more and more, euen till it hath attained the top. *Isaiah* shewes that in such wise shall the wrath of God be; because it should not inuade the wicked at the very first, but should kindle by little and little, so as at length it should ouerspread farre and wide. In the beginning, the Lord proceeds moderately: if he gaine nothing by touching and going, then he doubles his blowes. But if he see vs altogether indurate, then hee sets his wrath on fire, vtterly to destroy and consume vs, euen as the fire burnes vp a thicke forrest. Lastly, as the other Prophets say; Wee shall finde our selues to be but straw and stubble, when the wrath of God is once kindled. 2 1 2 3 *Chap.* 33. 11 *Chap.* 5. 24. *Psal.* 83. 14. *Chap.* 40. 24. & 41. 2. & 47. 14

Vers. 19. *By the wrath of the Lord of hosts shall the land be darkened, and the people shall be as the meate of the fire: no man shall spare his brother.*

HAuing shewed that the cause of all euils proceeds from our selues, to whom they therefore ought to be imputed; hee teacheth by consequence, that God reuengeth himselfe iustly. For seeing men draw miseries and calamities vpon themselues, God permits them not to escape his hands. Not that hee is inclined to crueltie, (for hee is louing and gentle) but because he is iust, and cannot indure the wicked. Hee expresseth the vengeance of God by the similitude of *smoke* and *darkenesse*, then which nothing is more heauie and dolefull; because so fearefull a iudgement could not well be expressed, but vnder borrowed speeches. Although it seemes hee alludes to the smoke whereof hee had spoken before. For when a fire is growne to such greatnesse, and burnes so on euery side, the brightnesse must needees be obscured by the darknesse of the smoke.

No man shall spare his brother.] In this last particle, and in the verse following, the Prophet describes by what meanes the Lord will execute his wrath after it shall bee so inflamed. For though wee discerne no enemies which might astonish vs, God can arme one of vs against another to destroy our selues. As if he should haue said, that God will not be much to seeke in bringing his vengeance vpon you which he hath threatned; because although others should let you alone, & not molest you, ye the can ouerthrow you euẽ by *ciuill warres*. Now it is an horrible thing and monstrous to say, that *none should spare his brother*: and that euery one shall deuoure his flesh. For a man neuer hated his owne flesh: Ephes. 5. 29. But when God hath blinded vs, what letteth that wee should not destroy one another? And although this bee odious, yet

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it comes to paſſe euery day. There is neither coniunction of blood, nor of religion, nor of the image of God, which we all beare, that can hold vs in, although euen the very heathen ſometimes deferred to do euill, being bound with nothing elſe but the common band of naturall ſocietie, becauſe they knew that the beaſts themſelues agree together, taking knowledge of one another, not exerciſing crueltie to any of their owne kinde: for one Wolfe will not eate another, neither one Beare another. It is much againſt nature then that men, from whom the name of humanitie proceeds, ſhould be ſo cruell, as to eate one an other; therein ſurpaſſing the rage of wilde beaſts. This euill then can not fall out but by reaſon that God hath blinded them, and giuen them vp vnto a reprobate ſenſe: for when as men are in peace, they thinke themſelues free from all dangers, and feare nothing. But the Lord derides ſuch ſecuritie, and ſhewes, that he will execute his wrath vpon them, euen *by their owne hands*, which he wil arme and prouoke againſt them.

Gen. 1.27. & 9.6.

Verſ. 20. *And he ſhall ſnatch at the right hand, and be hungrie; and he ſhall eate on the left hand, and ſhall not be ſatisfied: euery one ſhall eate the fleſh of his owne arme.*

THis is a common ſpeech, To pull and hale on all ſides: and this phraſe ſets forth an inſatiable or cruell auarice. Alſo this deſire of *ſnatching* pricks men forwards vnto crueltie. Now he expreſſeth their inſatiable deſire with greater vehemencie, in that being prouoked by a blinde crueltie, & poſſeſſed with more then a brutiſh furie, their teeth alſo ſhall be ſet on edge with no leſſe appetite to ſuck the blood of their brethren, then to eate the fleſh that is bought in the ſhambles. This circumſtance greatly aggrauates the ſharpnes of the vengeance, to wit, that the children of *Abraham*, and the holie poſteritie of the choſen people ſhould ouerflow into ſo horrible a rage. Let vs remember then that it is a token of a fearefull puniſhment of God when brethren band themſelues one againſt an other, with a furious deſire or luſt to teare one another in pieces.

A ſigne of ſome fearfull puniſhment enſuing, whē brethren bite and teare one another.

Verſ. 21. *Manaſſeh Ephraim, and Ephraim Manaſſeh, and they both ſhall be againſt Iudah: yet for all this his wrath is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.*

THeſe two Tribes were ſpeciallie linked together, for beſides that they deſcended of one father *Abraham*; there was yet a neerer coniunction, in that they tooke their originall of one Patriarke *Ioſeph*, *Abrahams* great grand-child. Now although they were ſo neere allied, yet notwithſtanding God ſhewes that he will cauſe them to haue ſuch conflicts together, that they ſhall deſtroy each other, euen as if they ſhould *deuoure the fleſh of their owne arme*; in regard whereof, they ſhould neede no forreine enemies. He addes alſo, that when *Manaſſeh* and *Ephraim* haue wearied themſelues in fight, both of them ſhall ioine together and ſet vpon *Iuda* to deſtroy them alſo. *Gen.* 41.52.

Yet his wrath.] If any man ſhall ponder in his mind what calamities *Iſaiah* hath ſet forth; he will, I doubt not, be aſtoniſhed, and wonder very much in himſelfe to ſee that he *yet* denounceth ſharper puniſhments then the former. But the Lord deales thus with the wicked, neuer ceaſing to afflict them, till he hath whollie ouerwhelmed and rooted them out, becauſe they hauing been often ſummoned to repentance haue refuſed, and *ſtill* refuſe to be reconciled vnto him. We are not therefore to maruell if plagues after plagues be heaped vpon them, as is alſo declared by *Moſes*, namely, that he wil *yet* ſend ſeuen times more puniſhments vpon thoſe which would not come to repētance, leſt they ſhould imagin that after they had been chaſtiſed once or twiſe, all their puniſhments were then at an end. Now when he ſaith, that the *hand of God is ſtretched forth ſtill*, he meanes, that new rods are ſtill in making, which he hath in a readineſſe to ſmite them withall: for the Lords anger is not like to that of women; but his corrections and wrath go both together, *Leuit.* 26.18. 21.

THE X. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Woe vnto them that decree wicked decrees, and write grieuous things.*

ISaiah now preſſeth ỹ people ſomewhat neerer to the quick, as he hath done in the firſt and ſecond Chapters, to the end they might perceiue ỹ they were iuſtlie afflicted. For men will neuer confeſſe they haue deſerued the paines which they indure, vnleſſe they be conſtreined thereunto, and manifeſtlie conuinced. Now although they were ſufficientlie conuinced euen by the former teſtimonies, yet was it needfull to ſpecifie thoſe things againe, by which their hypocriſie might be diſcouered. For men are ſo impudent, that they thinke themſelues ſafe if they can frame ſome excuſe, and in the meane while blaſpheme God wittinglie. He handled them not too ſharplie, neither did he exceed meaſure in accuſing them, no, though in deſpight of them he ſtopped their mouthes, ſeeing they were come to ſuch an impudencie.

Auen and *Amal* are oftentimes conioined together in the scriptures. *Auen* signifies vanitie, and iniquitie; but the latter signification agrees best to this place. *Amal* is as much to say as vexation; and oftentimes that which is the very cause of it, to wit, the wrong or oppression which the rich and mightie oppresse the poore and weake withall, abusing them by their power and authoritie. For euen as he hath heretofore shewed that the welspring of an euill life proceeds from the gouerners themselues, so he now placeth their ill example in the first ranke, to the end they might receiue due punishment for the wickednesses wherof themselues were the cause. Which we ought diligentlie to obserue, because such as are promoted vnto the highest roomes, thinke they are then freed from the common condition of men, so as they ought to yeeld none account of their doings vnto God. Therefore hee shewes that they shall haue this priuiledge before others, euen to *be first chastised*. Whereas some establish here two orders; and distinguish betweene *makers of decrees*, and those that *write them*: I approue not of it. For in generall, without any distinction at all, he taxeth such Princes and magistrates as oppressed the people in such wise, by their vniust and tyrannicall *decrees*, that their gouernement tended wholly to plaine theeuery. He therefore comprehends all sorts of gouernours and superiours.

Psal.7.14.

Chap.1.10. 22.33.

Vers.2. *To keepe backe the poore from iudgement, and to take away the iudgement of the poore of my people, that widdowes may bee their pray, and that they may spoile the fatherlesse.*

To keepe backe.] Others translate, To cause them to turne from: but the true sense is, *To keepe backe the poore from defending their quarrell*: or, To make them lose their suite. This is the iniquitie and oppression which hee mentioned in the former verse; to wit, that they plucked from the poore that right which belonged vnto them. They were defrauded that the rich might be gratified; and being vtterly spoiled of their liuings, they carried nothing away with them from the seate of iustice, but taunts and reproches. Now hee names the *poore* chiefly, because they are lightly destitute both of mony and other helpes. Whereas the Iudges and Magistrates then ought to haue aided them before the rest; they on the contrary tooke the greater liberty to oppresse and tread them vnder foote with greater ignominie. For those who haue most riches, friends, credit, and fauour, are not so liable to oppression; because they haue weapons in their fists wherewith they may both defend and reuenge themselues. But the Lord saith, hee hath a singular respect vnto the *poore*, which yet notwithstanding are for the most part despised: yea hee so regards them, that hee will not suffer the wrongs and iniuries which haue been done vnto them to remaine vnpunished. For he hath not taken vp, on him the title of the protecter and defender of the poore for nothing. In him it is then that the poore and weake ought to seek consolation; and therefore to endure their troubles and miseries patiently, because God hath care ouer them, and will not suffer the harme that is done them to goe vnreuenged.

The weakest goes alway to the wall.

The Lord hath taken the protectiō of the poore into his own hands. *Exod.22.23 Deut.15.9. & 24.15. Psal.68.6.*

The rich and mightie are heere also admonished, that they therefore laugh not in their sleeue, although God deferre their punishment: for bee it that the poore be left destitute of their right through iniustice; yet the Lord will iudge their cause, and take the maintenance of their right into his hands, who were thought to bee destitute of all helpe.

Vers.3. *What will yee doe now in the day of visitation, and of destruction, which shall come from farre? to whom will ye flee for helpe? *and where will ye leaue your glory.?*

*Or, where will yee be safe.

THe Prophet doth heere sharpely threaten the Princes that slept securely in their sinne. For it is the common custome of such, who are drunken with their greatnesse, proudly to despise al danger. He shewes then, that although God seeme for a while to deferre and winke at their doings; yet notwithstanding the time of his iudgement is prescribed, and shall speedily knocke at their doores ere they be aware. And because they were growne secure by reason of the victorie ouer their enemies; as also because they were backed by the league which they had made with a most puissant nation; therefore the Prophet expresly telles them, that *their destruction shall come from farre*.

In what sense this word visitation is taken generally.

The word *visitation* is taken here for iudgement; because God also visits vs two waies: in mercy and iudgement. For he reueales and manifests himselfe and his power vnto vs in them both. First, when in taking pitie vpon vs, he deliuers vs out of the dangers wherein we are plunged. And secondly, when he roots out the wicked, and contemners of his word. The two significations tend to one end; because God manifests not himselfe vnto vs, but by his workes: and we thinke hee hath forsaken vs, vnlesse hee giues vs some signe of his presence. The Scripture applies this word *visitation* then to our capacitie, because when wee are pressed with afflictions, and the wicked in the meane while let loose the bridle to all dissolutions, it seemes to vs that God is farre off from vs, and that he takes no care of our matters.

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And how it is taken in this place.

Visitation therefore in this place must bee taken for iudgement; by which God will take the wicked by the necke, so as they shall not escape him: also that he will oppose himselfe against their boldnesse and rebellion.

Now if there be such horrible iudgements of God heere in this world, how fearefull and terrible will he be when he shall come at the last to iudge all men? For all the examples of chastisements, which now astonish and amaze vs, are but small beginnings of that last vengeance, wherein hee will thunder vpon the

the reprobate: and hee alſo reſerues and deferres many things which hee ſeemes to paſſe ouer in ſilence, euen of ſet purpoſe vntil that day. And if the wicked be not able to beare the blowes wherewith he ſmiteth them here below; how much leſſe well they be able to ſuſtaine his fearefull and incomprehenſible Maieſtie, when they muſt come before his tribunall ſeate of glory, at whoſe preſence euen the very Angels are aſtonied?

When he ſaith, *from farre*; note that wee ought not to waxe ſenſeleſſe whē proſperitie abounds: for all ſuch as extenuate the power of God by a falſe ſecuritie, which rockes them aſleepe in their vices, ſhall feele, that in an inſtant he can, and alſo when he will, ſhake both heauen and earth, euen from the one end thereof to the other.

To whom will ye flee?] He ſhewes how they ſhall reſt vpon their forces in vaine, becauſe they ſhall auaile them nothing at all to reſiſt the hand of God. He alſo ſhewes, that as they haue been cruell towards others, ſo it ſhould be a moſt iuſt recompence, that in their need they ſhould finde ſuccor neither from God nor man: for there ſhall be iudgement without mercie vnto thoſe that ſhew no mercie, Iam. 2. 13. This ſhall happen eſpeciallie to the Iudges, who ought to haue been a refuge for the whole people, becauſe it is their office to defend and maintaine the poore and afflicted: but if in ſtead therof they deſpiſe, betray, or ſpoile thē; is it not good reaſon they ſhould feele how much their crueltie diſpleaſeth God, & that euē in their own deſtructiō?

As touching that which followes, *Where will ye leaue your glorie?* The expoſitors take it as if *Iſaiah* ſhould ſay, that they ſhall be depriued of their dignitie. And they thinke the Prophet in deriſion aſks what ſhall become of this their high preheminence, wherewith the great ones haue no leſſe proudly then fooliſhlie aduanced themſelues, when God ſuffered them to take their pleaſure? But becauſe this would be too much conſtrained, I rather thinke that *Iſaiah* inquires where they will finde hiding places to ſecure their glory. And in this ſenſe I take the word, *To leaue*, namely, To put in ſafetie: and the two particles anſwers thereunto, To whom will you flee for ſuccor? Where will you finde refuge that you may hide your excellencie? Vnleſſe any had rather retaine the expoſition which I haue put in the margin, becauſe the verbe *Azab* ſignifies, To aſſure, as well as To leaue. To conclude, if God confound and ouerthrow Princes in this wiſe, that are ſo high exalted, what ſhall become of thoſe that are of baſe condition? There is none then that hath any cauſe to flatter himſelfe: for wee must needs become all as ſtubble, when the wrath of God ſhall be kindled againſt vs.

Pſal. 83. 14. 15.

Verſ. 4. **Without me they ſhal fal amōg the bound, they ſhall fall among the ſlaine: yet for all this his wrath is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.*

* Or, if they fall not.

BEcauſe the ſignification of the Hebrew particle is ambiguous, the expoſitors bring many interpretations. Some take it excluſiuely, as in many other texts of the ſcripture, euen as if he ſhould ſay, They ſhall only fall among the priſoners and ſlaine, becauſe they ſhall be led captiue, or put to death. Others tranſlate, *Without me:* and if this reading agree, the Prophet ſhewes what the cauſe of their deſtruction is, to wit, they are reuolted from God: and this is the cauſe indeed of all euils, namely, to leaue the fountaine of life, of ſaluation, and ſo conſequently, of all good things. And thus he toucheth the ſottiſhnes of the wicked to the quick, who thought themſelues iolly fellowes when they had forſaken the Lord; euen as if there could not haue befalne them a more deſireable and pleaſant thing, then to be ſeparate farre enough from him: and thus it ſhould be a kind of bitter reproch in regard their calamitie ſhould proceed from no other cauſe then from the abſence of God, whereof they fondlie reioyced. Others thinke this ſhould be a broken or an abrupt maner of ſpeech, to wit, that they ſhould haue no refuge but in hiding themſelues vnder them that were fallen and ſlaine. And alſo it may be a forme of an oth. Now this ſenſe will agree well, that God ſhould *ſweare* with indignation that he would not pardon one of them, but would deliuer ſome ouer to their enemies, who ſhould cut their throtes; and would cauſe others to be led into captiuitie. This ſentence then ſheweth what deſtruction ſhall befall all thoſe who being admoniſhed by the word of God, repent not. We alſo gather from the text following, that the Prophet threatens them with a fearefull deſtruction; for he repeates that which he hath ſaid alreadie, to wit, that *the wrath of God is not yet appeaſed*, and that he will finde out greater chaſtiſements then the former, to auenge himſelfe vpon them. This teacheth vs, that there is nothing better then to be touched with true repentance, and in good earneſt to acknowledge our faults betimes, to the end the Lord may ſhew vs mercie.

Verſ. 5. *O Aſſur the rod of my wrath! the ſtaffe alſo in their hands is mine indignation.*

THat which now followes hath ſuch reference to the denunciation of puniſhment, that yet there is alſo mingled therewithall ſome conſolation to ſweeten the troubles of the faithfull: yea, the ſpeciall drift of the ſpeech is to ſhew, that all the euil which the Aſſyrians ſhall do them is but a ſcourge ſent of God for a time only: and yet after the wicked ſhall haue triumphed with ioy aboue meaſure, it muſt needs come to paſſe that they ſhall be tamed in the end. The Hebrew word *Hoi*, ſometimes ſignifies a bitter exclamation. Sometimes it is taken as an aduerb of calling; and ſometimes alſo it ſignifies a woe, as indeed the old tranſlator hath turned it: yet it may not be otherwiſe expounded heere, but as if the Lord called the Aſſyrians; or ſpeakes as a man ſighing in

himselfe, that he is constrained to chastise his people by them.

And yet whilest I consider better of euerie circumstance, I rather condiscend to this opinion; namely, that the Lord calles the Assyrians heere, as if hee armed them by his edict to make warre. He told the Iewes before that they should come: but hypocrits are so senseless, that they are neuer touched with any feare of God, but when they see his plagues; or rather indeed till they feele them. This is the cause therefore why he now saith, Come: as if the Iudge should call for the executioner, and command him to binde the malefactor; or rather to cut off his head. Thus the Lord calles the Assyrians, to the end he might execute his vengeance by their hands.

Also the staffe. This may bee referred to the Assyrians, and we may resolue it as if it should be a repetition of the same speech, the words onely being a little changed. And yet I so distinguish them; that the Assyrians are called the *staffe of Gods wrath*; moreouer, that the swords and weapons wherewith they were furnished, are nothing else but the wrath of God himselfe: as if the Prophet should say, God serues himselfe (as it pleaseth him) of the Assyrians, euen as of swords to execute his vengeance withall. Lastly, that they are no otherwise to be feared, but so far forth as God shal display his wrath by their meanes towards the Iewes, although they be furnished with munition. In a word, he shewes that all the force of the enemies shall proceede from the *wrath of God*, who by a secret instinct shall driue them forward to ouerthrowe this people: for otherwise they could not haue moued so much as one of their fingers. God also pronounceth, that the *staffe* which the Assyrian beareth, *is his indignation*; to the end the Iewes might know that the assaults and indeauours of the enemies were gouerned by his prouidence. For I approue not that which others trãslate, In the place, or, In their region: both are too much constrained. To be short, the Lord calles the Assyrians as executioners of his vengeance, to the end hee may punish the sinnes of his people by their hand; and protests, that whatsoeuer they hold in their hands, is his indignation.

1 Now this doctrine hath two vses. First, to terrifie the wicked, and that they might know how God threatens not to roote them out in vaine: as also he shewes how hee will punish them. Which serues much for the awaking of

2 the vnfaithfull, who mocked at all these Sermons and threatnings of the Prophet. Moreouer, this doctrine was not a little profitable, when the people beganne to be afflicted by the Assyrians. For then they easily perceiued that that which the Prophets had foretold, was not spoken in vaine, neither came it to

Obiect. passe at aduenture. But some wil here ask, why he now cals him the *staffe of his indignation*, seeing he said before, that the Assyrian was the *rod* of his wrath? For one would thinke hee should speake thus, The Assyrian is my wrath, and the staffe which he beares is mine indig-

Ans. nation. But we are not curiously to stand vpon the word, seeing wee vnderstand the Prophets meaning. Now he calles men the staffe of Gods wrath, because he serues himselfe of them as of a staffe: he saith, that the weapons of men are the *wrath of God*, because they are not handled at the pleasure of those which beare them, but are testimonies of Gods wrath.

The Prophet then hath spoken aptly, to the end we should not thinke the wicked are carried away with the raines in their necke, whither their appetite shall leade them: but are staied and held short, so as they can doe nothing at all without the will of God. From hence we may gather, that God works by the hands euen of the wicked. But wee must bee wise according to sobrietie, and speake modestly herein: for we ought wisely and iudicially to distinguish betweene the worke of God, and the actions of men. God then works and serues his turne of men three waies. First, in respect that all of vs haue our being and doe moue by him: whence it followes, that all our actions proceed from his power. Secondly, he driues forward, and bowes the wicked by a particular meane, whither it pleaseth him: and although they thinke nothing at all thereon, yet doth hee serue himselfe of them, to the end they may kill and destroy one another; or to the end hee may chastise his people by their hand: and of this kinde doth the Prophet speake in this place. Thirdly, when hee gouernes his elect by the spirit of sanctification, which is peculiar to his chosen onely. Wherefore, bee it that tyrants, spoilers, or others molest vs, bee it that strangers lift themselues vp against vs; yet in the midst of all these confused garboiles, full of all vexations, wee must lift vp our eyes to the hand of God, neuer imagining that any thing falles out by chance.

How God is said to worke by men.

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Vers. 6. *I will send him to a dissembling nation, and I will giue him a charge against the people of my wrath to take the spoile, and to take the pray, and to tread them vnder feete, like the mire in the streetes.*

HE goes on still with the former sentence, wherein he called *Ashur* the rod of Gods wrath. For euen as a father takes not the rod in hand for nothing, but determines to correct his childe: so the Prophet shewes that the rod of the Lord shall not walke at randon; but is ordained and appointed to chastise this wicked and vnthankfull people. He calles them a *dissembling* or froward nation; because there was no vprightnesse nor sincerity in them: so then, dissimulation is opposed to integritie, which is the beginning of all vertues: as contrariwise, hypocrisie is the mother of all vices. Moreouer, hee accuseth not the Israelites lightly heere, but reprocheth them with a thing more execrable then any other. And therefore he presently after calles them *the people of his indignation*. As elsewhere hee saith that the Idumeans are the people of his curse, Chap. 34. 5. But albeit hee

hee declares that hee is angrie againſt the Iewes, yet the maner of the Hebrew phraſe hath a farre greater weight; for it imports as much as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, that this people is deſtinate to perdition, becauſe there is nothing elſe in them but *matter of wrath*. It is certaine that God is neuer *angrie*, vnleſſe he be prouoked thereunto by our wickednes; but when impietie is come to the higheſt degree, then his vnappeaſable wrath and *indignation* burneth. Thus he takes away all hope of reconciliation from the hypocrites and contemners, who ceaſed not to heape ſinne vpon ſinne.

Afterwards it is ſaid, he gaue the reines to the rage of the enemies, that they ſhould deuoure and ouerflow into all kinds of *pilling* and *extortions*. And yet we muſt not take this as if becauſe the Aſſyrians had commandement from God, they might therefore excuſe themſelues: for God commands after two ſorts, to wit, by his ſecret counſell, whereof men haue no knowledge: ſecondly, he commands by his law, which we ought chiefly to haue regard vnto; that ſo we may anſwere a companie of fantaſticall ſpirits, who diſpute prophanely of the counſell of God, whē they will excuſe their owne and others impietie. Wee muſt then wiſely diſtinguiſh betweene theſe two ſorts of commandements: for ſeeing the Lord declares his will in his law, I ought not to mount vp to his ſecret counſell which he hath hidden from me, but ought rather to bring my ſelfe ſimplie vnder his obedience. If any ſhall alledge that he obeyes God when he plungeth himſelfe into diſſolutions, he is a lyar, and accuſeth God in vaine to be the author of his wickedneſſes, whereof his owne heart knowes himſelfe to be guiltie, for in this reſpect there needs none other witneſſe, but euery mans owne conſcience. I grant that God ſerues his turne of the wicked, but ỹ wicked haue no purpoſe therein to ſerue God. Therefore when he works by the wicked and reprobate, it is a thing accidentall in regard of men: for they haue no intent of ſeruing his will, neither haue they any will thereunto. If therefore they take this pretext, they may be eaſily conuinced as vtter rebels againſt God, ſeeing they only do that which pleaſeth themſelues: for they haue the expreſſe will of God in his law, ſo as they ſeeke it in vaine any where elſe. In regard of them then, they do not the worke of God, but the diuels, becauſe they ſerue their owne luſts. It is certaine that the Aſſyrians did not ſo much as looke for any reward for their paines at Gods hands, but were caried away with their luſts, ambition, and auarice: in the meane while the Lord ordered their endeuors and counſels to another end, which was to them vtterlie vnknowne. Now the ſumme of this place is, that a rare and extraordinarie teſtimonie of Gods vengeance ſhould be manifeſted, when the Aſſyrians ſhould ouerflow with a furious licentiouſnes, becauſe they ſhould be ſent of God not to deale mildlie or moderatelie with his people, but to pill and ſack them as in open warre. He addeth alſo *To be trod vnder feete*, which is the vttermoſt of all rage, for what can men do more then with ſhame and contempt to ſtamp them *vnder feete* whom they haue vanquiſhed?

1 2

We muſt diſtinguiſh betweene Gods ſecret, and reuealed will.

Obiect.

Anſ.

The wicked do Gods wil, yet it is not with a minde to ſerue him, but their owne luſts.

Verſ. 7. *But he thinketh not ſo, neither doth his heart eſteeme it ſo: but he imagineth to cut off and deſtroy not a few nations.*

BEcauſe the wicked doe trouble the conſciences of the weake by caſting out the ſome of their rage, as if God had not the power to hold their fierceneſſe and furie ſhort; the Prophet preuents this betimes, and exhorts the faithfull to know, that they are iuſtlie afflicted by a ſecret iudgement of God, although the wicked ouerflow into all diſſolution. So then he ſhewes that which we touched erewhile, namely, that the Aſſyrians ſhall minde nothing leſſe then to ſerue God, and to be executioners of his vengeance: but we ſhall ſee by and by to what end they did it. For ſome might obiect thus: Thou art the Ambaſſador of God, why doeſt thou menace vs with the Aſſyrians? As if belike this furious beaſt would yeeld obedience to the commandement of God. To this he anſwereth, that God is ſuch a wonderfull workeman, that he knoweth how to draw thoſe to do him ſeruice who thinke nothing at all thereon, or which otherwiſe would not obey him. *Although* (ſaith he) *that their endeuors and counſels tend wholie to another end, yet nothing ſhall hinder God, that euen by them he ſhould not execute and fulfill that which he hath ordeined.* For many might replie: What a prepoſterous courſe is this? Will God ſubiect his choſen people to profane nations? There is no equitie at all in it, that our eſtate (be we ſinners as we are, in the higheſt degree) ſhould be made worſe then ỹ condition of theeues, who by their wickednes and impietie had deſerued a moſt ſeuere puniſhment. The Prophet declareth then that the Aſſyrians ſhould haue their turne alſo, and ſhould be iuſtlie puniſhed in their time: and yet ought no man to thinke it ſtrange if they afflict, pill, deuoure, & maſſacre others, ſeeing they ſhould not want their recompence.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Beſides, the Prophet comforts the faithfull, and aſſwageth their trouble and perplexitie; ſhewing that God holds the pride of theſe wicked ones ſhort, leſt they ſhould exerciſe whatſoeuer pleaſed them. He teacheth then, that howſoeuer the wicked furiouſlie rage, that God notwithſtanding moderates his owne iudgements from heauen, ſo as he takes a ſpeciall charge of the ſaluation of his Church. And therefore although that *Aſſur* be inflamed as a cruell beaſt after his pray, yet he commands the faithfull to lift vp their eies vnto God, whoſe counſell is farre remote from this blind furie of the enemie.

Verſ. 8. *For hee ſaith, Are not my Princes altogether Kings?*

THe Prophet ſhewes the cauſe why the Aſſyrian will not thinke himſelfe to bee the rod

rod of God; namely, because hee was so blinded with pride, that he acknowledged not any power aboue his owne. Neither can it otherwise be, that those should in any sort submit themselues vnder the prouidence of God, who resting vpon their greatnesse, attribute this and that vnto their owne forces. For then are wee said to giue the chiefe dominion vnto God, when we beleeue that it is vnpossible to moue the least finger without his will. Contrariwise, whosoeuer thinks himselfe to haue any power of his owne, hee vsurpes Gods power vnto himselfe, with a pride full of sacrilege: as in this place the Prophet describes the insolencie of a profane King in liuely colours, who proudly vaunted as one hauing all things. This especially happens to great Princes; for they are so blinded with abundance of riches, munition, and power, that they hardly can bee brought to thinke themselues men. Of which wee haue too much experience: for what Prince shall we see at this day, who thinks or remembers that he is a man, and subiect to the miseries of this present life? They are so carried away with giddinesse of spirit, that they thinke to attaine to the top of whatsoeuer they haue determined by and by, and that in despite of all impediments whatsoeuer.

Vers. 9. *Is not Calno as Carchemish? Is not Hamath like Arpad? Is not Samaria as Damascus?*

HEere hee names certaine *Cities*, although others affirme that they are regions. Notwithstanding it is more probable that they were Cities, or some strong places. *Shall is not happen* (saith he) *alike to the places which I haue not yet subdued, as to these which haue resisted me?* He compares *Calno*, *Arpad*, and *Samaria* (which he vanquished afterward) to *Carchemish*, *Hamath*, and *Damascus*, which hee had vanquished before, and saith, that these should not bee stronger then they. Thus haue the wicked been wont to boast and glory in their deeds past; so as they thinke to breake thorow all impediments, as if nothing were able to hinder their counsels and enterprises: and which is yet worse, they thinke to come to the end of all things in despite of God himselfe, and without his knowledge. When we reade this historie, let vs learne not to be proud if wee haue been strong at some time, or if al things haue fallen out according to our wish. For he who hath exalted vs, can quickely also abase and cast vs downe. And if hee reprocheth the *Assyrian* for his ouer weening, how much more ought they to be reproued, who attribute the praise of holinesse and righteousnesse vnto themselues, as if they could regenerate themselues by their owne proper vertue? For wee need not doubt but such do rob God of his honor, and take that to themselues which is proper vnto him.

We must beware how we waxe proud of our good successes.

For he that hath exalted vs, can soone deiect vs.

Vers. 10. *Like as mine hand hath found the kingdomes of the idols, seeing their idols were aboue Ierusalem, and aboue Samaria:*

11. *Shall not I, as I haue done to Samaria, and to the idols thereof; so doe to Ierusalem, and to the idols thereof?*

HEere pride ouerflowes his bankes yet further: for the Assyrian not onely exalts himselfe against men, but euen against *God* also: yea, against the *gods which he worshipped*. He boasteth that the *gods* vnder whose protection other nations were; could not let him that he should not subdue them, and that the *God* of *Ierusalem* and *Samaria* should resist him no more then the former. For infidels are so full of pride, that attributing the victories which they get, to their own forces, they make no bones to exalt themselues against God and all diuine power. They make faire shewes indeed, as if they stood in some awe of their gods; that is to say, of the idols which themselues haue forged; to whom they bow and offer sacrifice; wherby they seeme to confesse, that they hold all their victories of these treen gods: but by and by they offer incense and sacrifice to their owne nets, (as *Habacuck* saith, speaking of *Nebuchadnezzar*) Abac. 1. 16. when they brag and glory themselues in their goodly acts, counsels, prudence and industrie. For then they discouer their hypocrisie, then they lay open their secret thoughts, which were hidden before vnder these close fainings: which wee may easily discerne, when they suddenly take that to themselues, which before they seemed to attribute to their god. Wee neede not wonder then if *Senacherib* exalted himselfe aboue all that is called God; for such is the fruite of impietie.

Idolaters reuerence their owne idols but in shew onely.

Now there is heere a double blasphemie. First, in that hee aduanceth himselfe aboue God, *thinking himselfe stronger then he*. Besides, in that hee matcheth the true God with the false. Hee shewed his impietie more then enough, when he exalted himself aboue idols: for although idols be nothing; yet in regard that the worshippers of them attribute a certaine vertue and diuinitie vnto them; if they lift vp themselues against such forged gods, they shew themselues contemners of all diuine power. Their own conscience then witnesseth against them, that they bid open defiance to God; neither is there any ignorance which can excuse them, because they perswade themselues that God is inclosed in their images. For be it that this tyrant derided *Apollo*, or *Iupiter*; it is certaine that he despised them not simply as idols; but as hauing some diuinitie in them. The other blasphemie of this tyrant was, that hee placed the *liuing God in the ranke of the counterfeit gods of the heathen*; and was so bold and presumptuous to exalt himselfe against him, as well as against other gods, and to despise the confidence of Israel, as if the vertue and power of God ought not to be esteemed greater then that of the idols.

Idolaters shew themselues contemners of all diuine power, in contemning the gods which themselues haue forged.

Vers. 12.

Verſ. 12. *But when the Lord hath accompliſhed all his worke vpon Mount Zion and Ieruſalem, I will viſit the fruit of the proud heart of the King of Aſſur, and his glorious and proud lookes.*

HItherto the Prophet hath ſhewed vs what the pride of the Aſſyrian ſhould be, after he had ouercome Iſrael: but now he declares what ſhould befall *the Aſſyrian himſelfe*, and what the counſell of the Lord ſhall be againſt him. The vnbeleeuers doe all things as if God were not in heauen, or were not able to breake all their enterpriſes. For what meane theſe hauty and proud wordes elſe; *My hand hath found the kingdomes of the idols*; but that he thought to exalt himſelfe aboue all gods? But God oppoſeth himſelfe here againſt his indeuours; ſo that hauing once ſerued his turne of him, hee will alſo puniſh him. This ſentence containes two members: firſt, *Iſaiah* ſhewes that God will frame a puniſhment for this wicked and infidell King. Secondly, he ſhewes that the time thereof is not yet come; to the end the faithfull might wait for it with patience.

Now hee teſtifies, that the fit time to bring this to paſſe is, *after* God ſhall haue chaſtiſed the ſinnes of his Church: as if the Father of a familie would firſt quiet the ſturres which are bred in his owne houſe. This is the drift of this counſell; to wit, that the faithfull ſhould 1 not waxe out of heart, though they ſaw this curſed tyrant to triumph in this ſort, neither yet to deſpaire of their deliuerãce, as if there were no meanes at all to bridle his furie. In a word, God promiſeth, that after he ſhall haue permitted the Aſſyrian to exalt himſelfe beyond meaſure, yet that he will execute iuſtice 2 in the end. Secondly, that it is his office to abate the pride of fleſh, which is ioyned with ſuch an execrable ſacrilege. And therefore the particle *Sur*, hath great weight; as if hee ſhould ſay, that the haughtineſſe whereinto the Aſſyrian is exalted, ſhall bee no let why the Lord ſhould not pull it downe well enough.

He takes the *fruit* by way of ſimilitude, becauſe the wicked thinke themſelues bleſſed when they are ſwollen with pride and outrage, euen as if they gathered ſome fruit. He placeth the *heart* firſt, which is the ſeate of pride, which being ſtuffed with arrogancie, vomits nothing but iniuries and crueltie. Afterwards hee addes the *eyes*, wherein the inward affection of the heart manifeſts it ſelfe, which by the eye-lids lifted vp, are meſſengers of the vice which is ſecret. Although then that the Aſſyrian lifts vp his creſts, yet God declares, that hee hath meanes in his hand ſuddenly to conuert the glorie of this King into diſhonour and ſhame. Wherefore hee heere comprehends the contempt, diſdaine, pride, and other arrogant behauiours and ſignes of vaine glory; all which are to be ſeene in the proud. Now he brings in *God* ſpeaking: for that which God pronounceth with his mouth, hath greater vehemencie then if hee ſhould haue ſpoken by the voyce of the Prophet. From hence we are to draw a generall doctrine; namely, that God cannot indure the inſolencie of the proud, but hee muſt needes downe with it; becauſe hee is at perpetuall warre againſt them: Iam. 4. 6. 1. Pet. 5. 5.

Let vs alſo note that this ſentence comes in by way of reſtraint, to the end the Prophet might preuent the ouer great haſtineſſe of men, ſaying, that this ſhall come to paſſe *after that the Lord ſhall haue accompliſhed his worke*. For as ſoone as we ſee a man proud, wee meruaile how the Lord can ſuffer him. But *Iſaiah* ſhewes heere that God indeede ſuffereth this tyrant, although hee proudly and fiercely exalts himſelfe, becauſe hee is minded to ſerue his turne of him: and that the time is not yet ſeaſonable wherein the Lord ſhould ſhatter the wicked too pieces; but that they muſt wait with patience. For *after he hath afflicted the kingdome of Iudah*, as bringing his owne houſhold firſt into order, he will not then be ſlowe nor ſlothfull to puniſh the enemie ſtranger: as fathers who are wont either to caſt away, or breake the rods wherewith they haue beaten their children.

Hee takes the *mountaine of Zion*, for the Church, by a figure called Synecdoche; to the end that by the Temple and royall Citie, hee might decipher out the whole body, as by the head or principall part.

He expreſly ſaith, *all the worke*, becauſe wee willingly hold backe the Lord from his worke by our inconſiderate haſtineſſe: yea many times when he hath but euen new begunne. For we are wont to make ſuch wiſhes againſt the reprobate, as it is hard to reſtraine our impatience; vnleſſe God apply himſelfe to our affections in puniſhing them by and by. To abate ſuch heate, the Prophet commands that wee ſhould let God alone, and leaue the fit time free vnto himſelfe when to exerciſe his fatherly chaſtiſements.

We oft times hinder the Lords working by our inconſiderate haſtineſſe.

All the worke then, is taken for a iuſt meaſure. Behold here a very profitable doctrine, and of great conſolation. We ſee the wicked are wonderfull proud, and how they liſt vp themſelues audaciouſly againſt God, as if they were ſtronger then he: alſo how they purſue his doctrine with iniuries and ſlanders; ſo as we can hardly expreſſe the fiercenes of their arrogancie with words. If the Lord ſhould agree to our will, hee ſhould runne by and by and thunder from heauen againſt them, and vtterly roote them out. But his purpoſe is before hee doth this, to correct his Church by them. For he ſpeakes not heere of Egyptians, or Aſſyrians; but of the *Iewes*, of *Zion*, of the *Temple*, his dwelling place, which it pleaſed him to dedicate and conſecrate to his honour.

This word All, hath great emphaſis heere.

Note.

God begins firſt with his owne.

So at this day there are diuers diſeaſes in the Church which the Lord will purge and heale. True it is that he hath alreadie begun: but wee deceiue our ſelues if wee thinke his worke to be now perfect. Hee will not ceaſe then, till he hath ſo tamed vs, that being touched

Note. ched with a true feare of his name, we ſubmit our ſelues vnto him with ſuch modeſtie and teachablenes as is fit. Wherefore wee muſt not maruell if he lets looſe the bridle to Tyrants, and ſuffreth them ſtill to exerciſe their crueltie againſt his Church: for the conſolation is readie, to wit, *hauing vſed them as his vaſſals to correct his people, he will viſit their pride and arrogancie.* And it is no wonder if God in ſmiting his choſen firſt, do therein declare that he hath a ſpeciall care of their ſaluation.

1. Pet. 4. 17. Iudgement then muſt begin at the houſe of God firſt: and afterwards he proceeds on in judgement againſt ſtrangers, who ſhall be yet more grieuouſlie puniſhed.

Verſ. 13. *Becauſe he ſaid, by the power of mine owne hand haue I done it, and by my wiſdome, becauſe I am wiſe, therefore I haue remoued the borders of the people, and haue ſpoiled their treaſures, and haue pulled downe the inhabitants like a valiant man.*

THe Prophet doth againe repeat the open blaſphemies which the Aſſyrian would diſgorge; for he attributes all the victories which he obteined to his *wiſdome* and *power*. By the *ſtrength of his hand*, he meanes his armed ſouldiers gathered out of diuers nations; but withall he brags alſo, *to haue beene a valiant king:* and this is the cuſtome of theſe vaine braggers, to attribute all that to themſelues which is done in their name; although they in the meane while giue themſelues to feaſting and eaſe vnder the ſhadow. Afterwards he boaſts of his *wiſdome* and warineſſe, as we commonly ſay, *I haue been very diſcreet and expert.* And no doubt but he adornes his fraudes and deceits with the title of honeſtie, wherewith yet hee had circumuented his neighbours. For behold the craft and cunning of Kings and Princes, euen to trouble and vex the Countrie by indirect meanes, to ſeeke pretence of lawes, to ſow diſcords, and laſtlie, to mingle heauen and earth together (as they ſpeake) by their practiſes.

Fay eſté bien entendu & expert.

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When he ſaith, *I haue remoued the borders of the people*, it is as much to ſay, I haue ſtretched out the bounds of my gouernment, and haue added other countries to mine owne, ſo as there is no bound nor diſtinction. As if we ſhould ſay, that the French King hath taken away the limits of Brittanie, Burgonie, Aquitaine, Prouence, and other regions, in ioyning them to his kingdome. He addes alſo, that no *treaſures* lay ſo ſecret and hidden which he diſcouered not, & got to himſelfe: as if he ſhould ſay, By my wiſdome I haue drawne all nations round about into my nets; I haue emptied their treaſures; and griped all that was hid into mine hands.

Verſ. 14. *And mine hand hath found as a neſt the riches of the people, and as one gathereth egges that are left, ſo haue I gathered all the earth, and there was none to moone the wing, nor to open the mouth, or to whiſper.*

HE further addes, that it was no hard matter with him to ouercome Kings, and lay their riches on an heape: and he makes this ỹ more plaine by a ſimilitude; as if he ſhould ſay, If a man ſhould ſeeke *a neſt* and finde the birds gone, he may take the egges away without any difficultie. For if the birds ſit vpon their egges (as they haue a naturall affection to keepe their neſts) either they wil flie vpon him that would take them away, and peck at him with their billes, or elſe they would indeuour to driue him away by hiſſings and ſhrill cryings. But this Tyrant boaſts that there was no bodie durſt ſo much as *open his mouth* againſt him, and that by meanes thereof he conquered all kingdomes without any great adoe; and therefore he attributes all theſe things to his wiſdome, acknowledging no prouidence of God at all. Now the Prophet hath ſet forth theſe brags of ſet purpoſe, and that euen by the mouth of the Tyrant himſelfe, to the end he might ſhew that theſe boaſtings of his were ſo many bellowes (as it were) to kindle the wrath of God. For if ſuch a proud caytiue were not to be borne with among men, how much leſſe can the Lord ſuffer or endure ſuch an one?

Simile.

Verſ. 15. *Shall the axe boaſt it ſelfe againſt him that heweth therewith? or ſhall the ſaw exalt it ſelfe againſt him that moueth it? as if the rod ſhould lift vp it ſelfe againſt him that taketh it vp, or the ſtaffe ſhould exalt it ſelfe, as if it were no wood.*

HEre the Lord doth more apparantlie deride the follie of this outragious Aſſyrian, by which hee promiſeth vnto himſelfe mountaines and wonders. For ſaith the Lord, it is all one, as if the *axe* or hammer ſhould deſpiſe the hand that holds it, and ſhould brag of their nimblenes: whereas it appeares well enough that theſe are but dead inſtruments, without any proper mouing. But before wee further expound the ſentence at large, I will touch ſomething briefly as concerning the Prophets words. The ſecond member of the verſe is ſomewhat obſcure. True it is that the ſentence is plaine, but there is ſome ambiguitie in the maner of ſpeech, which alſo cauſeth great diuerſitie among the expoſitors. All things being well weyed then, me thinks the ſenſe which I haue giuen ſorts beſt with the text. What? Were it not a monſtrous ſpectacle, if ỹ ſtaffe ſhould exalt it ſelfe againſt him that takes it vp, as if it *were no wood?* For the particle *Eth* often ſignifies as much as Againſt; and the Copulatiue *Vau* is alſo often ſuperfluous. And thus we ſhall haue a cleare expoſition, and ſuch a one as agrees with the Prophets meaning. Heretofore he reproched the king of Aſſur becauſe he attributed the victories which he obteined to his counſels and forces: but now he ſaith, that herein this Tyrant exalted himſelfe *againſt God*, neither more nor leſſe then

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if the *axe* deſpiſing the hand that ruled it, ſhould appropriate the praiſe due to the workeman vnto it ſelfe: or that a *ſtaffe* ſhould riſe vp againſt him that handleth it, as if it were ſome other thing then wood, which yet is dead and without ſtrength. Whence wee may know that men exalt themſelues againſt *God*, when they attribute vnto themſelues more then is meete, and that they war not ſo much with men like themſelues, as with the Lord himſelfe. Let vs then reiect theſe proud ſpeeches ſo full of blaſphemies, as; I haue done this by my power; I haue directed this by my wiſedome; I haue brought ſuch a thing to paſſe by my induſtrie. For the Lord is a iealous God, Exod. 20. 5. and cannot abide to giue his glory to another: Iſaiah 42. 8.

Now let vs obſerue theſe compariſons, whereby he likeneth men to inſtruments. But firſt of all we muſt not referre this to the prouidence of God in general, by which all creatures are ordered and gouerned, as ſome doe: who confeſſe indeede, that all are moued of God becauſe they can neither will nor chuſe: but they adde, that euery creature is moued according to his naturall inſtinct, as the Sun, the Moone, the heauens, and ſuch like things. Thus they imagine that man is carried hither and thither by his owne will and free choice; becauſe God doth nothing elſe but continue the power which hee gaue at the beginning. Now their errour tends hereunto, that the frame of the whole world is indeed ſuſtained by the hand of God; yet ſo, that it is not needfully particular mouings ſhold be ordered by his prouidence. And thus they attribute vnto God the office to ſend raine and faire weather, in as much as hee is the creator of nature: and yet neuertheleſſe, that God commands nothing; but the raine is ingendred of the vapors; and faire weather proceedes from ſome other naturall cauſes. Now this confuſed gouernement which they leaue vnto God, is ſcarcely the one thouſand part of the dominion which he attributes to himſelfe. *Iſaiah* therefore rightly eſtabliſheth him as preſident ouer all actions, ſo as hee diſpoſeth of men according as it pleaſeth him beſt, no leſſe then if they were *rods* in his hand. He bowes their counſels, ordereth their enterpriſes, and moderates their actions; to the end wee might know that all things depend vpon his prouidence, and not vpon the appetite of the wicked.

Obiect. Yet they reply, that there is no reaſon wherefore men ſhould bee thus called axes and ſwords; and that in the meane while their will, iudgement, and whatſoeuer elſe that diſtinguiſheth them from beaſts, ſhould be taken away from them; ſo as of men we ſhould make trunkes of wood or ſtones. But the anſwer is ready: for although God compares men to ſtones, it followes not therupon that they ſhould be altogether like them. For that which is like, is not the ſame, but agrees in ſome point. For although a ſtaffe cannot moue it ſelfe hither and thither, yet notwithſtanding is fit to giue blowes: ſo the wicked haue ſomething in nature, and yet can they turne themſelues neither one way nor other further then they be ſtill guided by the prouidence and ſecret counſell of God. Thus this fitting or agreement of things, hindereth not that the whole action ſhould not be attributed to God onely.

Anſ. But it is very farre from the purpoſe that ſome doe heere moue that queſtion touching the will of man. For although God be ſaid to hold the counſels of men in his hand, and turnes their enterpriſes and executions to what end it pleaſeth him; doth it therefore follow that they conſult not, or ceaſe to deuiſe this or that? For wee muſt not here imagine any conſtrained will, as if God drew men whether they would or no: but hee rules all their mouings by a wonderfull and an incomprehenſible manner; yet ſo as their owne will remaines vnto them ſtill. Now *Iſaiah* teacheth chiefly in this place, that all the indeuours of men are vaine, if the Lord giue not an iſſue vnto them: and therefore that the King of Aſſur could haue done nothing, what enterpriſe ſoeuer hee had taken in hand, if God had not giuen him his victories. In regard whereof, hee hath no cauſe to attribute the praiſe of thoſe things to himſelfe, which hee obtained not but by the meanes of God. And this is it which hee confirmes by another ſimilitude, when hee ſaith, that the *lifting vp of the ſtaffe*, comes not from the nature of wood, but from the will of him which handleth it.

Verſ. 16. *Therefore ſhall the Lord God of hoſtes ſend among his fat men leannes, and vnder his glory ſhall he kindle a burning like the burning of fire.*

HE goes on ſtill with the former doctrine, ſignifying that God will ſhew the Aſſyrian how hee hath lifted vp himſelfe too too much, and that hee will bring that his arrogancy downe to the ground, wherein he fooliſhly pleaſed himſelfe. For in as much as hee put his truſt in his forces, and in the multitude of his munition, *Iſaiah* declares that God will take all this away from him; and this vnder the ſimilitude of *fat* and *leane*. For by this word *fat*, hee ſignifies as well riches, as ſtrength of warre: and by the word *leane*, the want and neede of theſe things, wherein the Aſſyrian truſted too much: as if he ſhould ſay, The Lord will cauſe all the *fat* and well fed things of the Aſſyrian to waxe *leane*. It is no new thing to compare proſperitie vnto fatneſſe: for euen as horſes that are ouermuch pampered, become proud, ſo as they are readie to caſt their rider, or wince and fling with their heeles if any offer to come neere them: ſo abundance makes men become wild and cruell, inſomuch that a man cannot maſter them but by bringing downe their fleſh.

The other ſimilitude is yet more proper, to wit, *that the fire ſhall be kindled vnder his glorie*: for his meaning is, that by how much the more his felicitie increaſed, the hotter ſhould the flame bee which ſhould conſume it. And therein alſo he ſhewes, that the Aſſyrian ſhall

be vtterly brought to nothing, euen as if one should plucke vp a tree by the rootes, or should race an house to the very foundation. For if a man should onely loppe off the branches of a tree, it would easilie bring forth other branches: or if the roofe of an house were onely burned, all the other parts would remaine safe and sound. He leaueth nothing then to the Assyrian, but affirmes that hee shall be vtterly consumed. By this word *As*, or like, which imports a similitude, hee fitly shewes, that the flame shall bee such that it shall consume all the *worst* of the Assyrian.

Vers. 17. *And the light of Israel shall be in fire, and his holy one shall be as a flame, the which shall burne and consume his briars and thornes all in one day.*

HE makes an elegant allusion to this burning, wherewith he had threatned the Assyrians. For there are two things in fire, to wit, light, and heate: and as God consumeth his enemies by his heate, so he also inlighteneth his faithfull ones with his light. Now it is well enough knowne that God is sometime called deuouring fire in one place, and light in an other (as Psal.36.9.) in diuers respects, because the power which he sheweth towards the faithfull is not like vnto that which he manifests against the vnfaithfull. In a word, he so threatens the Assyrians with destruction, that therewithall he comforts the faithfull, and that two waies; first, because they shall see that God will be reuenged vpon the iniuries done vnto them: in the second place, being gladded with his light, they shall receiue new strength, and life.

Deut.4.24. Heb.12.29. Chap.10.30 Mich.7.8.

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He plainely without any figure sheweth what this light is, when he addeth, *his holy one*, so as there needs no long exposition, to wit, that he wil defend and keepe this people whom he hath elect and chosen to himselfe as his owne from amongst other nations. He saith then, that the fauor of God which *shines* vpon Israel, shall be as a *fire* to *deuoure* the enemies at the last. *In a day*, that is to say, it shall *burne* with a sudden fire. For he signifies a fearefull and vnaccustomed burning, which we commonlie see to befall the wicked euen then when they thinke themselues safest and furthest off from danger. To concude, he shewes that all the forces which they shall oppose, shall be as *Tow*, which being once set on fire shall quicklie *come to nothing*.

Vers. 18. *And the glorie of his forrest shall come to an end with his fruitfull territorie, from the soule to the flesh: and shall be broken, as the breaking of a standard.*

HE continueth still the same similitude of *burning*, and declareth that the fire shall as well consume the high things as the low, and shall leaue nothing sound: for it may fall out that the fire will seaze vpon the top of a place, and in the meane while it shall leaue y bottome vntouched. The word *Carmel*, which is put here, is not a proper name, as I thinke, but is rather to be taken for a fat and fruitfull territorie: and there would also be some absurditie in it, to say that Mount Carmel was in the land of Assyria. The sense therefore is, that not only the ruin of the *forrests* of Assyria drawes neere, but also that the *graine* or *corne shall be consumed by the same fire*, because it shall not only run vpon the vpper parts of the land, but shall pearce downe euen into the bottoms. He addes also another similitude taken from man, Euen as a man is composed of *body and soule*, so also his diseases shall seaze vpon him one by one, till euery part be smitten. For it often falles out that the body will be sick and impotent, and the spirit will be sound, and so on the contrarie; but when both together are smitten, it is very dangerous. By this similitude then he threatens, that nothing shall remaine in good plight to the Assyrians, who are now destinate to destruction, because they shall perish, both *soule, and flesh*: not that mens *soules* are mortall, but because God will openly shew his vengeance vpon them. Surely this is very terrible; for the end of corrections are, that the *soule* might be saued, although the bodie should perish, 1.Cor.5.5. but when the *spirit* also is destroied with the bodie, can we imagine any thing more miserable? For the flame onelie toucheth the faithfull, but consumes them not, as it doth the vnfaithfull: in whom it findes nothing but fewell fit for the fire.

As the breaking of a standard.] There are here a meeting together in the Hebrew words, which cannot be expressed in another language. But it is the same thing which he hath set before vs in his other similies, to wit, an extreame discomfiture: for when the standard is beaten downe, the whole armie is put to flight. For when enfignes are taken, then there is the greater bloodshed. As when the Historiographers mention any great slaughter, they say that the standards are taken. Now the Prophet threatens not the Assyrians thus in fauour towards them, that they being admonished, might profit thereby, and be touched with true repentance: but it was to comfort the faithfull, to the end they should not thinke the Assyrian should escape vnpunished, when he had exercised his cruelties against the people of God: as also lest they should imagine, that the Lord had forgotten his promise, or that he was not able to bring the enterprises of his enemies to confusion. And in deede, vnlesse the Prophet had speedily preuented the matter this way, many such doubts would haue come into their mindes.

Vers. 19. *And it shall bee easie to number the rest of the trees of his forrest: for a little child shall tell them.*

THe Hebrew phrase shewes that there shall be a very small number left; and thus hee onely confirmes the former sentence, to wit, that

that there ſhal be ſuch a waſte after the Lord ſhall haue brought the Aſſyrians downe, that the reſidue ſhall be *eaſilie told*. And yet he goes on further in ſaying, there ſhall be ſo few, that *a little child* ſhall bee able to tell all that remaine: for we know that little children haue much adoe to count to three or foure. Thus then the kingdome of the Aſſyrians, which in times paſt appeared as a great forreſt, the trees thereof being cut downe and ouerthrowne, ſhall become like to a ſmall number of trees ſcattered a great way off one from another.

Verſ. 20. *And it ſhall come to paſſe in that day, that the remnant of Iſrael, and thoſe which ſhall eſcape of the houſe of Iacob, ſhall reſt no more vpon him that ſmote them: for they ſhall reſt vpon the Lord, the holy one of Iſrael in truth.*

NOw hee returnes to the choſen people, and deſcribes the fruit of the chaſtiſement which was at hand. For in as much as it is an hard and difficult thing to be moleſted and afflicted, and that wee flee it as much as poſſibly we can: the Lord ſhewes vs the fruit of afflictions, that ſo hauing learned to conſider the end thereof, we might indure them the more cheerefully: as if hee ſhould ſay, I know you would faine that the Aſſyrian were farre off from you, that ſo you might inioy your commodities quietly; but yet think with your ſelues, that this affliction is as neceſſarie for you, as a potion for a ſicke ſtomacke: for you know not the power of God, and therefore withdraw you your affiance from him, to ſet it vpon the wicked. Now what a miſerable thing is it to put the hope of our ſaluation in thoſe that are Gods enemies, and to *ſtay* our ſelues vpon them which ſeeke nothing but our ouerthrow? For the Iſraelites reſted one while vpon the Aſſyrians; then vpon the Egyptians. And therefore there was no loſſe in leſſening of the people, becauſe this *little handfull* which *remained*, learned thereby to put their truſt in God. And in this reſpect alſo wee may know how needefull it was that God ſhould chaſtiſe the Iſraelites.

Now the moderation which he addes, containes an excellent and wonderfull conſolation, to wit, that notwithſtanding this, yet a remnant of the Iewes ſhould remaine, amongſt whom the true ſeruice of God ſhould be reſtored. For the particle *In truth*, is not ſuperfluous: for before the Lord afflicted thē, they all made profeſſion to be of the true religion, and called vpon God together: but it was in hypocriſie. *Iſaiah* then deriding this counterfet holineſſe, ſaith, that their hope ſhall bee ſound and ſincere, when they ſhall once bee purged from their fainings and deceits. For although they proudly boaſted themſelues to reſt onely vpon the Lord, yet did they reſt indeede vpon the helpe of the Aſſyrians. When the Aſſyrians therefore ſhould chaſtiſe them, they ſhould then learne to truſt in God only, and to turne away their heart from looking for ſuccours from men. Hence we may gather, that we cannot ſolely reſt our ſelues vpon God, vnleſſe wee wholly plucke away all our truſt from creatures. Becauſe we ought ſo to ſtay vpon him, as to renounce all other things willingly for his ſake. Where this confident truſt is not, there hath truth no place, becauſe the heart is double and parted in twaine.

Verſ. 21. *The remnant ſhall turne, the remnant of Iacob to the ſtrong God.*

THe *remnant ſhall be converted*. This is a confirmation of the former ſentence, although hee ſeemes to allude to that place of the ſeuenth Chapter, where the ſonne of *Iſaiah* was called *Shear-iaſhub*. For we haue there ſaid, that this name was impoſed vpon him accidentally; to the end hee might be as it were a pledge of that deliuerance to come, of ỹ which his father had propheſied. It was needfull alſo that the Iewes ſhould be confirmed diuers waies, to the end they might bee aſſured that the Lord would bring them backe in the end. Whereunto alſo appertaineth that which he addeth, *Vnto the ſtrong God*, that is to ſay, to him, whom the people being *converted* from their reuolt, ſhall acknowledge to be the protector of their ſaluation. For this epithite is attributed vnto God, according to the circumſtance of the place. It ſhould ſeeme that the word אל, which ſignifies God, ſhould chaue xpreſſed his power ſufficiently; but he would alſo adde *Gibbor*: that is to ſay, Mightie, or Strong, to the end he might ſtirre vp the people to truſt the more confidently in him. For how could it come to paſſe that the people ſhould returne from vnder the Aſſyrians and Egyptians, vnleſſe they were perſwaded that God was al-ſufficient, who ſhould doe the deede? This then is the welſpring of all our euils; to wit, when wee are not reſolued that whatſoeuer wee can wiſh or deſire for our ſaluation, is in God.

Verſ. 22. *For though thy people, O Iſrael, were as the ſand of the ſea; yet ſhould but a remnant be ſaued. The conſumption determined ſhall abound in iuſtice.*

HEe excludes hypocries from their fooliſh confidence: for it was enough in their conceit for them that they were the children of that holy perſonage *Abraham* according to the fleſh onely: and vnder this bare and naked pretext of their originall, they would be thought moſt holy. In the meane while he exhorts the faithfull to patience, to the end they might learne with a meeke and quiet ſpirit, to wait for this diſcomfiture and diminution of their multitude; to the end that whē it ſhold come to paſſe, they ſhould not be troubled at it as at ſome new thing. He comforts them then for feare they ſhould not beare ſuch a waſting patiently; becauſe therout the Lord was purpoſed to gather a ſmall

remnant at the least. The Hebrew verb signifies To finish, and sometimes also To *consume*. The latter signification agrees best, for he calles this diminishing of the people, a *Consumption*, and that *Accomplished*: and herein hee speakes excessiuely (as they say) for it would be a thousand to one that they were not all destroyed, and therefore a very few should escape.

The name of *Israel* may be taken here in the genitiue, or in the vocatiue case; so as in this latter sense he should speake to the Patriarke *Iacob*, or to all the faithful in his name. But seeing ỹ meaning is cleare inough howsoeuer we take it, the matter is of no great moment. It may be taken also in the genitiue. For mine owne part I rather thinke it is a proper name to point out as it were the true and obedient Israelites, for he vtters a vehement speech in turning himselfe to the Patriarke; and God in speaking to him that was dead testifies to the liuing, that that which he had long ago promised, to wit, that the posteritie of *Abraham*, which should be innumerable as the sand of the sea, should not stretch it selfe to a confused multitude, who had cast off all true godlines, but that there should be an interruption in this degenerate people, till that a little while after they should be renued. *Gen.* 13. 16. & 22. 17. 28. 14.

He addes also another consolation, to wit, that this little handfull *shall abound in iustice*. For we are in danger to be out of heart, and to doubt of the mercie of God, when we see the Church of God oppressed with such grieuous calamities, so as it seemes it must fall into ruin. Those who are touched with true repentance know by experience that this is the heauiest temptation of al others. It was needfull therefore that the hearts of the faithfull should be fortified against it, that by considering the fruit which should come vnto them from this discomfiture, they might feele their griefe asswaged: which fruit was this, that thereby the whole earth should be ouerspred with *Iustice*, euen as a riuer that ouerfloweth. He touched this point before, when he said that this remnant should rest vpon the Lord their God in truth. *Vers.* 20.

The word *Iustice* is diuersly expounded. Some referre it to the preaching of the Gospell, because the righteousnes of God is reuealed frō faith to faith by it, as S. *Paul* saith Rom. 1. 17. Now the Gospell was published throughout the whole world by the ministrie of the Apostles, who were as a small remnant of the Iewes. Others had rather to take it thus, as if this *Consumption* were a testimonie or witnes of the iustice of God, who did so grieuously chastise his people. But I had rather expound it more generallie thus; *This consumption shall suffice to fill the whole earth with Iustice*. Those which shall remaine, be they neuer so few, shal yet suffice notwithstanding to cause the riuers to run with iustice, in such wise that the whole world shall be couered therewith.

Vers. 23. *For the Lord God of hostes will make a Consumption, and shall plase the bounds in the midst of the earth.*

THis repetition doth againe pluck away the meanes from these proud contemners of God wherein they flattered themselues. For it was a thing almost incredible that the Iewes should perish as it were in a moment, who had so many promises made them, and with whom God had contracted a perpetuall couenant: it also seemed to be repugnant to the nature of God, which is immutable. The Prophet threatneth then, that *the Lord* is the author of this *Consumption*, to the end he might beate downe the pride of the wicked, who trusting in their present felicitie, thought themselues out of all danger, and being puffed vp with this vaine confidence, laughed at all admonitions and warnings. God, saith he, shall bring your land to a desert, so as in the most florishing part thereof shall be seene a consumption most like vnto a wildernes. For he takes the *midst of the earth* for the heart of it, that is to say, for the places most strong and best fortified. Many thinke the word *Consumption* should be an adiectiue: but I had rather affirme that it is a substantiue, according to which sense it is taken in *Daniel*, and in other places. *Gen.* 17. 5. *Dan.* 9. 24. 27.

Saint *Paul* alledgeth this text, but it is somewhat different in words from these of the Prophet in this place, to wit, according to the vulgar exposition which was then most receiued. Now although the Apostle spake properlie, faithfullie, and according to the Prophets meaning, yet the words which he reciteth being drawne from the Greeke interpretation, haue occasioned many to erre from the true sense of the Prophet. For in regard that the Greeke translator had turned it *Logos*, that is to say, The word, many haue descanted vpon the Gospel, and thereupon haue affirmed, that the abolishing of the law is here signified, because the Gospel puts an end to the figures and ceremonies: and cōsequētlie, that it is a word abbreuiated & compendious, wherby we are discharged of ỹ yoke of the law vnder which the people sighed. But this comes nothing neere ỹ Prophets intention, for he calles *consumption* heere a decreasing, by meanes whereof the people shall be almost brought to ruin: and thereunto tend both senses, namely, that of S. *Paul*, and of the Greeke interpretation also. For by Word, they vnderstood that which the Hebrews expresse by the word *Dauar*. And although the Prophet hath not the word *Dauar*, yet notwithstanding that which he hath in the text signifies a thing determined, that is to say, *a Consumption*, and both of them haue one and the same meaning. To conclude, the Apostle repeates that in this place which *Isaiah* said now touching the future consumption of the people, and teacheth that this propheſie was chieflie accomplished in his time when as the Iewes for their vnthankfulnes were cut off from the kingdome of God, some small remnant only reserued. *Rom.* 9. 28.

Vers.

Verſ. 24. *Therefore the Lord God of hoſtes, ſaith; My people which dwelleſt in mount Zion, feare not Aſſur. Hee ſhall ſmite thee with the rod, and ſhall lift vp his ſtaffe vpon thee, after the *maner of Egypt.*

*Or, example

HEe goes on with the former conſolation, which onely appertained to the faithfull, who in very deed were then a ſmall number. For many gloried in the name of God, and would be taken for his people; but very few there were who ſhewed that by their practiſe, which they profeſſed in word. He ſpeakes not to all then indifferently; but to thoſe onely which ſtood in neede of conſolation. For ſeeing they were in danger to loſe all their hope, when they compared their condition with others, and that the kingdome alſo was deſtroyed: for this cauſe, I ſay, it was very expedient they ſhould bee comforted. And this diſtinction is to be noted: for otherwiſe it had been abſurd to haue directed ſpeeches ſo diuers, vnto perſons of one condition. He addes the reaſon of the conſolation; to wit, that this diſcomfiture ſhall bee nothing elſe but as the *liſting vp of the rod*, which ſhall be onely to chaſtiſe them, and not to deſtroy them.

The letter *Beth*, is a particle of ſimilitude. The word *Derec* ſignifies example. I expound it then, After the example of Egypt; as if hee ſhould ſay, Although the Aſſyrian be cruell, and by all meanes will ſeeke thy ruine; yet he ſhall not kill, but ſhall onely ſmite thee. Hee alledgeth the example of Egypt then, the bondage whereof was very hard; and yet not deadly. For in the midſt of perplexities and confuſions, the Prophets are wont to bring the people backe to the contemplation of this redemption, whereby God deliuered his choſen people miraculouſly from the hand of this cruell tyrant *Pharoah*. The ſenſe therefore is, euen as the Lord was the ſtrongeſt *then*, and deſtroyed the Egyptians, who practiſed your deſtruction: ſo will he *now* alſo eaſilie ouercome the Aſſyrians.

Exod. 1.14. & 12.31.

Exod. 14.24

Others expound it, *In the way of Egypt*, in regard the Aſſyrians made warre with the Iewes, becauſe of the Egyptians. But this expoſition cannot agree; and if wee looke narrowly into the text, we ſhall finde none more fit then that which I haue alleadged; as alſo it is approued of the beſt expoſitours. For there are heere two members one oppoſite againſt another; to wit, *the affliction* wherewith the *Egyptians* had vexed this people; and the calamitie wherein they ſhould be wrapped vnder the Aſſyrians. As the puniſhment which the Egyptians inflicted vpon them was not mortall, no more ſhould that of the Aſſyrians be. As if it had been ſaid in theſe or the like words; Thou knoweſt my force and power againſt *Pharoah*; ſo alſo ſhalt thou know it againſt *Senacherib*. Neither would the knitting together of theſe ſentences match well, vnleſſe we ſhould expound it thus.

Verſ. 25. *But yet a little while and mine indignation ſhall bee conſumed: and my wrath ſhall be kindled to deſtroy them.*

HEe meanes not onely the ſiege which *Senacherib* planted with a mightie armie before *Ieruſalem*, but the other diſcomfitures alſo whereby this citie was deſtroyed, the Temple raſed, and the people carried away captiues. For it was needfull that the faithfull ſhould be fortified againſt theſe greeuous aduerſaries with ſuch promiſes as theſe. Which wee are diligently to obſerue; becauſe if wee lightly paſſe this ouer, as other expoſitours doe, wee cannot fitly ioyne theſe things together. Thus the captiuitie of the people was as a conſumption; becauſe Babylon was as their ſepulchre, and their exile as a kind of death. When neceſſitie then appeared, and that *Senacherib* with his armie beganne to preſſe neere vpon them, ſo as they were in great diſtreſſe being thus beſieged, this very conſolation was exceeding neceſſarie. For it might ſeeme that Iudea was vtterly conſumed, and there was little or no hope of ſuccour left touching outward appearance: as if he ſhould ſay; Obſerue therefore this conſolation diligently; to wit, the Lord will ſpare thee: true it is hee will deferre it for *a little while*, and will hold his ſuccour hidden as it were from thine eyes; but in the end *hee will deliuer thee, and will be reuenged vpon thine enemies*, whom hee hath determined vtterly to conſume.

2. *King.* 18. 17. 2 *Kin.* 25. 4

If any will take the verbe *Calah*, To conſume: he ſaith, *he will conſume his wrath*, in the ſame ſenſe, as we are commonly wont to ſay, we conſume the yeares and our age: that is, I will giue way to mine indignation, till ſuch time as I haue vtterly *deſtroyed* the Aſſyrians. But the word, to accompliſh, is more proper; as if he ſhould ſay, Till I haue executed mine indignation. And this is the deſtruction wherewithall hee threatens the vncircumciſed elſewhere. For when the Lord hath taken away all hope of mercy, hee then executeth his iudgement againſt the vnfaithfull.

Verſ. 26. *And the Lord of hoſtes ſhall raiſe vp a ſcourge againſt him, as the plague of Madian, in the rocke of Oreb, and his ſtaffe vpon the ſea: and ſhall lift it vp *in the way of Egypt.*

*Or, after the manner of Egypt.

ISaiah vſeth heere the word *ſcourge*, and not rod: thereby ſignifying, that the Lord would handle the enemies much more roughly and ſeuerely then they handled the Iewes. For he threatens them with an vtter deſtruction: and declares the ſame more plainely by two examples: the firſt is of the *Madianites*, who were horribly deſtroyed in the valley of *Oreb*, which was thus nominated becauſe of their king: the ſecond is of the *Egyptians*, which were drowned by the Lord in the red ſea, when they purſued his peo-

ple. Iudg.7.22. Exod.14.21. Now in the first place he recites the historie which was a little freshest in memorie then the other: in the second, that which was most auncient. Whence we learne, that the Lord displayeth his power for the maintenance of his Church, to the end that in the middest of the greatest confusions in the world, we might remaine stedfast in faith, that being vpheld and stayed vpon his fauour, we might be of good cheere, and of good hope. For his custome hath bin to deliuer his Church by wonderfull and vnexpected meanes, as wee may see came to passe in the time of *Moses*, and *Gedeon*. Wee ought euermore thē to call these his benefits to mind, to the end we may so much the more couragiously learne to put our trust in God, and to perseuere constantlie.

1 God manifests his power in all times for the preseruation of his church, that in the middest of the greatest confusions our faith might remain vnshaken.

2 We may also gather from hence, that all the afflictions which compasse vs about, are the rods wherewith God beates vs; and yet in the meane while he suffreth neither Satan nor none of his instrumēts to hurt vs deadlie.

3 Contrariwise, an horrible destruction is prepared for our enemies, as wee see came to passe to the *Madianites* and *Egyptians*. This is then a singular consolation, that when wee shall compare our condition with theirs, we shall indeede see them merrie, and proudly insult ouer the children of God; but it is only for a time: for we shall by and by heare what an horrible sentence is pronounced against them, to wit, that they are ordained to a deadlie and an eternall destruction.

4

Vers. 27. *And at that day shall his burden be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck: and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.*

IT is vncertaine whether he heere speakes of the deliuerance which hapned vnder *Zorobabil*, or of that admirable discomfiture of *Senacherib*, whē he besieged Ierusalem with a mightie armie. All almost agree to this latter exposition: and in very deed, the drift and scope of the text approues it, for he will adde a description of the wayes and chiefest places whereby *Senacherib* should passe to come to Ierusalem: so as it should seeme nothing should hinder him from inioying the citie at his pleasure. I somewhat assent to this exposition; I only extend this prophesie further off: for *Isaiah* meant to comfort the faithfull who were pressed with the present calamitie: and the promise also might seeme vaine, seeing the calamities which should come vpon them afterwards were whollie contrarie vnto it. As for example, if the Lord should promise me prouision for the next yeere, and should yet leaue me destitute of it, what credit could I giue to the promise made vnto me; the accomplishment whereof I must wait for so long a time, if he deliuer me not from the present necessitie? Thus the promise of the Lord, who had said he would deliuer his people out of Babylon, and would perpetuallie assist them, might seeme as good as vanished, when the people should see themselues laid open to the throte of this rauenous wolfe. The Prophet then minding to preuent this difficultie, comprehends both the points before mentioned, to wit, that God will keepe his people, and in the end deliuer them from death. Others restraine this to the discomfiture of the host of *Senacherib*. But because *Isaiah* promiseth that the *yoke* shall be dissolued, or broken, I make no question but he speakes of the deliuerance from the captiuitie. In a word, he affirmes, that God will not only deliuer them out of Babylon, but will also giue them succor euen against the siege of this Tyrant *Senacherib*, whom he will not suffer to passe beyond that which is threatned.

2.Chron.36. 22, 23. Ezr.1. & 2. 2.Kin.19.35

1

2

His burden shall be taken from off thy shoulder.] He expresseth this tyrannie two waies, that he might the better amplifie the benefit of the redemption. If any will referre this to *Senacherib*, there was not as yet any such heauie *burthen* imposed vpon the shoulders of the Iewes vnder his tyranny. The people only payed him a certaine tribute, as we may discerne by the holy historie. Wherfore then hath hee expressed this tyrannie vnder two termes? It is very likely that he had respect vnto the present perill, in regard this proud tyrant had alreadie deuoured y whole countrie of Iudea (like a cruell beast as he was) by his insatiable couetousnes: and had so oppressed them, that it might seeme his *yoke* could neuer be remoued frō off their necks. But I haue alreadie giuen the exposition which seemes best vnto me, to wit, that the Prophet speakes here of the cōtinuall course of Gods grace, euen till the time of redemption.

2.King.18. 14.& 23.33. 2.Chro.36.3.

Some expound this which followes *of the face of anointing*, by the word Fatnesse, which noynts the yoke: but this exposition is too strict. Others are better aduised, who take the word *Schamen* in his accustomed signification, to wit, for oyntment, or oyle. For he brings them back vnto Christ, shewing, that by meanes of him it shall come to passe they shall be deliuered from vnder this tyranny. Now hee calleth *Anointing*, the kingdome which had bin consecrated by the Lord, and for this cause would he keepe it pure and entire. And when the Prophets will set forth the maiestie of this kingdome, they make mention of the anointing wherewith the Lord in speciall maner had adorned it, because it was a figure of Iesus Christ. For although God had established the rest of their neighbour kingdomes, yet were they prophane notwithstanding: but this was an holy kingdome in respect of others, because the Lord ruled after a speciall maner in Iudea; and vnder this figure of the kingdome, he represented Iesus Christ vnto them. For this cause also the promise was made to *Salomon*, that the throne of this kingdome should be perpetuall. 1.King.9.5.

Whereas some expound this word anointing, of the King himselfe; it is too much constrained, neither containes it any substantiall doctrine in it. Thus then the Prophet shewes them

them the meanes whereby this tyrannie ſhal be brought to nothing: for there was little or no hope left in outward appearance, that they ſhould thus eaſilie ſhake off the yoke of ſo mightie a tyrant. Now he telles them then that this ſhall come to paſſe by meanes of the *anointing* of this heauenly kingdome: to the end all might vnderſtand that this benefit did wholly depend vpon the vertue of Chriſt, and not vpon fortune, nor vpon the power of men.

Verſ. 28. *He is come to Aiath: he is paſſed into Migron: at Micmaſh ſhall he lay vp his armour.*

BEcauſe the holy Citie ſhould immediately be beſieged, the Prophet ſets al the furniture of *Senacherib* before their eyes, to the end that after the faithful had wel bethought them of euery particular formerly mentioned, they might reſt ſtedfaſt vpon God. And this deſcription had great efficacie to appeaſe their terrours, when they knew the Aſſyrians ſhold not remoue a foot but by ỹ wil of God, who by the mouth of his Prophet, had plainely chalked out all the way of the enemie. We need not ſtand much in expounding the ſituation of the places which are named here. It ſufficeth vs to know that hee paſſed by theſe places, whereof the Iewes are heere aduertiſed. Whereas we haue tranſlated, *he ſhall lay vp his armour*; others tranſlate, He hath numbred: for the verbe *Paqad*, ſignifies alſo to number. I reiect not this interpretation; but yet I willingly receiue the firſt rather, becauſe it ſeemes to mee the Prophet declares that the King of Aſſyria *ſhall lay vp his armour*: that is to ſay, his victuals and other warlike munitions in *Micmaſh*. We alſo know it is the manner of them that goe to warre, neuer to ſet forward without munition, which they lay vp in ſome ſafe and fit place, to the end the Campe may be prouided of thoſe things which are neceſſary for it. Now by the word *Armour*, or, *munition*, hee not onely meanes darts, and ſwords; but alſo all prouiſions and helpes of warre: for the ſignification of the Hebrew word ſtretcheth very farre, and comprehends all ſorts of inſtruments; as alſo vnder the word Veſſels, the Latins vnderſtand diuers things.

Verſ. 29. *They haue gone ouer the foord: they lodged at the lodging at Geba: Ramah is afraid: Gibeah of Saul is fled away.*

SOme thinke hee ſpeakes in this place of Iordan: but I know not whether one could wade ouer Iordan in that quarter or no. Howſoeuer it be, hee ſets forth what an aſtoniſhment there ſhould bee when newes ſhould come of the Aſſyrians arriuall; to wit, that all the Countrie ſhall be *ouerwhelmed with feare and terrour*; ſo as it ſhall fall into the hands of the Aſſyrians, euen as it were of it owne accord. For where ſo great a feare hath once inuaded the heart, there the vanquiſhed will eaſily yeelde themſelues euen at the firſt aſſault of the enemie: ſo as the conquerours ſhall rob and ſpoile at their pleaſure. Hee ſpeakes in the plurall number, as hauing changed the perſon; becauſe he mentioneth the King in one reſpect, and his hoſt in another. He names *Ramah* chiefly, becauſe it was the neereſt village: and deſcribes alſo the flight of ſome, who being amazed with the onely bruit, ſhould giue vp the Country into the enemies hands.

Verſ. 30. **Lift vp thy voyce O daughter Gallim; cauſe Laiſh to heare, O poore Anathoth.* *Or, neigh.

AFter hee had ſpoken of ſo great terrour, by the word *neigh*, hee alſo mentioneth the cries and ſhrikes which ſhould bee heard in other parts. It is a verie common thing among the Hebrewes to call Cities by the name of *daughters*. Now hee ſhewes that the cry ſhall be ſo great, that the neighbour Cities ſhall heare it. For the lamentation which ſhall be made in *Anathoth*, ſhall be heard of *Laiſh*.

Verſ. 31. *Madmenah is remoued: the inhabitants of Gebim haue gathered themſelues together.*

BY an exceſſiue manner of ſpeech hee meanes, that this Citie *Madmenah* was ſhaken in ſuch wiſe, as it ſeemed to remoue out of the place. Which is to be referred to the tumults of the people, that fled: as if hee ſhould ſay, The inhabitants of *Madmenah* ſhall make no leſſe noiſe, then if the Citie ſhould be turned vpſide downe. As touching that which followes; *the inhabitants of Gebim haue gathered themſelues together*; wee may expound it, that they ſhould gather themſelues vpon an heap with feare. Others vnderſtand it as if they ſhould preſſe one another, the way being too narrow for paſſage.

Verſ. 32. **Yet there is a time that he will ſtay at Nob: hee ſhall lift vp his hand toward the mount of the daughter Zion, the hill of Ieruſalem.* *Or, It ſhall be yet day, when hee ſhall come into Nob to ſtay there.

SOme expound that the Aſſyrian ſhall remaine yet one day in *Nob*, which was a litle citie neere to Ieruſalem, as S. *Ierome* and others witnes. But I rather agree to their opinion, who thinke that the enemie ſhould ariue there very early, that he might make his preparations to goe the next day to beſiege Ieruſalem: for his meaning is to ſhew the diligence of the Aſſyrian; and how neere Ieruſalem was to an vtter ruin: as if he ſhould ſay, The enemie ſhall haue no great way to goe, and ſhall ariue in Ieruſalem before the day be at an end. That which followes *of the liſting vp of the hand*, ſerues to augment the feare, becauſe *Senacherib* hauing alreadie

conquered all the countrie, will threaten Ierusalem, as if with his only looke he could take and sack it. By the word *Zion* he comprehends all the citie, taking a part for the whole, because this part was the highest, and ouerlooked all the quarters of the Citie. From the foolish ouerweening of this tyrant the Prophet shewes that the citie of Ierusalem was not farre off from an vtter downefall: for the whole countrie, yea the *Citie* it selfe was so astonished, that none durst oppose himselfe against the enemie. Thus the Prophet meant to amplifie the benefit of God by these circumstances, to wit, that it was to be attributed to the speciall fauor and good wil of God, and not to mans help, which auailed nothing that Ierusalem was deliuered, euen as if a man should haue pulled a sheepe out of the iawes of the wolfe.

Vers. 33. *Behold, the Lord God of hostes shal cut off the bough with feare, & they of high stature shall be cut off, and the hie shall be humbled.*

34. *And he shall cut away the thick places of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall haue a mightie fall.*

ALmost all the expositours doe expound this place of the Assyrians, for they think the Prophet threatens this destructiō wherewith the Lord will roote them out after they haue besieged Ierusalem; as if he should speak on this wise, The Assyrian shall be so swolne with pride, that he will thinke himselfe sure of Ierusalem as soone as he shall haue once looked vpon it: and also, that all shall be astonished at his comming, so as some shall flee away, others shall yeeld themselues voluntarilie; therefore he will by and by imagin himselfe Lord ouer all: but the Lord will sodainly ouerthrow all his deseignes, and will cut downe his high branches. Yet when we aduisedlie consider euery thing, and especiallie that which is by and by added of *Lebanon*, with the consolation that followeth, I am of opinion that this place ought to be referred to the Iewes themselues. So then *Isaiah*, as I thinke, continues still to threaten the calamities which should happen soone after to the people: as if he should say, the Assyrian shall not only come to Nob, but shall spoile the whole countrie; and therefore he shall waste and whollie roote out whatsoeuer is beautifull and good therein, euen as if one should cut off the boughs from the trees, or as if the tree it selfe should bee plucked vp by the roots.

The Chapter following confirmes this interpretation, wherein the Prophet giues consolation against this calamitie, and that consolation is ioyned to this verse, and is added as a fit remedie to asswage the bitternes of so great heauines. I do not greatlie allow of the diuision of the Chapter, which is often times cleane against the haire, and whollie confoundeth the sense of ỹ Prophet: I thinke then that that consolation ought to be ioyned to this verse, as if there were no diuision at all.

The beginning of the Chapter ensuing, depends still vpō the two last verses of this present Chapter.

Moreouer, this similitude is not easie to be expounded, for it sufficientlie appeares that by the *high and mightie trees* he meanes whatsoeuer is strong, excellent, and high; so as he foretels the ruine and destruction of Iudea, and compares it to the *cutting downe of a forest*, signifying that there shall be nothing so high and excellent in the countrie which the enemies shall not cast downe euen till they shall haue stripped the land of all her ornaments. He also makes mention of *Lebanon*, for wee know that it was a mountaine greatly renoumed in regard of faire & goodly trees which were in it: but if he had spoken of the Assyrians, there should haue been no reason in it for him to speake of the destruction of Lebanon. Whence we gather, that he heere threatens the Iewes againe, and that the preface of his Sermon agrees very well when it begins at this particle demonstratiue *Behold*, Vers. 33. Chap. 10.

Reade the former Section saue one, for the better vnderstanding of the verse following.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *But there shall come a rod forth of the stock of Ishai, and a grasse shall grow out of his rootes.*

BEcause the description of so horrible calamities might astonish the faithful, and might therewithall minister matter of despaire vnto them, it was very requisit to set some word of consolation before their eyes. For the beholding of the kingdome wasted, the cities ouerthrowne, and all parts of the countrie destroyed, could not but worke sighes and deepe gronings in them, so as they might very easily haue been shaken, and in the end vtterlie become desperate if the Lord had not preuented them by this consolation. The Prophet then shewes what the Lord will do in time to come, as also how he will restore the kingdome. Now he still continues the similitude which he had vsed in the former Chapter, for there he said that Iudea should be brought to nought, euen *as the fire consumes the forest*. The defotmitie of this countrie then should resemble a wast ground, where nothing can be discerned but ashes, after the trees haue been consumed with fire. But to the end there might be some resemblance betweene things opposite, he saith, that *a rod* *Vers. 33. 34.*

shall

ſhall come forth of a ſtocke, which yet ſhall become a tree, and ſhall ſpread his branches and fruits farre and neere. For this cauſe I haue choſen rather to tranſlate the word *Guetza*, A dry ſtocke; then roote: although the matter be not great whether of them both we vſe; and yet this word ſtocke, notwithſtanding doth better expreſſe the Prophets meaning: for hee ſignifies, that howſoeuer the ſtocke be dry, yet the graffe which ſhall come forth of it, ſhall bee more excellent then all the forreſts in the world.

Whence wee gather, that this prophecie cannot agree to any other perſon then to Chriſt; becauſe no ſuch graft was ſeene to come forth, before hee came into the world. Verily this can no way be applied vnto *Hezekias*, neither yet to *Iosias*, becauſe they were aduanced euen from their birth to be Kings at the length. As touching *Zorobabel*, he neuer came to the thouſand part of that dignitie which the Prophet extolleth in this place. Wee ſee then that the conſolation of the poore and deſolate Iewes, is heere ſet before them in one onely Meſſiah, and that their hope concerning the ſame, is deferred euen till his appearing. For when he was manifeſted, there was no hope left of any reſtoring, or reeſtabliſhing of the kingdome; neither in deed could they haue had any if this promiſe had not been added: becauſe it ſeemed that the houſe and linage of *Dauid* was vtterly extinct. For this cauſe he mentions not *Dauid*, but rather the familie of *Iſhai*; becauſe the dignitie of this family was ſo diminiſhed, that it ſeemed rather the houſe of a countrie Farmer, then the houſe of a King: for ſuch indeed was the houſe of *Iſhai*, when *Dauid* (little thinking thereon) was called to the gouernment of the Kingdome. Thus then after they had loſt their antient glory, and had receiued ſo great a diſcomfiture, hee calleth it the familie of *Iſhai*, becauſe it was the moſt inferiour of all others. And therefore I thinke that the conſolation rather beginnes heere, then at the end of the former Chapter. The Iewes might doubt in ſo horrible a deſtruction, who ſhould be their defender: *Iſaiah* promiſeth one vnto them, howſoeuer hee muſt come forth of a drie ſtocke.

1. *Sam.* 16. 11, 12. 2. *Sam.* 7. 11 & *Pſal.* 78. 70, 71.

He continues ſtill the former ſimilitude of the forreſt (as I haue ſaid) becauſe it hath greater elegancie then if he had ſimply ſaid, that Meſſiah ſhould come. For hauing ſhewed heretofore that the forreſt ſhould be vtterly conſumed, hee addes notwithſtanding, that a *rod* ſhall come forth, which ſhall reſtore the abundance and beautie of this burnt forreſt againe: and this rod is Ieſus Chriſt, who ſhould come to bee the protector and Sauiour of his people. Now it is not needfull to ſhew how abiect and baſe the beginnings of this kingdome was. Truely all that was to bee ſeene therein was ſo poore and weake, that to outward appearance all things (the originall of the blood royall excepted) ſeemed to be directly contrary to this which ſhould be accompliſhed in the perſon of the Redeemer. Yea ſo low were they brought, that this royall race was as good as vtterly extinguiſhed: for who would haue thought that a poore Carpenter had been begotten of the royall ſeede? Beſides, in what place, I pray you, was Chriſt borne, and what was his bringing vp? To conclude, after he had ſpent his whole life in contempt, and continually expoſed to ſhame and deriſion; was he not cruelly and ſhamefully put to death, by which hee was to begin his kingdome? Yet notwithſtanding all this, he grew into an infinite greatneſſe, euen as a great tree growes vp of a ſmall & little ſeede: as Chriſt alſo himſelfe teacheth vs, Matth. 13.31. whereof wee haue daily examples. For it muſt come to paſſe of neceſſitie, that the ſame ſhould befall his kingdome, which came to paſſe in his owne perſon.

Mark 6.3.

Mark 4.31.

Verſ. 2. *And the ſpirit of the Lord ſhall reſt vpon him: the ſpirit of wiſedome and vnderſtanding, the ſpirit of counſell and ſtrength, the ſpirit of knowledge, and of the feare of the Lord.*

NOw he begins to ſpeake of Chriſt plainely and without any figure. It had been ſufficient to haue propounded the conſolation vnder the former ſimilitude: and fitly did the oppoſition anſwere betweene the burning of the forreſt, and the new reſtoring of it againe. He therein deſcribed the twofold eſtate of the people: for hauing ſpoken of the calamitie, he by and by addes the hope of reſtauration: the beginning whereof notwithſtanding, muſt come forth of a little bud: but now hee manifeſtly ſhewes what this deliuerance ſhall bee, and what the condition both of Chriſt and his Kingdome ſhould be alſo.

Some thinke this ſhould rather be referred to *Ezekiah*, who was a figure of Chriſt: but how inconſiderately wee ſhewed heretofore. For when *Ezekias* was borne, the name and royall dignitie of the houſe of *Dauid* had yet vigor and ſtrength in his ſucceſſours: and beſides, hee was farre ſhort of this greatneſſe, whereof he will ſpeake by and by.

Moreouer, hence we gather, that the ſpirituall Kingdome of Chriſt was promiſed in times paſt to the antient people, inaſmuch as the vertue, power, and maieſtie thereof is heere eſtabliſhed in the gifts of the Holy ghoſt. Now albeit Chriſt had little neede of theſe gifts and graces: yet was it needfull for vs that he ſhould be thus inriched with them, becauſe hee tooke our fleſh vpon him; to the end hee might afterwards powre out againe all thoſe benefits vpon vs, whereof we ſhould otherwiſe haue been vtterly deſtitute. For out of his fulneſſe muſt we all draw grace vpon grace, euen as out of the fountaine; according to that in Iohn 1.16.

Iob. 3.32.

The Spirit of the Lord.] We muſt keepe that in mind, which I touched erewhile; to wit, that this is to be referred to the humane nature of Chriſt; becauſe it could not be that hee ſhould haue been inriched with the gifts and graces of the Father, but as in reſpect that he was made man. Beſides, as he deſcended

ded frō heauen for our sakes; so did he also receiue the gifts of the holy Ghost from heauen to adorne vs with them: and this is that anointing whereby he obtained this name of Christ, the which he communicates to vs. For whence comes it that wee are called Christians but by reason that hee receiues vs into his fellowship, and that he distributes to euerie one of his fulnesse, according to the measure of his free liberalitie? And in very deed, this place doth not so much teach vs what Christ is in himselfe, as rather what he receiued of the Father, that hee might fill vs with his abundance. Now albeit there is no great need that wee should stand long in opening the meaning of the words, yet not withstanding if any will haue a short difference betweene *wisedome* and *vnderstanding*, I am of opinion that the word *wisedome*, doth generally comprehend whatsoeuer belongs to the order and rule of life: and then that *vnderstanding* is added in stead of the exposition thereof. For if we haue the foresaid *wisedome*, wee shall haue vnderstanding enough. This word *counsell*, signifies as much as the word Iudgement; whereby wee are able to giue resolution in doubtfull things: for it were not sufficient to haue vnderstanding, vnlesse wee were therewithall endued with *counsell*, to guide vs safely in matters of importance. The word *strength*, is sufficiently knowne. As touching *knowledge*, or skill, it differs little from vnderstanding, vnlesse it should rather appertaine vnto *knowing*, and so it should declare the act. *The feare of the Lord*, signifies a sincere affection to serue and honour God. Now the Prophet reckons not vp all the graces of the holy Ghost heere, as many haue thought. For the Papists haue sottishly and vnlearnedly drawne their seuenformed grace from this place: and some of the antients haue been no lesse absurdly deceiued therein then they. *Esaiah* mentioneth but sixe, & they haue added the seuenth of their owne head. And as one errour lightly followes another, so they haue indeuoured to restraine the gifts and graces of the holy Ghost to be but seuen in number: and yet notwithstanding in other places wee see that there are as many epithites more attributed vnto him, according to the diuersitie of his effects. Moreouer, it is a thing sufficiently knowne, that wee our selues are made partakers of many other benefits by the meanes of Christ, then those which are heere recited; to wit, meekenesse, chastitie, sobrietie, truth, holinesse, and the like, which comes to vs from no other fountaine then from Christ himselfe. Hee recites not all the gifts heere then, which were conferred vpon the Lord Iesus, neither was it needfull so to doe: his meaning was onely to shew that Christ was sent vnto vs furnished and adorned with all graces fit to inrich vs with all.

Eph. 4. 7.

We are taught in this place, not so much what Christ is in himselfe, as what he hath receiued of his Father, that he might fill vs with his abundance.

1. Wisdome.

2 Vnderstanding.

3. Counsell.

4. Strength.

5 Knowledge.

6 The feare of the Lord.

Gal. 6. 1.

2. *Tim* 1. 7.

If these things had not been added, peraduenture wee might haue conceiued the restauration of this kingdome to be carnall rather then spiritual, as the Iewes doe: or might haue imagined Iesus Christ had been vnfurnished of all necessarie graces. And therefore hee shewes first generally, then particularly, that the gifts of the holy Ghost were powred into him, to the end we might boldly goe vnto him to aske those things we stand in need of. For he will inrich vs with *wisdome* and *vnderstanding*, he wil giue vs *counsell* when things are confused, he will make vs *strong* and valiant in combats, and will beautifie vs also with godlinesse; that is to say, with the true *feare of God*: in a word, hee will furnish vs with all things needful for our life and saluation. The Prophet then comprehends all gifts and graces heere, so as it is too foolishly done of them, who haue gone about to suppresse that which is not heere expressed.

These gifts of the holy Ghost, namely, wisdome, vnderstanding, counsell, strength, knowledge, and the feare of the Lord, are therefore powred into Christ, that wee standing in neede of all, or any one of them, might boldly beg the same at his hands.

Now hee shewes that all graces are in Christ, to the end they might be communicated vnto vs: for which cause we are called his companions in the 45. Psalme, verse 8. For as the strength of the members flowes from the head, so Christ powres out the vertue of his heauenly vnction vpon the whole body of his Church. Whence it followes, that those who are barren and dry, haue no communion at all with Christ; and therefore doe falsly challenge vnto them the name of Christians. As often therefore as wee feele in our selues the want of any of these gifts, let vs accuse our owne infidelitie as the cause of it; because true faith makes vs partakers of all Christs benefits. Let vs humbly intreat the Lord then, that he will not suffer the lusts of our flesh to raigne in vs, that so Christ may wholly vnite vs vnto himselfe. Let vs also obserue, that it is onely in Christ, in whom wee are to seeke all good things. For we greatly deceiue our selues, if wee thinke to obtaine any thing at the Fathers hand by any other meane.

Vers. 3. *And shall make him prudent in the feare of the Lord: for he shall not iudge after the sight of his eyes, neither reproue by the hearing of his eares.*

THe verbe *Riach*, which is put heere in the coniugation of *Hiphil*, signifies properly to smell. It may also bee expounded in the actiue signification, To giue a piercing smell: which I thinke agrees as fittest to this place; that this prudencie might also be placed amongst the gifts of the holy Ghost. And this effect also agrees particularly vnto the person of Christ; to wit, that he is wise and prudent to gouerne his owne beyond al that the capacitie of any of the faithfull is able to comprehend. First, we are to note the similitude of the verbe, To smell; which signifies that Christ shall so abound with iudgement and discretion, that he shall not neede to apprehend any thing either by sight or hearing, because hee shall be able by his onely smell, to discerne the most secret and hidden things.

The most part of the expositours take the particle, *In the feare of the Lord*, as if all the affections of the heart should bee discouered before Christ, so as hee should be able easilie to iudge who are the true seruants of God.

But

But let the readers conſider if the ſenſe would not agree better to ſay, that the feare of God is taken heere for a certaine rule of iudgement. For the Prophet doth of ſet purpoſe diſtinguiſh the heauenly iudgement of Chriſt, from the iudgement of men; to the end we might know that the outward appearance of holineſſe or integritie, is nothing at all approued before him. The ſenſe then is, that when we come before the tribunal of Chriſt, he will not onely examine things according to the outward actions, as men doe in ciuill policie: but the life is there examined and squared out, according to the rule of true pietie. Neither indeed is it fit for men to bee the ſearchers of the heart: and we ſhall often ſee, that there is onely a vaine appearance in thoſe whom we ſhall eſteeme honeſt men: but Chriſt iudgeth not by the outſide, becauſe he knoweth and ſoundeth the vttermoſt and hiddeneſt ſecrets of the heart. His *iudgement* then is far different frõ mans iudgement, who though they bee neuer ſo expert and wittie, doe yet too foolithly oft times ouerſhoot theſelues. Thence it followes, that none can be the true ſeruants of God, but thoſe whom Ieſus Chriſt approueth. Now they cannot bee approued of him, vnleſſe they ſhew a pure and vpright heart: for we cannot deceiue him by any falſe and vaine appearances.

Verſ. 4. *But with righteouſneſſe ſhall he iudge the poore, and with equitie ſhall he reproue for the meek of the earth: and he ſhall ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips ſhal he ſlay the wicked.*

To whom theſe graces formerly mentioned doe properly appertaine.

HEere he teacheth that Chriſt ſhall be the protectour of the *poore*: or rather hee ſhewes who they are to whom the grace of Chriſt properly appertaines; to wit, to the *poore* and *meeke*: that is, to thoſe who being humbled vnder the ſenſe of their owne miſerie, haue throwne to the ground this high and proud conceit of themſelues, wherewith men are vſually puffed vp, till being meekened by the word, they haue learned to humble themſelues. The Prophet heere proteſts then, that Chriſt will not be the defender and protectour of all in generall, but of thoſe who acknowledge themſelues *poore*, and deſtitute of all good things. And this Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe ſhewed to the Diſciples of *Iohn Baptiſt*, when he told them that the Goſpell was preached to the *poore*: Mat 11.5. For all are not indeede indifferently capable of this doctrine, but thoſe onely who being ſtripped of all ouerweening of the fleſh, haue their recourſe to this heauenly ſafeguard and protection.

All are not not capable of this doctrine.

There is heere then a cloſe oppoſition; to wit, that Chriſt gouernes not the rich: that is to ſay, thoſe who are blowne vp wiith a falſe opinion of themſelues: becauſe that howſoeuer he cals al men vnto him, yet notwithſtanding the moſt part refuſe to ſubiect themſelues vnder his gouernement; for they are the poore onely, which ſuffer themſelues to be guided by him. This text admoniſheth vs to ſtrippe our ſelues quite and cleane of all pride, and to put on the ſpirit of meekeneſſe and modeſtie, if wee deſire that Chriſt ſhould rule vs vnder his hand. Behold heere then the ſpirituall pouertie which the Prophet recommends to all the members of Chriſt, which is not to be ſwollen with an ouerweening, but truely to be humbled with the feeling of our pouertie and miſerie, to the end we may depend vpon Chriſt onely. Hauing once reſolued throughly vpon that, this King and faithfull protectour will take care of our ſaluation, and will defend vs euen to the very end againſt all our enemies: we alſo heere learne, who they be that he calles vnto him, Come to mee all you, ſaith he, that trauaile and are heauie laden: Matth. 11.28. Needfull it is then that we trauaile and be preſſed vnder the weight of our burthen, if wee will feele and haue experience of his ſuccour.

Wee haue alſo to obſerue the order which the Prophet keepes heere: for firſt hee placeth *pouertie*, and afterwards *meekneſſe* or gentleneſſe: becauſe we muſt be *poore* before wee can bee brought to be *meeke* and lowly. As long as we thinke our ſelues to be any thing, being puffed vp with a vaine confidence of our owne worth, our heart forthwith ouerfloweth into all pride and conceitedneſſe, ſo as wee cannot be humbled nor brought into any order: but when we once know our own miſerie, then we beginne to abaſe our ſelues, and being weake and oppreſſed, wee are forced to ſigh vnder the burthen. He heere deſcribes then ỹ condition of Chriſts people, as heeretofore hee had ſet forth the nature of their King: whence alſo we are to learne, that all doe not indifferently partake in theſe excellent gifts of the holy Ghoſt, wherewith Chriſt was adorned, as we haue ſeene heretofore, but the poore and humble onely.

We muſt be poore before we can be brought to meekeneſſe.

In the former verſes the Prophet did ſet forth the nature of Chriſt as he is the King of his Church: heere he deſcribes the qualities and condition of his ſubiects.

Now this word, *to iudge*, ſignifies gouernment, the principall part whereof is, that Chriſt makes vs partakers of thoſe gifts which hee hath receiued of his Father, to the end hee might liue in vs, and we in him.

And ſhall ſmite the earth.] In this place the Prophet extolles the efficacie of the word, which is the royall ſcepter of Chriſt. For the *rod of the mouth* is as much to ſay, as a verball ſcepter: and in the ſecond member, ſpeaking of the *breath* or ſpirit *of the lips*, hee repeates the ſelfeſame thing: as if he ſhould ſay, Chriſt ſhall not neede to borrow ſtrength from others to beate backe his enemies, and to ouerthrow whatſoeuer is contrary to his dignitie and Empire; for his onely *breath* or word ſhall be ſufficient thereunto. Now this may be a generall ſentence, ſeeing it is of neceſſitie that the faithfull doe firſt die, to the end they may bee renewed into a ſpirituall life. And in this ſenſe, the Goſpell is called the ſword of the Spirit, dedicated for the killing of the ſacrifices: but the latter part of the verſe requires another ſenſe. And yet notwithſtanding, if any bee minded to vſe a diſtinction heere, the *ſmiting of the earth* ſhall be referred

Rom. 15.16.

referred as well to the elect as to the reprobate, becauſe ỳ Goſpel is a two edged ſword, piercing into the inmoſt and darkeſt corners of the heart and diſcerning the thoughts and affections: but it wounds one of them after one maner, and the other ſort after an other. For in mortifying the vitious nature of the elect, it kils their luſts, that they may be a liuing & ſweet ſmelling ſacrifice before God: but it ſmiteth and killeth the reprobates outright, becauſe they rot in their perdition; yea, it is made vnto them the ſauour of death vnto death as the Apoſtle ſpeakes 2.Cor.2.16. And I could eaſily grant that he ſpeakes here of both effects in deed, were it not that the vſe of the Hebrew tongue doth contradict it, becauſe the Hebrues doe often repeate one and the ſame ſentence in diuers words.

Heb.4.12.

Now it followes by and by after, that Chriſt is armed with the *breath of the lips* to *ſlay* the wicked withal; vnleſſe ſome wil ſay that *Iſaiah* added this ſecond member for amplification ſake. And in very deed it is much more to *ſlay*, then to *ſmite* only. Seeing then it is the propertie of the Goſpel to humble all men generallie, it is a thing accidentall in the reprobate when he ſtrikes them with a deadlie wound. Thus the Prophet ſhould conioine the ſpeciall to the generall, thereby ſhewing that the wicked fall vpon the ſword of Chriſt vnto eternall deſtruction, becauſe they are not conſecrated to be acceptable offrings. How euer it be, vndoubtedlie this laſt member ought to be wholie reſtrained and referred to the wicked, and therefore it was added, in as much as this efficacie appeareth not at the firſt in the preaching of the Goſpell: and contrariwiſe many deſpiſe and ieſt at it, holding whatſoeuer Ieſus Chriſt hath ſaid in his word to be no better then a fable. But howſoeuer they feele not his power by and by, yet can they not eſcape it, but at the laſt they ſhall be ſmitten to death therewith. And yet it ſeemes the Prophets meaning ſhould not be ſufficientlie explaned, becauſe he not only ſpeakes heere of the inward feeling wherewithall the wicked are touched whether they will or no, but alſo euen of that impietie it ſelfe which ſhall be ſcattered and aboliſhed by the vertue and efficacie of this ſcepter, as the Apoſtle Saint *Paul* expoundeth it in the 2.Theſſ.2.3. who queſtionles had reſpect vnto this place when he ſpake of the ruine of Antichriſt, and in that place he opens vnto vs the meaning of the Prophet. He ſhewes then that Ieſus Chriſt ſhall neuer be without enemies, which ſhall indeuor to ouerthrow his kingdome, to aboliſh or ſtop the free paſſage of his Goſpell (otherwiſe the Prophet had laid this without cauſe) but Ieſus Chriſt ſhall *deſtroy* them by the ſound of his word, as well euery one of them in particular, as all of them in generall, with their head and Captaine alſo. Thus S. *Paul* ſets before vs a double vſe of this doctrine in an other place, requiring this of a Paſtor, that he be not only fit to *teach*, but alſo that he *conuince* the gainſayers, Tit.1.9. For the Paſtor ought not only to feede the flock, but alſo to keepe and maintaine it againſt all harmes.

The wicked may for a time take pleaſure in contemning the word of the Goſpel, but in the end the Goſpel ſhal ſmite them thorow vnto endleſſe perdition.

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Chriſt performes all theſe things, and therefore he is furniſhed with force of armes fit and neceſſarie to ſurmount the lies of Satan, the crueltie of tyrants, and all ſorts of enemies. It hereby appeares, that falſe doctrines can not otherwiſe be aboliſhed but by the Goſpel; for the Magiſtrate ſhall vſe the ſword in vaine (which yet muſt be vſed notwithſtanding) to repreſſe falſe teachers and falſe prophets: all this, I ſay, will ſerue to no purpoſe, vnleſſe the *ſword of Gods word* be firſt walking: which we ought diligentlie to obſerue againſt the Papiſts, who being deſtitute of the word of God, haue their refuge to new weapons, by meanes wherof they thinke to make their partie the ſtrongeſt. And which is worſe, they are ſo impudent to brag that heretikes can not be ouercome by the word, although both the Prophet, and the Apoſtle *Paul* alſo eſtabliſheth none other meanes but it.

Falſe doctrines can no otherwiſe be put to flight, but by the power of the Goſpel preached.

When the Prophet ſaith by the *ſpirit of the lips*, we muſt not reſtraine it to the perſon of Chriſt only. For this is to be referred to the word which is preached by the miniſters of it; becauſe Chriſt works ſo in them that his will in their *mouth* ſhould be reputed his mouth; and their *lips* as his owne lips: that is to ſay, when they ſpeake by his *mouth*, and preach his word faithfully. On the other ſide, the Prophet ſends vs not heere to ſecret reuelations, that Chriſt might reigne in vs: but he openlie extols the outward preaching of the word, and teacheth that the Goſpel preached and ſounded forth, is a royall ſcepter in the hand of Chriſt; otherwiſe he had vnfitlie made mention of the *mouth* and of the *lips*. Whence it followeth, that all thoſe which reiect the outward preaching of the Goſpel, do as much as in them is to ſhake off, or at the leaſt would pluck from Chriſt the ſcepter which he holds in his hand: not that the efficacie whereof the Prophet ſpeakes depends vpon the voice of men, but in regard that Chriſt himſelfe works by his miniſters, who will not haue their labour to become vaine or vnprofitable, but that they ſhould bring in the elect vnder his obedience, and kill the reprobates, as S. *Paul* glories in a certaine place, that he hath vengeance readie againſt all vnbeleeuers and rebels, 2.Cor.10.6.

Luk.10.16.

Heere we muſt againe remember what is the nature of the kingdome of Chriſt: for as he hath neither crowne vpon his head, nor yet materiall armor vpon his back, no more doth he rule in the world by force of armes, neither gets he himſelfe authoritie by ſhewes and great preparations; nor yet brings he his people to his obedience either by feare or conſtraint; but the doctrine of the Goſpel is his kinglie banner, vnder which he aſſembleth the faithfull to his ſeruice. Wherefore in what place ſoeuer the doctrine of the Goſpel is preached, there it is certain the Sonne of God reignes; but where it is reiected, there is his rule and dominion aboliſhed by the ſame meanes. Whence it appeares how ridiculous the bragging of the Papiſts is, when they ſay that the Church is amongſt them only, when as yet in the meane while they

The nature of Chriſtes kingdome.

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put Chriſt himſelfe to ſilence, and can not indure his voice: nay, doe they not on the contrarie diſgorge their edicts with full mouth, their lawes, decrees, and tyrannicall conſtitutions againſt it?

Verſ. 5. *And iuſtice ſhall be the girdle of his loines, and faithfulnes the girdle of his reines.*

OTher tranſlate girdle: but becauſe the Prophet ſets Chriſt before vs decked as it were with his royall ornaments, I haue rather tranſlated it ſword-girdle, or hangers: for this alſo is a kinglie ornament. as was the ſceptre which was giuen him heretofore. And *Iob* minding to ſhew that God will ſtrip kings of their honour, ſaith, that he will vnlooſe or vnbuckle their girdle. Iob.12.18. Wherefore to be *girt with a ſword-girdle* is nothing els but to be placed in royall dignitie, as we alſo ſhal ſee hereafter in another place, Chap.22.21. Now the Prophet heere deſcribes two ſorts of girdles, to wit, *iuſtice*, and *faithfulnes*: vnleſſe any had rather ſay that the word *faithfulnes* being a ſubſtantiue, ſhould be put in the place of an adiectiue, as if he ſhould ſay, that Chriſt ſhall be girt with *faithfull iuſtice*. For *faithfulnes* is not added here as a diuers thing from iuſtice; but to declare what this *iuſtice* is wherewith Chriſt is girded. Some thinke he ſpeakes here of that *iuſtice* which Chriſt communicateth vnto vs, ſo as it ſhould not only be in him, but in his members alſo. By faith or *veritie* they vnderſtand that faith whereby we imbrace the ſaluation which is offred vnto vs.

Verſ. 4.

Chap.14.5.

The Chalde Paraphraſt expoundeth it thus, The iuſt ſhall come about him, and the faithfull ſhal approch vnto him. But I take it more ſimplie, as if he ſhould ſay, He ſhall not appeare as kings clothed with purple, & crowned with a diademe, or girt with a ſword-girdle, but *iuſtice* and *faithfulnes* ſhall ſhine in him. I confeſſe that iuſtice is not ſo incloſed in Ieſus Chriſt that it alſo appertaines not to all his members: yet notwithſtanding wee muſt obſerue this maner of ſpeech, that Chriſt *Girded with righteouſnes*, comes forth to gouerne his members by it, the which alſo he forthwith powres out vpon them by a ſecret power of the holy ghoſt. If we diſtinguiſh the word faith from iuſtice, me thinks it ſhould be put for faithfulnes or ſtedfaſtnes; as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, that Chriſt will neuer deceiue thoſe that are his, becauſe he will alwaies continue like himſelfe.

Verſ. 6. *The woolfe alſo ſhall dwell with the lambe, and the leopard ſhall lie with the kid, and the calfe and the lion, and the fat beaſt together, and a little child ſhall lead them.*

7. *And the cow and beare ſhall feede, their young ones ſhall lie together: and the lion ſhall eate ſtraw like the bullocke.*

HEe againe deſcribeth the qualities and conditions of thoſe which ſhall be ſubdued vnto Chriſt. For becauſe there is a mutuall correſpondency betweene the King and the ſubiects, he ſometimes aſcends from the body to the head, and by and by from the head to the members: and we haue alreadie ſaid, that Chriſt raignes not for himſelfe, but for his faithfull ones: whence it followes, that hee frames our vnderſtandings to his will, by the operation of his holy Spirit. Yet notwithſtanding the Prophet aimes at a further thing: for it is as if he ſhould promiſe an happie reeſtabliſhment to the world, deſcribing as it were the order which was at the beginning, before that woful and ſorrowful change happened by the reuolt of man, vnder the which we are conſtrained to ſigh at this day. Whence comes it that the brute beaſts are ſo cruell, that ſuch as haue any ſtrength giue themſelues to ſnatch, rent, and deuoure with violence? Certainely there ſhould haue bin no diſcord betweene God and the creatures, if they had continued ſtedfaſt in their firſt and pure originall. When they riſe vp then one againſt another, and that the weakeſt haue neede of defence againſt the ſtrongeſt, is it not a teſtimonie of that confuſion which is iſſued from the ſinne of man? Now ſeeing Chriſt is come to the end, that hauing aboliſhed the curſe, he might reconcile the world vnto God; it is not without cauſe that the reeſtabliſhment of a perfect eſtate is attributed to him: as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, that the golden world ſhould returne, during which time all felicitie ſhould flouriſh: that is to ſay, before the fall of man, and the change and ruine which followed thereupon.

Verſe 2.

God by *Hoſea* ſpeaketh thus; I will make a couenant for them with the beaſts of the field, with the birds of the ayre, and with the creeping things: Hoſe.2.18. as if hee ſhould ſay, After that God ſhall become mercifull to the world for Chriſts ſake, he will therewithall ſhew the ſignes of his good fauour vnto it: to the end that whatſoeuer corruptions did proceed from the ſinne of man, might come to an end. To conclude, the Prophets vnder theſe figures, teach the very ſame which S. *Paul* affirmes plainely; to wit, that Chriſt came to gather the things which were ſcattered both in heauen and in earth: Epheſ. 1. 10. The ſumme of all then is, that Chriſt ſhall come to chaſe all hurtfull things out of the world, and to reſtore it to the firſt beautie in which it was before it was accurſed.

Col. 1.20.

And therefore he ſaith, that the *lion ſhall feede as the bullocke*: for if the contagion of ſinne had not infected the world, wee ſhould not haue ſeene any beaſt giuen to blood nor to the pray, but the fruits of the earth would haue ſufficed all things; which kind of foode indeed was preſcribed vnto them by the Lord. In the meane while, although *Iſaiah* ſaith, that the wild and the *tame beaſts* ſhould liue quietly together, to the end the bleſſing of God ſhould appeare & ſhine euery where; yet notwithſtanding he aimes chiefly at that which I haue ſaid, to wit, that no hurtfull affection ſhould be diſcerned amongſt the people of Chriſt, neither yet any crueltie or inhumanitie whatſoeuer. And whereas before

Had not the contagion of ſinne infected the world, we ſhould haue ſeene no beaſt giuen to deuouring, or bloodſucking, but the fruits of the earth would haue ſufficed all liuing creatures.

they had beene as *lions* and *leopards*, they ſhould now become like *lambs* and *ſheepe*; becauſe they ſhall haue put off all cruell and brutiſh affection. For by theſe kindes of ſpeech, he meant nothing elſe but to ſay, that thoſe which in times paſt had been like *outragious and cruell beaſts, ſhould become gentle and traictable*. And therefore he compares violent men and robbers, to *wolues* and *beares*, which liue of the pray and ſpoile: and pronounceth that they ſhould become tame and meeke, ſo as contenting themſelues with a common and ordinarie diet, they will carefully auoid the doing of wrong or hurt vnto any.

Now here we muſt argue from the leſſe to the greater; to wit, if Chriſt doe appeaſe and ſet the brute beaſts at vnitie together, much more will hee nouriſh brotherly concord betweene men, whom hee will gouerne by the ſpirit of meekenceſſe. And yet it is not the Prophets meaning that any are thus gentle and peaceable of their own nature, before they be reformed by grace; but he promiſeth, ỹ how peruerſe ſoeuer their nature ſhall be, yet they ſhall forſake their crueltie, and ſhall become as meeke as ſheepe or *lambs*.

Whereas hee addes, that *a little childe ſhall leade them*: it ſignifies, that thoſe beaſts which were otherwiſe cruell and vntamed, ſhall readily yeeld cheerfull ſeruice, ſo as there ſhal be no need to vſe any violence to repreſſe their crueltie. In the meane while, we muſt keep in minde the ſimilitude which we haue touched; to wit, that thoſe ſhall obey Chriſt, which ſhall be giuen vnto him, although they were outragious beaſts before; and ſhall obey in ſuch wiſe, that they ſhall by and by follow him, and that at his leaſt becke: as it is alſo ſaid in the 110. Pſalme, verſe 3. Thy people ſhal come willingly. Neither ought they to be placed in the ranke of ſheepe, which are not indued with this meekeneſſe. Let vs ſuffer him then to maſter and rule vs, and let vs willingly ſubmit our ſelues to thoſe to whom he hath giuen vs in charge, although they be like *little children*. Thus it ſeemes that the Miniſters of the word ſhould heere be compared to little children, becauſe they haue no externall power; neither doe they ſhew themſelues to haue any ciuill authoritie.

Obiect. But it may be demanded, whether there be not ſome who are meeke and gentle, who yet haue not been tamed by the doctrine of the Goſpell. For it ſeemes indeed that the Prophet ſhould ſay ſo, when hee compares ſome to *ſheepe*, and others to *beares* and *lions*.

Anſ. I confeſſe we ſhall finde a meruailous diuerſitie in men, who yet are led by the very inſtinct of their own nature: ſome are meeke and peaceable, others turbulent and inhumane; but yet it is certaine that all are ſauage and outragious, till Chriſt haue tamed them by the Goſpell. All are puffed vp with ambition & pride, before they bee purged with this medicine. True it is that many may well counterfet a falſe appearance of modeſtie and humilitie, but in the meane while they burſt with pride inwardly. To bee ſhort, where the Spirit of Chriſt dwelles not, there let vs not looke to finde any true humilitie.

No true humilitie to be found, where the Spirit of Chriſt dwels not.

Verſ. 8. *And the ſucking child ſhall play vpon the hole of the aſpe: and the weaned child ſhall put his hand vpon the cockatrice hole.*

HE continues his former ſpeech; to wit, that when men ſhall be receiued againe into fauour with God, and that they ſhall be purged from their vices by the ſpirit of regeneration, they ſhall then alſo bee freed from their hurtfull nature. For men ſhould not neede to feare the biting of venemous ſerpents, but in regard ỹ they are vnworthy that God ſhould ſubiect the parts of the whole world vnder their authoritie. And in that the *ſerpents* haue this libertie to hurt *little children*, truely it thence appeares, that all the poſteritie of *Adam* is infected with ſinne from the conception in the wombe. Now we are to obſerue this ſimilitude whereof wee haue ſpoken; to wit, that thoſe who are filled with an hidden venome to hurt, ſhall in ſuch wiſe change their naturall inclination, that they *ſhall not hurt* ſo much as *little children*.

The libertie of doing harme which one creature hath ouer an other, argues that the whole poſteritie of Adam is infected with ſinne, euen from the conception.

Some are openly fierce and cruell; others carry and nouriſh their malice in ſecret, as a ſerpent doth his poiſon; as *Dauid* alſo deſcribes it, Pſal. 55.22. For ſome are more readie to manifeſt their malice; others more ſlow. In a word, whatſoeuer they be, he ſignifies that all muſt bee purged from their malice, as well open as ſecret, after they ſhall be once ſubiected vnder Chriſt. He alſo ſignifies, that hence forward there ſhall be a generall ſecuritie euerie where, ſo as thoſe who are deſtitute of all helpe, ſhall liue in ſafetie, in ſuch wiſe as they ſhall aduenture to expoſe themſelues euen to the moſt perillous dangers.

Verſ. 9. *Then ſhall none hurt nor deſtroy in all the mountaine of mine holineſſe: for the earth ſhall bee full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters that couer the ſea.*

NOw he plainely ſhewes, that euen *men* themſelues hauing ſubdued their naturall peruerſitie, ſhall bee inclined to equitie. He ſpeakes then of the faithfull, who are truely regenerated into newneſſe of life. For although there are many hypocrits full of iniquitie, mingled in the Church with the elect of God; yet notwithſtanding they are like to to the Iſhmaelites, whom God will driue out thence when his time is. To this purpoſe we are to note that which is ſaid in Pſal. 15,2. & 24.4. that none but the louers of iuſtice ſhall haue any ſetled or ſure reſt in the Temple of God, to dwell there perpetually. This then appertaines to the lawfull citizens of the Church to bee pure and exempt from all deſire to doe hurt. Whence we gather alſo, that it is a ſingular gift of the holy Ghoſt, when men abſtaine from violent courſes; becauſe ambition, pride, crueltie, and couetouſneſſe, will ordinarily puſh them forward to wrong

their

their neighbours euery kinde of way, and therefore the Prophet addes to very good purpoſe that this ineſtimable gift *flowes from the knowledge of God.* Thus then it behoues that all fleſh be humbled, and that mẽ learne to put themſelues into the protection and ſafegard of God, and to maintaine brotherly kindnes betweene thẽſelues when they know that he is the father of them all. For although many which are not yet renued by the ſpirit of Chriſt may haue ſome appearance of humanitie, yet is it very certaine that they are caried away therein with the loue of themſelues, becauſe all haue this naturallie ſo rooted in them, that they will alwaies ſeeke their owne profit rather then the profit of an other, and therefore thinke they are put in this world only to ſerue their owne turne and not their neighbours: yea, they would haue all the world at their commaund if it were poſſible, which *Plato* alſo wiſely conſidered.

There may be ſome appearance of humanitie euen in the vnregenerate: which yet ſpringe onely from ſelfeloue.

Plato.

From hence proceed deceits, periuries, theftes, robberies, & an infinit other ſuch like wickednesſes. There is no fit remedie then to tame this vnbridled luſt but the knowledge of God only. Now we ſee how the Prophet doth againe eſtabliſh the dominion of Chriſt in the faith and doctrine of the Goſpel, it being the meanes (indeed) without which he doth not ordinarilie gather vs to himſelfe: for thereby he illuminates our vnderſtandings to manifeſt vnto vs the heauenly life, which is nothing elſe (as himſelfe witneſſeth) but to know him to be the only true God, and him whom he hath ſent, Ieſus Chriſt, Iohn 17.3.

Moreouer, the *abundance of knowledge* is here eloſely compared to that ſmall taſte which God gaue to the ancient people vnder the law. And albeit the Iewes were kept vnder ſuch childiſh rudiments, yet vnto vs hath the perfect light of the heauenlie wiſdome ſhined by the meanes of the Goſpel, as *Ieremiah* alſo foretold, They ſhall not euery one teach his neighbour, nor euery one his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord, for they ſhall all know me, ſaith the Lord, from the leaſt vnto the greateſt, Ier. 31.34. If ſo be ŷ this fulnes of knowledge then haue taken poſſeſſion in our vnderſtandings, it will purge and cleanſe them frõ all maliciouſnes. This place alſo informes vs what maner of Church there is in the Papacie, where the light of holy doctrine being ſmothered, yea almoſt cleane extinct, their whole religion is, to be blindfolded in a bruttiſh ignorance.

Though we attaine not vnto a perfect knowledge the firſt day: yet we muſt endeuour to profit more and more continually.

Now if it ſo fall out that we haue not a perfect knowledge at the firſt daſh, yet we muſt endeuor day by day to profit more and more, 2. Pet. 3.18. and that in ſuch wiſe, that the fruit thereof may iſſue from this roote. Whence it appeares that the greater part haue profited but very meanly in the ſchoole of Chriſt, when ſo many coſenages, extortions, and violences haue their full ſwinge on all ſides.

Verſ. 10. *And in that day the roote of Iſhai which ſhall ſtand vp for a ſigne vnto the people, the nations ſhall ſeeke vnto it, and his reſt ſhall be glorious.*

HE returnes againe to ŷ perſon of Chriſt, and repeates the ſame ſimilitude which he tooke vp heretofore in the beginning of this Chapter, to wit, of the *roote*, or ſprig iſſuing out of the drie ſtock, which had no appearance of any ſap in it. He ſaith then it ſhal come to paſſe that the *Gentiles*, who in times paſt had the Iewes in abomination, ſhall yet come and *doe homage to the King of the Iewes.* Now this might ſeeme a thing altogether incredible: and no doubt but this promiſe was a long time derided, becauſe ſuch a change ſhould rather haue been expected when the kingdome ſtood & floriſhed in his full ſtrẽgth then after it was deſtroyed. But needfull it was it ſhould be brought thus low, to the end it might afterwards be exalted; and that the glorie and power of God might hereby be better knowne, then if all things had been in their floriſhing eſtate. For what is he that with the eyes of fleſh could haue apprehended ſuch a height, from a little ſprig that it ſhould be diſcerned of all people, and ſhould draw the eyes of euery one vnto it? He compares it to a ſtandard lifted vp on high: and we know that this was accompliſhed in the publication of the Goſpel, yea much more excellentlie then if Chriſt had ſoared aboue ŷ cloudes. Hereunto appertaines that which is ſaid in S. *Iohn*, As *Moſes* lift vp the Serpent in the wilderneſſe, ſo muſt the ſonne of man be lift vp, Iohn. 3.14. *Luk.* 2.31.32 *Numb.* 21.9

Chriſt is then *ſought* when wee run vnto him to obteine ſaluation, as in many places of the ſcripture, where the ſeeking of God, is as much to ſay as to put our whole hope and confidence in him. And therfore the Greekes haue tranſlated, They haue hoped, reſpecting the ſenſe, rather then the ſignification of the word.

As touching that which immediatlie followes, that *his reſt ſhall be glorious*, all the expoſitors almoſt do expound it of the Sepulcher of Chriſt, taking a part for the whole, becauſe they by and by after referre it vnto his death. And to ſay the truth, the buriall of Chriſt was but an appendance of his death. The ſenſe then according to their opinion ſhould be, that the death of Chriſt which was ignominious before the world, ſhall be full of glorie and maieſtie. But when I conſider all circumſtances more narrowly, the Prophet in this place by this word *reſt*, ſignifies the Church: as alſo it is ſaid in the Pſalmes, This is my reſt for euer, here will I dwell, Pſal. 132. 14. And thus he decketh the companie of the faithfull with an honorable title, becauſe in them he will haue his perpetuall manſion. Seeing then that the Church at that time was expoſed to mocks and reproches, he promiſeth that it ſhall be brought to a better and more happie eſtate, and ſhall yet againe recouer her firſt beautie. Here then we haue an excellent teſtimonie, which giues vs to vnderſtand, that God will dwell for euer in his Church, although this ſhall not alwaies appeare ſo vnto men.

Verſ. 11. *And in the ſame day ſhall the Lord ſtretch forth his hand againe the ſecond time, to poſſeſſe the remnant of his people (which ſhall be left) of Aſſur and of Egypt, and* *Pathros, *and Ethiopia, and of Elam, and of Shinar, and of Hamath, and of the Iles of the ſea.*

*Or, parthe.

BEcauſe the propheſie touching the future glorie of the Church was incredible, hee now declares by what meanes it ſhall bee brought to paſſe; to wit, that God will *manifeſt the ſtrength of his hand* to performe as it were a famous and memorable act. Moreouer, to confirme the elect people in good hope, hee brings to their remembrance the deliuerance paſt, to the end they might not doubt that God ſhould not bee as well able to deliuer them now, as hee was to deliuer their fathers, who had experience thereof in former time in Egypt. For this word *againe*, aimes at that, and it is all one as if hee had ſaid, Now alſo will God be the Redeemer of his Church. This hee confirmes by another reaſon; to wit, although it ſeemed that God ſhould deſpiſe his people; yet will hee not be depriued of his *inheritance*. The ſumme is, that God will take care of the ſaluation of his Church, to the end hee may not be bereaued of his right.

Exod. 12. 31.

Notwithſtanding hee ſpeakes expreſly of the *remnant*, becauſe this deriuerance ſhould appertaine but to a little handfull of ſeede. Laſtly, hee repeates that which hee had ſaid heretofore; Howſoeuer God ſeparates and ſcatters his Church, yet can it not be that he ſhould wholly reiect it; becauſe it is no leſſe pretious vnto him, then our *heritage* is deare vnto euerie one of vs. Now he ſpeakes not of the *Aſſyrians*, which had led the people into captiuitie, but alſo of *other nations* amongſt whom the Iewes were ſcattered. For after the greater part of the people were carried into Babylon, ſome fled into *Ethiopia*, others into other regions; becauſe they feared leſt they ſhould be led into the ſame bondage with others. As touching *Parthe*, in the text it is *Pathros*: ſome thinke it ſhould be *Parthe*; and this is probable, although others ſay that it is Arabia the Stony. Vnder the word *Elam*, he comprehends the Medes, Zocdians, Bactrians, and other Eaſterne people. *Shinar*, or Ethiopia, is comprehended in Chaldea. By *Hamath*, ſome vnderſtand Cilicia, and other neighbour regions about Mount Taurus. Vnder this word of the *Iles*, the Iewes vnderſtand all the regions which are beyond the ſea. For according to their opinion, Greece, Italie, and Spaine are Iles; becauſe the ſea is betweene them and others. We ſee then that the Prophet ſpeakes not onely heere of the deliuerance which was vnder Zorobabel, bu the aimes at a further marke: for the Iewes were not then carried into Egypt, neither into Ethiopia, nor yet into any other regions. This cannot be vnderſtood then of the deliuerance out of Babylon, but ought to be referred to the kingdome of Chriſt, vnder which this deliuerance hath been, and is accompliſhed by the preaching of the Goſpell. Moreouer, we muſt obſerue, that this which is heere mentioned, is a ſpeciall worke of God, and not of men; becauſe hee ſaith, that the *Lord ſhall ſtretch out his hand*; heerein attributing that to the diuine power of the Lord, which men cannot accompliſh by all their ſtrength.

We are alſo to note, that from the conſideration of the benefits which the Lord hath done for vs in times paſt; wee ought to be the better confirmed in hope for the time to come: ſo as when we call to minde the deliuerance out of *Egypt* and out of *Babylon*, wee may boldly conclude, that the Lord is as mightie now as he was then; and that he will no leſſe aſſiſt vs at this day, euen in ſetting vp the Church againe in her primitiue beautie and glory. He can performe the ſame thing the third, the fourth, yea many times, which hee hath done once or twice. Whereas the Prophet calles thoſe whom God deliuers a *remnant*, let vs learne not to affect a great multitude, but let vs content our ſelues with our ſmall number, and not bee abaſhed although we be but a few. For if ſo be the truth and righteouſnes of God floriſh amongſt vs, we ſhall haue true and ample occaſion giuen vs to reſt therein ſecurely.

Former deliuerances ſhould incourage vs to hope for the like in time to come.

2. *Cor.* 1. 10.

Multitudes not to be affected, vnleſſe truth and righteouſneſſe doe alſo flouriſh.

Verſ. 12. *He ſhall ſet vp a ſigne to the nations, and aſſemble the diſperſed of Iſrael, and gather the ſcattered of Iudah from the foure corners of the world.*

THis verſe containes nothing in it but the explication of the former. Now this maner of ſpeech is taken from a ſimilitude, the ſenſe whereof notwithſtanding may be double; to wit, either that the Lord in *making the ſigne*, will amaze the enemies in ſuch wiſe, as they ſhall not dare to ſtop the paſſages againſt the people which ſhall returne; or rather that hee will *ſet vp a ſigne* to the poore baniſhed, to the end they ſhould make no difficultie to take their iournie home againe. Beſides, the vſe of this doctrine hath its force amongſt vs euen at this day: for looke how the ſtandard is lifted vp in the Campe, to aſſemble euerie one to his colours, and to hold himſelfe in battel aray; ſo alſo is the ſtandard now ſet vp before vs, to the end all of vs ſhould gather our ſelues together thereunto; that is to ſay, The Goſpell which the Lord hath *liſted vp* amongſt the Gentiles, and in the which Ieſus Chriſt is preached vnto vs. From hence let vs obſerue, that we cannot be gathered vnto the Lord, vnleſſe wee come vnder this *enſigne*, and bee vnited vnto him by faith. For he will not acknowledge vs for any of his ſheep, if we be not gathered in from our ſcattering, and that all of vs doe aſſemble our ſelues vnder this banner: as himſelfe alſo ſaith, My ſheepe heare my voyce, and they follow me: Iohn 10. 27. There is a repetition in the word *To gather*: for he ſhewes how effectuall the calling of God ſhall bee, becauſe

becauſe he will ſet his people in their former eſtate, euen as ſoone as he ſhall be pleaſed to make but a ſigne onely.

The word *ſcattering*, is collectiue, and vnder it he comprehends the Iewes ſcattered here and there. It ſeemes alſo that he alludes (as hee often doth in other places) to one ſelfeſame text of *Moſes*, where the Lord promiſeth to gather together his people, when they ſhall be ſcattered to the vtmoſt parts of the world, yea euen into the *foure corners of the earth*: Deut. 30.4. Now this was fulfilled vnder the leading and gouernment of Chriſt: at this day therefore ought wee to hope, that by the meanes of this good Captaine, the poore and deſolate Church ſhall bee reſtored. For otherwiſe there is little hope that this ſmall remnant ſhall bee gathered together, vnleſſe the elect doe bend their eyes toward this enſigne. We ought often therefore to call theſe promiſes to minde, to the end wee being vnderpropped by them, may bee more and more eſtabliſhed and confirmed.

Verſ. 13. *The hatred alſo of Ephraim ſhall depart, and the aduerſaries of Iudah ſhall be cut off: Ephraim ſhall not enuie Iudah, neither ſhall Iudah vexe Ephraim.*

1 HEere hee promiſeth that there ſhall bee
2 ſuch great tranquillitie in the Church,
3 that the Iſraelites and the Iewes ſhall not waſte themſelues any more by ciuill diſſenſions, neither yet bee moleſted in any ſort by their enemies: alſo, that they ſhall not bee ſubiect to *hatred* nor *enuie*, as they were before. Not as if there ſhould no wicked ones at all be found ſtill among them; but that the Lord will roote them out at the laſt. Yet we are eſpecially to obſerue that which he addes touching the *pacifications of ciuill hatreds and diſſenſions*; to wit, that the children of *Abraham* ſhall no more moleſt one another, but ſhall be at vnitie in one religion, and in the true feare of God. For it was an odious and deteſtable ſpectacle to ſee them ſo long time ſworne enemies one to another. It is not for nought that he ſhewes the fountaine of diſſenſions; to wit, *enuie*, which was the cauſe why the ſucceſſours of *Abraham* did rent one another, when the Tribes of *Iudah* and *Ephraim* ſtroue amongſt themſelues for the excellencie. This curſed fire brand *enuie*, hath kindled all the warres in the world, when as no man will humble himſelfe, nor part with the leaſt iot of his right. In a word, the Lord promiſeth heere, both an outward and an inward peace, which is an excellent and deſireable benefit aboue all things.

Enuie the fountaine of diſſenſions.

But ſome will ſay, that this was neuer yet accompliſhed, and that we haue rather ſeene the contrarie come to paſſe. For as ſoone as the Goſpell beganne to be publiſhed, diuers wars, tumults, and horrible perſecutions followed thereupon; all the world almoſt was in an vprore and ſhaken: and ſince I pray you, what peace hath the Church had within it? Satan by ſowing of his cockle and curſed ſeede, hath ſtirred vp horrible troubles euen amongſt Chriſtians themſelues; ſo as the Church hath had none more dangerous nor deadly enemies, then thoſe that haue been nouriſhed and maintained in her owne lappe.

Obiect.

Anſ. 1 I anſwere, that the Prophet heere comprehends the whole Kingdome of Ieſus Chriſt, and not one age or generation. For 2 in this life wee doe but onely taſte the firſt fruits as it were of this Kingdome. Moreouer, 3 although the Church be vexed with enemies, as well ſtrangers as domeſticall, yet euen in the midſt of them, God ceaſeth not to preſerue and maintaine it: and thus in the end 4 ouerturnes all his enemies. Alſo, this prophecie properly appertaines to the true and lawfull children of *Abraham*, whom the Lord daily purgeth by afflictions and baniſhments; cauſing them by this meanes to forget all ambition and enuie: for we ſhall not vſually find deſire of vaine glorie amongſt them, who haue been meekened and inſtructed in the ſchoole of Chriſt. Thus then, that which *Iſaiah* heere promiſeth, hath alreadie beene fulfilled in ſome part, and is accompliſhed euery day. But we muſt goe on ſtill in theſe exerciſes, and haue fightings daily, as well within as without, vntill wee obtaine that eternall peace which wee ſhall inioy hereafter, with all felicitie in the Kingdome of God.

Verſ. 14. *But they ſhall flee vpon the ſhoulders of the Philiſtims toward the weſt: they ſhall ſpoile them of the Eaſt together: Edom and Moab ſhall be the ſtretching out of their hands, and the children of Ammon in their obedience.*

HIs meaning is, that the Lord will alſo aſſiſt his people by another means; to wit, that he will triumph ouer his enemies, & ſubdue them vnder his power. For as he hath hitherto ſpoken of the ſafetie of the Church; ſo now alſo he declares, that ſhee ſhall obtaine victorie ouer her enemies. Now hee makes mention of the nations againſt whom the Iewes had continuall warres: the *Philiſtims* 1 aſſailed and moleſted them on the one ſide, on the other ſide they had the *Ammonites* and 2 *Moabites*, by whom they were conioyned both by conſanguinitie and neighbour hood. And 3 on the other ſide were the *Idumæans*, who were not withheld by any neereneſſe of kin- *Gen.* 36.1. red whatſoeuer, from being the ſworne ene- 8.9. mies of the Iewes; they came of *Eſau* the brother of *Iacob*, the remembrance whereof ought to haue turned them from all hatred and rancour. And therefore the Lord promiſeth to his Church, that although ſhe ſhould haue enemies, that yet notwithſtanding by ſuffering vnder them, ſhee ſhall conquer and bring them vnder in the end.

The Church ouercomes by ſuffering.

The ſtretching forth of the hands, ſignifies the domination which the Church ſhall obtaine ouer her enemies: for ordinarily the *hand*,

signifies power, and the Hebrues vse the phrase, To stretch out the hand, to subdue this or that. So as it is said in the Psalme, I will set his *hand* in the sea, and his *right hand* in the floods, Psal.89.26. To stretch out the hand then signifies power to rule and gouerne; and contrariwise he also addes the *obedience* which the enemies shall yeeld vnto her.

The Iewes who dreame of an earthlie kingdome and Messiah, interpret all these things carnallie, and draw them to I wot not what outward power, whereas they should rather be esteemed according to the state and condition of Christes kingdome. True it is that the effect of this propheſie was seene to be fulfilled in some part, when the Lord brought back the Iewes from captiuitie, at which time he raised them vp into a good estate in despite of all their neigbour enemies: but the faithfull were to expect a more excellent victorie, which in the end they obteined by the preaching of the Gospel. For albeit we must fight continuallie vnder the crosse, yet we ouercome our enemies notwithstanding: 1 first, when being deliuered from vnder the tyrannie of the diuell & vnbeleeuers, we are called and maintained in freedome by Iesus Christ, that the flesh with all his lusts may be 2 brought vnder: secondly, when by meanes Luk.21.19. hereof we liue to him, and possesse our soules in patience, quietly with a meeke spirit bearing whatsoeuer befalles vs. We also heape Rom.12.20. coles of fire vpon the heads of our enemies, and by this meanes likewise we obteine victorie ouer them and ouer all their iniuries and reproches, vnder which it seemes we are subiect.

Vers. 15. *The Lord also shall vtterlie destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and with his mightie wind shall lift vp his hand ouer the riuer, and shall smite him in his seauen streames, and cause men to walke therein with shooes.*

HE meanes nothing else in this verse but to shew that the Lord by his admirable power will open a way vnto his people which seemed to be shut vp before. Now he speakes by a figure, for one side of the sea is called *a tongue*, because when the sea enters vpō both lands, and occupies one part, it seemes like a tongue thrust out. He speakes of the *Egyptian sea* then, yea of *Egypt* it selfe, which he yet more plainly declares hereafter. But he principallie names the *sea* and the *riuers*, because these be fortresses of the regions and the closings in of all passages.

Vpon the riuer.] No doubt but he meanes the riuer *Nilus*, which watereth and compasseth all Egypt in many places, by meanes whereof they might haue shut vp the passage before the people returning into Iudea. I doubt not but the word *Ruach* is here taken for wind, although these words *of the Lord* be ioyned therewith: for all the *winds are the Lords*, seeing he gouernes and guides them as it pleaseth him, and especiallie a *vehement whirlwind* raised vp miraculouslie is so taken when this word is vsed.

Now he alludes to the first deliuerance of the Church whē it was brought out of Egypt. For whē it pleased God to giue them passage, he dried vp the sea by the violence and *force of the winds*, Exod. 14.21. I grant that God needed not the help of winds, because he was able to haue done it of himselfe: but when he vseth ordinarie meanes, first from thence 1 wee learne that all creatures are readie to yeeld obedience vnto him. And howsoeuer they haue their naturall course, yet are they all in his hands, so as he will turne their force and violence which way soeuer it shall please him. For example, when the *wind* ariseth, it takes his beginning of a naturall cause: all the winds also haue their seuerall proprieties: the south wind is moyst, the north wind cold, and the effects which proceed from them are altogether alike: for the south wind makes the bodies moist, and the north wind dries them. The Lord shewes by admirable miracles that he hath a superior power, and an ouerruling hand farre aboue these naturall causes, so as nature (that is to say, the disposition of things, as prophane men haue imagined) ouerrules not, but he only. Secondly he shewes, that when he thinks good 2 he changeth the nature and order of things, to the end he may be acknowledged the author of them, because such a change doth the better set forth his power and domination. This is the cause why *Isaiah* speakes not of the wind alone, but of the *wind of the Lord*, to the end we might know that the wind is not raised vp by chance, but is directed by the hand of the Lord.

What we haue to learne from Gods working by ordinary meanes.

And he shall smite him in his seuen streames.] Others translate floods, and expound it thus, He will diuide Nilus into seuen parts. Now although this exposition be receiued of all, yet I approue not of it; and as I take it, they haue failed here by forgetfulnes rather then by ignorance, for I hold them learned men notwithstanding, and such as are well exercised in reading the ancient writers. It is well enough knowne by histories, that Nilus hath seuen principall mouthes; others were called false mouthes, because they had no name. Look then how many armes or mouths it had, so many streames and riuers it made as it seemes; and his riuers would haue been so many lets and impediments to slacken the voyage. Now *Isaiah* did purposely name the, because of the great fame of this flood. Moreouer, although this flood was deepe, yet notwithstanding he saith, it shall be so dried vp, that one shall not neede *to pull off his shoes* to passe ouer it: which yet they must needs haue done if there had been neuer so little water remaining.

The Prophet then vnder these borowed speeches meanes nothing else but to certifie them, that no power whatsoeuer shall be able to let God, when it pleaseth him to deliuer his people out of captiuitie. He touched the historie of the first deliuerance, to the end they might know that the same should now befall them which had hapned to their fa-

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thers in times paſt. This is the cauſe why he doth thus paint it forth before their eyes, becauſe the meanes of this deliuerance ſhould not appeare. For this promiſe ſo barely publiſhed, would not haue entred into their hearts ſo effectually as this notable example did, which was thus propounded and ſet before them.

Verſ. 16. *And there ſhall be a path to the remnant of his people, which are left of Aſſur; like as it was vnto Iſrael in the day that hee came vp out of the land of Egypt.*

THis verſe containes no new matter, but opens that further which went before; to wit, that the people ſhall feele the verie ſame powerfull hand of God in their deliuerance out of Babylon, as they had formerly proued in their deliuerance out of Egypt. He opened a way thorow the ſeas, alſo thorow a waſte deſert: and laſtly, thorow the midſt of Iordan: euen thus will hee make way againe, *Iſaiah* ſaith, for his people by the ſame admirable meanes. Now what the Lord hath once done, let vs expect the ſame againe for the time to come; and let vs to this end conſider the antient hiſtories. This alſo ought to bee referred to the laſt deliuerance of the Church, when wee altogether ſhall be fully deliuered out of all miſeries and calamities: ſo as howſoeuer the things which are taught vs concerning the reſurrection and eternall life, ſeemes incredible vnto vs, and that the meanes thereof appeares not vnto vs as yet; let vs know notwithſtanding, that it ſhall be eaſie with God to finde both the way and meanes. Exod. 14. 29. Ioſh. 3. 16.

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THE XII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *And thou ſhalt ſay in that day; O Lord, I will praiſe thee: though thou waſt angry with me, thy wrath is turned away, and thou *comfortedſt me.*

*Or, thou wilt comfort.

IAiah now exhorts all the faithfull to render thankes to God: although the exhortation hath alſo this drift; to wit, that they ſhould giue the greater credit vnto Gods promiſe. For hee hath ſealed it vp as it were vnto them by this exhortation; to the end they ſhould aſſure themſelues that it is vnmoueable. As alſo that they ſhould not imagine that the Prophet meant to feede them vp with a vaine hope, when hee put this forme of thankſgiuing as it were into their mouthes: which thankes, they could not haue giuen, vnleſſe the occaſion thereof had been both ſure and ſtedfaſt. In this *ſong* alſo hee ſhewes why it is that God doth good to his Church; to wit, that the memorie of his bleſſed name might be magnified; not that he needes any of our praiſes, but becauſe this is profitable vnto our ſelues. For we ought diligently to conſider, what honour he doth vs when he vouchſafes to ſerue himſelfe of our indeuours, in the magnifying and publiſhing his glorious name; wee notwithſtanding being ſuch vnprofitable, yea altogether vnprofitable ſeruants. The Prophet in this ſong addreſſeth himſelfe in generall to all the people, euen as if hee ſpake to *one man*: for it was requiſite they ſhould be ioyned together, as if they had been but one. According to this example, our coniunction ought to be ſo ſtrait, that there ſhould bee but one ſoule and one mouth: Rom. 15. 6. eſpecially if wee meane that our prayers and thankſgiuings ſhould bee acceptable before God.

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This is noted from the word Thou, in the text.

Though thou waſt angry.] The ſumme of this ſong is, that howſoeuer God was iuſtly *prouoked to anger* againſt this people, yet notwithſtanding ſatisfying himſelfe with one little ſtroke of the rod, he will eaſilie be appeaſed. Now becauſe the particle *Ci*, is often put for ſhewing of the cauſe, ſome tranſlate; O Lord I will praiſe thee: for being angry againſt me, thou wert by and by appeaſed. But becauſe it is ſometime taken otherwiſe, I haue followed that which I thought to agree beſt to this place. The faithfull then doe firſt acknowledge their fault: ſecondly, they attribute their deliuerance out of their miſeries, vnto the mercy of God. Now becauſe the verbs are put in the future tence, one may alſo expound, The chaſtiſement wherewith thou ſmiteſt me for a time, ſhall be no impediment that thou ſhouldeſt not pitie mee at the laſt, and giue mee matter of ioy and conſolation. Whether of the expoſitions ſoeuer we receiue, this ſentence ought to be diligently obſerued: for as ſoone as our hearts are touched with the feeling of Gods wrath, wee are ſollicited vnto deſpaire; ſo as if the danger be not ſpeedily preuented, wee ſhall be ouerwhelmed before we are aware. Satan alſo tempts vs euery kind of way, and aſſaieth all meanes whereby hee may put vs out of heart. So much the more neede haue wee then to bee well armed with this doctrine; that howſoeuer *we feele the wrath* of God, yet we may reſolue with our ſelues, that *it ſhall not indure long*: but that hee will ſend vs ſome *conſolation* after he hath chaſtened vs. The ſumme of this ſong.

But if we haue deliuerance, then let vs remember that the afflictions are ended: not becauſe we haue ſatisfied the iuſtice of God, as if we had merited it at his hands; but becauſe he beares with our weakeneſſe, euen of his fatherly louing kindneſſe. This confeſſion Afflictions no ſatisfactions of Gods iuſtice.

therefore appertaines properly vnto the faithfull and elect: for although the afflictions of the faithfull & the wicked are alike in appearance, yet is there great difference betweene them. For the wrath of God against the reprobate is perpetuall: and the plagues which they receiue are the tastes and beginnings of their eternall destruction: neither haue they any promise of refreshing or *comfort* But the faithfull feele by experience, that the *wrath of God* endures not long, and doe therefore cheere vp their hearts with good hope and assurance; because they know that God *will be mercifull vnto them in the end*: which hope certifies them, that hee chastiseth them not so much for their sinnes, as rather to bring them to repentance, that they should not perish with the world.

Great difference betweene the afflictions of the godly and the wicked, though they seeme alike in outward appearance.

1. Cor. 11. 31.

Vers. 2. *Behold God is my saluation; I will trust and will not feare: for the Lord God is my strength and song, he* *is *also become my saluation.*

*Or, shall be.

ALthough wee ought to apprehend the helpe of God in the midst of afflictions by faith, yet *Isaiah* speakes heere of that knowledge which is grounded vpon experience: for he endites a song of reioycing, when God by outward testimonies gaue them to vnderstand, that he was pacified towards his Church. Heereunto appertaines the particle *behold*, because the bright and shining light of Gods countenance, which had for a time bin hidden from them, did now shine againe vpon them; and that so apparently, that it might almost be pointed out with the finger. Now inasmuch as wee are terrified in afflictions, so as it cannot be auoided, but ý the conscience of sinnes will ouershadow our vnderstandings; no otherwise then as if the helpe of God were farre from vs, or did nothing at all appertaine vnto vs; the Prophet doth heere describe what a change there is in the affections, when God hath once reconciled vs vnto himselfe. But this prophecie extends it selfe principally vnto the comming of Christ, in which time God caused his *saluation* to appeare after a more speciall manner.

This prophetical song extends it selfe principally to the comming of Christ.

He addes afterwards, that when wee are once well resolued that *our saluation dependeth vpon God*, that the same is a stedfast foundation of *full assurance*, and a singular remedie to appease *feares*. For without this wee must needes tremble, be still in vnquietnesse and perplexities, and miserably tossed to and fro. Hence wee gather, that confidence proceedes from faith, as the effect from the cause. For by faith we feele that our saluation is in God: from thence followes a quiet and peaceable estate in the conscience: but where faith is not, there the conscience cannot be in quiet. Let vs know then that we haue well profited in faith, when we are furnished with this confidence which the Prophet heere describes.

Confidence proceedes from faith, as the effect from the cause.

We haue well profited in faith, when we are furnished with this confidence.

Moreouer, this confidence ought so to beare rule in our hearts, that it ought to put all *feare* and horror *vnto* flight: not that wee can be vtterly exempt from all feare and disquietnesse, but because assurance will beare away the victorie at the last. Yet notwithstanding wee must remember what I haue said; namely, that the Prophet heere sets forth the *cheerefulnesse* which the faithfull *inioy*, when God is *fauourable* vnto them; whereas in former times they were almost ouerwhelmed vnder the weight of temptation.

Confidence ought so to beare sway in our hearts as to put all feares to flight.

For the Lord is my strength.] He more cleerely and in a more especiall manner expresseth, that the faithfull shall haue good occasion to sing, because they shall know by experience, that *their strength* was in *their God*: for the truth is, that their deliuerance was an excellent proofe of the *power of God*. But seeing *Isaiah* recounts not heere the benefit of one day onely, but extolles the worke which God determined in himselfe, to continue vntill the comming of Christ; it thereupon followes, that the praises of God are not sounded forth as is meete, vnlesse it be by them who feeling their *weaknesse*, doe onely seeke vnto God, that hee would furnish them with *strength* and power. For it is not said heere, that hee should be a part, or the stay of our strength, but that hee is our full and perfect *strength*. The reason is, because wee haue no more strength and power, then that wee receiue from him. And in this regard also the faithfull say, that he is *their song*; because they are thus liberally dealt withall by him, to the end they should exercise themselues in thanksgiuings. Whence we gather, that the beginning of ioy proceedes from the fauour of God, and that the end of that ioy is the sacrifice of praise. Truely the hearts of the faithfull ought to bee so disposed to patience, that they should not cease to praise God euen when they see tokens of his frowning countenance: yet in the time of peace and prosperitie, they haue much more cause to open their mouthes, to the end they may sing forth ý benefits of God with a loud voice.

Who they be that are fit to praise God.

Psal. 50. 23.

We ought to praise God euen then when we see manifest tokens of his wrath, much more when wee perceiue signes of his fauor.

But because the wicked reioyce euen whilest they despise God, and besot themselues like brute beasts with a false ioy, rocking their consciences asleepe therein, neuer awaking themselues to praise God, iustly doth our Sauiour Christ curse their ioy; Woe bee to you, saith hee, that now *laugh*, for you shall weepe: your ioy shall be turned into heauinesse, and your laughter into gnashing of teeth. In the end of the verse, if any be pleased to retaine the preterperfect tence of the verbe, the sense will be, that the faithfull sing ioyfully, because God *hath saued them*. The sense will also agree very well in the future tence; to wit, that God hath not deliuered his chosen once onely, but that *hee will* also continue the same vnto the very end: for the faithfull ought not to stay themselues in the beholding of the present benefit alone, but to stretch forth their hope to the continuall progresse of Gods fauour.

Luke 6. 25.

Vers. 3. *Therefore with ioy shall yee draw waters out of the wels of* *saluation.*

*Or, out of the Sauiour.

BY this verse he confirmes that which we haue touched before, to wit, that this

Chapter

This ſong is a ſeale to confirme the promiſe made touching the peoples deliuerance.

Chapter is as it were a ſeale to confirme the promiſe made touching the deliuerance of the people; as if he ſhould ſay, The ſaluation of the Lord is ſet before you as a liuing fountaine, out of which you may draw *waters* in abundance. This ſimilitude is very fit, for as there is nothing more neceſſarie for this preſent life then *water*, ſo nothing troubles and diſquiets vs more nor goes ſo neere vs as the want thereof doth. Thus by a figure called Synecdoche (when a part is taken for the whole) he ſhewes that whatſoeuer is neceſſarie for the ſuſtentation of life is giuen vs freely out of the meere bountie of God. And becauſe we are barren & emptie of all good things, it is no maruell that he compares the
1 mercie of God to a *fountaine* which ſatisfies
2 them that are thirſtie; refreſheth thoſe that
3 are parched with heate; and recreates thoſe that are wearie and laden.

Of the ſauiour.] This word *ſauiour* agrees much better heere then if he had ſaid, out of the fountaines of God. For wee haue farre greater cauſe of conſolation when we know him himſelfe is the author of our ſaluation. The Prophet therefore hath appropriated this epithite according to the circumſtance of the place. Now if this promiſe comprehends vnder it the whole kingdome of Chriſt, wee for our parts ought alwayes to applie the ſame vnto our vſe. Let vs know then that the goodnes of God is heere offred and ſet before vs, to the end we might ſatisfie our ſelus to the full therewith. For we ought (as *Dauid* ſaith) to be as the parched ground, gaping for thirſt, Pſal.143.6. and to aſpire vnto theſe *waters of the ſauiour*. Now this goodnes of God is wonderfull and incredible, when he permits not that our deſire ſhould be in vaine, but freely offers and preſents a *fountaine* vnto vs, out of the which we may draw *waters* in abundance. Moreouer, Ieſus Chriſt is this

Ieſus Chriſt the true fountaine.

fountaine, and in him we haue the participation of all Gods benefits; for as S. *Iohn* ſaith, we draw all out of his fulneſſe, Iohn 1.16. It remaineth then that wee goe directlie vnto him as ſoone as our pouertie and want preſſeth vs.

Verſ. 4. *And yee ſhall ſay in that day, praiſe the Lord, call vpon his name, declare his works among the people, make mention of them, for his name is exalted.*

HE not only exhorts them one by one to praiſe God, and to giue him thanks, but would alſo that they ſhould *ſtirre vp others with them to doe the like*: And as he had ſayd before, many people ſhall goe and ſhall ſay, Come, and let vs goe vp to the mountaine of the Lord, prouoking one another by mutuall exhortations to imbrace the pure worſhip of God: ſo after he hath commanded euery one of them to render thanks to God, he would now alſo that they ſhould incite one another to the ſame dutie. He ſhewes then that this ought not to be ſaid only to one, but to all; and not only in one time, but for their whole life. Now in a briefe ſumme he ſhewes how God is rightlie honored when he commands vs *to call vpon him*, and to *reioyce* in none but in him only. For this cauſe alſo the holy ſcripture by the word *Inuocation*, comprehends often times vnder it the whole ſeruice of God, vſing therein a part for the whole: for by prayer wee ſhew the truſt that wee haue in God; and this indeede he requires of vs aboue all things. I alſo thinke that *prayer* is ioined with *praiſe*, that the Prophet might comprehend the whole ſeruice of God.

Chap.2.3.

Make mention &c.] His meaning is that this deliuerance ſhall be ſo excellent a work, that it ought not to be hidden from any corner, but publiſhed thorowout the whole world. I grant that he would haue the Iewes to acknowledge this in the firſt place, but after he cauſed all people to haue the knowledge of it. And this exhortation whereby the Iewes ſhewed their good will, was as a preamble to the preaching of the Goſpell which was afterwards publiſhed. For as the Iewes magnified the fauor which God had ſhewed them amongſt the Medes and Perſians and other nations neere about them; ſo alſo after Chriſt once appeared, they ought to haue been heraults to publiſh the name of God thorowout all the quarters of the world. Hereby it appeares with what zeale all the faithfull ought to be moued, namely, that they cauſe the goodnes of God to be manifeſted vnto all, to the end the ſeruice of God may be imbraced. Now we ought then eſpeciallie to be moued with ſuch an affection when we haue been deliuered from ſome great danger, as out of the iawes of the diuell, and from vnder the tyrannie of eternall death.

Verſ. 5. *Sing vnto the Lord, for he hath done excellent things: this is knowne in all the world.*

HE goes on ſtil with his exhortation, ſhewing vs from what affection this prayſe ought to proceed; for he teacheth that it is our dutie to publiſh the goodnes of God in all places: and yet muſt we not exhort nor prouoke others to go forward, and our ſelues in the meane time to ſtand ſtill with our armes acroſſe, but we ought to leade them the way by our example: for there is nothing more abſurd then to ſee them ſlothfull and neghgent, which prouoke others to prayſe God. Now in ſaying that God hath *done excellent things*, he thereby ſignifies that there is great cauſe *to ſing*. Neither in deed would the Lord haue them to ſing forth his praiſes vpon no ground; but he gaue them ample and very good cauſe thereof when he deliuered his people out of that extreme hard bondage. Now we haue alreadie ſaid that we muſt not reſtraine this ſong to one moment of time, but that it ought to be extended euen vnto the whole kingdome of Chriſt. This worke therefore is *excellent* indeed when God ſent his Sonne, by whom he hath reconciled vs vnto himſelfe, and hath deſtroyed the dominion of death and of the diuell. If wee then conſider wel of this worke of our deliuerance as we ought, we ſhall haue exceeding abun-

Ioh.3.16.17. Heb.2.14.

dant

dant matter giuen vs to praise God. When he saith in the last member, *that this is knowne in all the world*; hee therein toucheth the calling of the Gentiles, and confirmes that which hath been alreadie said; to wit, that this worke shall be such as it ought not to be concealed in some one corner; but to be published thorowout the whole world.

*Or, reioyce and sing.

Vers. 6. **Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion: for great is the holy one of Israel in the midst of thee.*

HEagaine exhorts the faithfull to reioyce in God, and therewithall shewes what is the true reioycing, and whereupon it is grounded. For we can haue no felicitie, but when *God dwelles in the midst of vs*: without this, our life is poore and miserable, although wee had the abundance of all other benefits and riches whatsoeuer. So then if our hearts bee ioyned to this treasure, this felicitie will draw all our senses easily vnto it. He calles God *holy*, to the end we might know that he will make himselfe felt of vs when he dwelles with vs: that is to say, wee shall not onely reuerence his Maiestie, wherewith wee are by and by ouerwhelmed; but that we shall be also fully assured that hee hath a fatherly care ouer vs, albeit wee be separate from the rest of the whole world. For he calles him *the holy one* by the effect; because by gathering vs vnder his wings, and sauing vs by his grace, he *sanctifies* vs as a thing *consecrated* for his owne vse. And therefore if God be with vs, the feeling of his gratious presence will fill our hearts with ioy vnspeakeable. By *reioycing* and *singing*, he signifies, that when God displayeth his power in the *midst of vs*, wee haue occasion to reioyce greatly. Also, speaking directly *to the inhabitants of Zion*, he shewes that *all* are not capable of so great a benefit: and hee therewithall closely exhorts vs to perseuere in the vnitie of faith, that being knit vnto the Church, we may reioyce with this happie and blessed ioy.

No felicitie but where God dwels.

From the first Chapter hitherto, the Prophet hath denounced iudgement against the two Kingdomes of Iudah and Israel: from the beginning of the Chapter following, to the 24. the Prophet foretelles what horrible calamities should befall the enemies of the Church. And thus God iudgeth his owne house first, as Peter speakes, 1. Pet. 4. 17.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *The burden of Babel, which Isaiah the sonne of Amoz did see.*

Seuen reasons shewing the cause why God caused the ruine of the Churches enemies to be foretold.

FRom this Chapter vnto the 24. the Prophet foretelles the grieuous and horrible calamities which should befall the Nations and Countries then knowne to the Iewes; either because they were neighbours vnto them, or else in regard that they had traffique or leagues with them.

1 And this he doth vpon good reasons: for when diuers changes happened, some thought that God did sport himselfe as it were, and tooke pleasure to bring base things to confusion: others thought that all things were guided by a blind violence of fortune; of which profane histories giue sufficient testimonie: and verie few there were who could be resolued that these casuall mishappes were ordained and gouerned by the counsell of God. For no one thing is so hardly beaten into mens heads as this, namely, that the world is gouerned by the prouidence of God. Many indeed will confesse this with their mouth, but the number of them is verie small which haue it truely engrauen in their hearts. We neede but one little puffe of wind to trouble vs, and behold we are vndone: then fall wee to searching the causes of it, as if this depended vpon the will of men. What will we doe then, when all the world is in an vproare, and that all things are so changed in diuers places, that it seemes they must needes shiuer into peeces? Well, we see then it is very profitable that *Isaiah* and the rest of the Prophets should speake of such calamities, to the end that all might vnderstand, that they come not to passe but by the secret and wonderfull counsell of God.

2 For if they had prefixed no prophecie touching this matter, things being thus suddenly confused, it might easilie haue troubled and appalled the hearts of the faithfull. But when they knew long time before that this should come to passe, they had therein a mirrour wherein to behold Gods prouidence touching the things that happened.

3 After that Babylon was taken, vse and experience taught them, that those things which they had learned in times past from the mouth of the Prophets, had not been foretold at random nor in vaine. Notwithstanding, there was an other cause why the Lord commanded that the *ruine of Babylon* and other places with it was foretold: not that the Babylonians had any profit at all by these prophecies, neither yet the other Nations, as though these writings came to them.

4 Another cause then was this, God meant by this consolation to asswage the sorow of the faithfull, lest they shold grow out of hert, as if their estate had bin worse then that of ỹ heathen,

then, if they ſhould haue ſeene them eſcape the hand of God altogether without punithment. For if ſo be the monarchie of Babylon ſhould haue continued ſafe, the Iewes would not only haue thought they had ſerued the Lord in vaine, and that the couenant which he had contracted with *Abraham* had been to no purpoſe, ſeeing ſtrangers and wicked men were better dealt withall then the elect people of God: but they might alſo haue entred into a worſe ſuſpition, to wit, that God had fauored theſe curſed theeues, who trod all iuſtice and equitie vnder their feet by their robberies and ſeditions; truely they might by and by haue thought either ỳ God
1 had had no care of his people, or elſe that he
2 wanted power to ſuccor them in their need;
3 or that all things were turned vpſide downe by the confuſed mouing of fortune. To the end then they ſhould not be too much appalled, nor become vtterlie deſperate, the Prophet preuents this by the conſolation of this propheſie, ſhewing therein that *Babylon* alſo ſhall be puniſhed.

6 Moreouer this compariſon did admoniſh them how grieuous the chaſtiſement ſhould be, which they of ſet purpoſe had pulled down vpon their owne heads: for if God threaten the vnbeleeuers and prophane nations ſo ſharplie, who yet haue erred in darknes, how much more ſeuere ought his anger to be againſt his people, who had wittinglie rebelled againſt him? Iuſt it is that the ſeruant which knew his maſters will and did it not, ſhould be beaten with more heauie ſtripes. When God then denounceth ſuch rough puniſhments againſt poore blind wretches, he therein did ſet a looking-glaſſe before the Iewes (who had been trained vp in the law) what chaſtiſement they had deſerued.

Luk. 12.47.

7 And yet the chiefe marke that *Iſaiah* aimes at in theſe propheſies, is to ſhew the Iewes how deare and pretious their ſaluation was in Gods eyes, when they ſaw that he tooke their cauſe into his owne hand, and executed vengeance vpon the wrongs which had been done them.

When God corrects, he alwais begins with his owne.

Now in the beginning the Prophet ſpake of the deſtruction and waſting of the kingdomes of Iuda and Iſrael (as we haue ſeene) which was to come, becauſe iudgement muſt firſt begin at the houſe of God, 1. Pet. 4. 17. for the Lord hath a ſpeciall care of his owne, and chiefly regards them. Wherefore euen as often as we reade theſe propheſies, let vs learne to applie them to our vſe. True it is that the Lord doth not by piecemeale foretell all things which come to paſſe at this day in kingdomes and amongſt nations, and yet notwithſtanding hath he not reſigned vp the adminiſtration of the world, which himſelfe keepeth in his owne hand, to another. When we then ſee the ruin of cities, the calamities which befall nations, and the change of kingdomes, let the things aforeſaid come vnto our minds, to the end we may humble our ſelues vnder Gods ſcourges, and learne to be wiſe by other mens coſts, and crie vnto the Lord for comfort in our afflictions.

Verſ. 1. *The burden.*] As touching this word *in gen.* which we ſhall meete ſo often withall, I will brieflie ſhew how we are to vnderſtand it. When the Prophets meane to denounce any aduerſitie, they vſuallie vſe this word *burden*, that the people might know how no aduerſitie ſhould happen which the Lord himſelfe ſhould not lay vpon them, euen as a burden or fardle is laid vpon mens ſhoulders. Now in regard that the wickednes and inflexiblenes of the people conſtreined the Prophets to ſpeake inceſſantlie of Gods ſcourges, thence it came to paſſe by a common flout or deriding maner of ſpeech, that the Iewes gaue this name of *burden* to all the propheſies, as it appeareth in the 23. of Ier. verſ. 36. where the Lord ſharplie rebukes them, becauſe by this flouting kind of ſpeech they not only diffamed his word, but alſo made it odious and contemptible. What is vnderſtood by this word burden. 1

Moreouer this word ſhewes, that God ſends all calamities and afflictions to the end euerie one may *beare* the puniſhment of his owne ſinne. He expreſly ſhewes, that that which he was to threaten was reuealed vnto him by a *heauenly viſion*, to the end this authoritie might put all diſcourſes of fleſhlie wiſdome to ſilence. It was a thing no doubt hard to be beleeued, that a Monarchie ſo beautifull, and abounding with ſo great riches, could be ouerthrowne by any meanes. In regard therefore that ſo great a power might not dazell their eyes, the Prophet brings them to the truth of the heauenly oracle, to the end they might by faith vnderſtand that iudgement of God which they were not able to comprehend by ſenſe. 2

Verſ. 2. *Lift vp a ſtandard vpon the hie mountaine: lift vp the voice vnto them that wag the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.*

THere is a ſimilitude in the word *mountaine*, becauſe it is ſpoken to Babylon, which (as we know) was ſeated vpon a plaine: but he ſets it as it were vpon an *hie* place like a fortreſſe mounted vp aboue all peoples, and that in regard of the Monarchie. Vnleſſe any had rather take this word indefinitly: as if he ſhould ſay, that whē the *ſtandard ſhall be lifted vp*, they ſhall runne thither from farre cōuntries, becauſe it will draw people vnto it from all parts by the ſight of it. I take this latter ſenſe to be the moſt probable; but I thought it not amiſſe to ſet downe that firſt which was commonly receiued. 2

Notwithſtanding, this might ſeeme ridiculous, that the Prophet ſhould heere lay a commandement vpon the *creatures*, as vpon his ſubiects; were it not that he was taught to doe ſo of God, and was furniſhed as it were with his authoritie. For a priuate man heere commands the *Medes* and *Perſians*; hee calles *armies*, he bids them *diſplay the banner*, ſound the trumpet to prepare vnto battel. In this place then wee haue to conſider the Maieſtie of God, in whoſe name he ſpeakes; and alſo the vertue and efficacie which is alwaies ioyned to his word. Wee often meete with theſe Doctrine.

kinder

kindes of speech in the Prophets, to the end we might know that God threatens nothing by his seruants, the execution whereof is not at hand. *Isaiah* might haue spoken more simply, and in plainer termes might haue told them, that the Medes and Persians shall come, and breake open the *gates of Babylon*, how strong and inuincible soeuer they seemed to be. But these exclamations haue much greater vehemencie in them, when hee not onely threatens war, as taking to himselfe the person of an Herald; but with soueraigne authoritie, commands the Medes and Persians to come, as if they were souldiers vnder his pay. Besides, he not onely teacheth that they shall bee readie when God shall onely make a signe vnto them, because they shall be pricked forward by his secret instinct: but being sent of God to denounce the ruine of Babylon, he attributes the effect of so incredible a thing to his *owne voice*. The summe is, that when God hath once spoken, we neede make no doubt but that his word shall be accomplished.

This is also worthy our obseruation, that he speakes to the Medes and Persians, and yet names thē not: and this hath much greater vehemency in pointing them forth with the finger: as when we say, This man, and that man. This manner of speech serues to confirme the prophecie, when he shewes things which were far off, as being present. When he saith; *Shake the hand, and they shall enter*: his meaning is, that the Medes and Persians shall no sooner set forward at Gods commandement, but they shall haue an open and easie way to march, without any impediment. Now although the Hebrewes call *Princes*, gracious Lords, and bountifull, (as our Lord Iesus Christ also giues them this title in the Gospell) notwithstanding it rather seemes that the Prophet speakes of the excellent power whereof the Babylonians boasted. For they were furnished with multitudes of people, and all preparations for war, aboue any others: so as it was a thing incredible vnto them, that they should euer be ouercome. But the Prophet declares that nothing shall bee able to let, that God should not prepare the way, and giue passage to the enemies.

Luke 22. 25.

Vers. 3. *I haue commanded them that I haue sanctified: and I haue called the mightie to my wrath, and them that reioyce in my glory.*

HEere the Prophet brings in the Lord speaking and declaring his *Commandements*. He calles the Medes and Persians *his sanctified*: that is to say, those which hee had prepared. For the verbe *To sanctifie*, is diuersly taken: sometimes it is referred to the spirit of regeneration, which is peculiarly giuen to the elect of God. Sometimes also it signifies to set apart, or prepare: which signification is the most fitting to this place. Now all those whom the Lord creates, hee also appoints to some certaine vse; and scatters not men here and there vpon the earth at randome, to range whithersoeuer they think good: but he gouernes them by his secret counsell, orders and moderates the violences of the reprobates, so as hee moues them at his pleasure, this way or that way; and then represseth and pulles them in short when hee listeth. And therefore he calles them *sanctified*, whom hee hath set apart, and prepared for his seruice, howsoeuer they bee no whit aware of it.

Whence wee are taught, to attribute and referre all the changes in this world, to the secret counsell of God. In this place also wee haue a meruailous consolation; to wit, that the wicked shall be able to doe nothing but that which is decreed of God, let them enterprise what they will. Where hee immediately addes, that *he hath called them*; it is much more then to *command*: which hee puts in the first place. For his meaning is, that the enemies shall not onely rouze vp themselues at the signe which God shall giue them, but at his expresse *commandement*: euen as if I should call one to come vnto mee, and hee should forthwith follow me. He shewes then that Babylon shall be destroyed by the Medes and Persians, no otherwise then if they should yeelde obedience to the *call of God*. For although their ambition, pride, and crueltie, was the motiue (touching themselues) which prouoked them to the warre; yet God fitted them thereunto without their priuitie, that they might bee the executioners of his iudgement.

Doctrine

Vers. 4. *The noise of a multitude in the mountaines like a great people: a tumultuous voice of the Kingdomes of the Nations gathered together: the Lord of hostes numbreth the host of the battel.*

HE now addes a more liuely description, by which he sets the things themselues as it were before their sight, because the Prophets contented not to speake only, vnlesse therewithall they did euen plainely represent the things wherof they spake; for words barely and coldly pronounced after a common maner, moue not so much; neither doe they touch mens hearts so to the quick as figuratiue speeches doe, which represent the liuely image of things. It is then as if the Prophet should say, You now heare a man speake, but know ye that this voice shall haue such great efficacie that by the very sound thereof *nations* shall be moued, *peoples shall make a noyse*, and a great sound, for the great *multitudes* of them; yea, they shall cast forth fearefull cries, and all to bring Babylon to ruin. This cry then shall haue such force, and that after my death, as if that which I now threaten were presentlie before your eyes.

By this therefore we see of how great efficacie the word of God is, when all creatures both in heauen & in earth yeeld obedience vnto it. So much the more then ought we to be confirmed in this doctrine, seeing nothing came

came to paſſe which was not foretold long time before. This is the reaſon why he affirmes in the latter end of the verſe, *that God will aſſemble diuers nations together vnder his conduct*: and howſoeuer they ſhall haue no meaning at all to execute thoſe correctiõs which he hath ordained, yet ſhall they do nothing but by his appointmẽt, euen as if ſome Captaine amongſt vs ſhould muſter or ſet his ſouldiers in array.

Verſ. 5. *They come from a farre countrey, from the end of heauen: euen the Lord with the* *weapons of his wrath to deſtroy the whole land.*

*Or, veſſels, or inſtrumẽts.

HE yet more fullie confirmes that which I ſaid erewhile, to wit, that the preparations of warre come not out of the earth nor by hap hazard: for albeit men by their luſts raiſe vp thoſe troubles which are in ỹ world, *yet God* hath an ouerruling hand aboue them. *Iſaiah* therefore rightlie attributes the preheminence vnto him, ſeeing men are nothing but the *weapons of his wrath*. Now he ſaith, that the deſtroyers of the Monarchie of Babylon ſhall come *from a farre countrie*, the reaſon is, becauſe we ſeldome feare any dangers, vnleſſe thoſe which be very neere vnto vs. Babylon was in ſuch wiſe fortified and well compaſſed about with ſo many kingdomes and prouinces which were ſubiect vnto it, that it ſeemed no enemies could euer ſo much as approch vnto it. In a word, ſhe feared no dangers at all, euen as if ſhe had been compact together, and built in the cloudes.

In as much then as there was no danger which threatned this citie any way round about it, he therefore ſhewes that the *deſtruction thereof ſhall come from farre*. For although all things may ſeeme quiet and peaceable in our conceit, hauing no controuerſies at all with our neighbours, yet notwithſtanding God is able to cauſe enemies to come from the *vttermoſt part vnder heauen*. Wherefore we haue no occaſion to promiſe a ſecure and proſperous eſtate vnto our ſelues, although we ſhould diſcerne no danger neere at hand to threaten vs. If this propheſie ſhould haue been caried to Babylon, no doubt but they would haue deſpiſed it as a meere fable. For let it bee granted that they would haue had ſome reſpect of the Prophets perſon, yet would they (in this their proud confidence wherewithall they were poſſeſſed) haue contemned theſe threatnings as vaine and friuolous. An example whereof wee haue readie at hand: for wee at this day ſpeake of the Turke in our Sermons, yet euery one thinks they be idle tales, becauſe we thinke they are very farre off: notwithſtanding wee ſee how much ground he hath gotten in a ſmall time, in ouerrunning thoſe which were farre remote from him, and were more mightie then he. The ſottiſhnes of men is ſo great, that they can not be awakened vnleſſe they be beaten vpon till they may feele the blowes. Let vs therefore ſet the Babylonians before vs as an example to teach vs wiſdome, that ſo we may feare the threatnings which the Prophets denounce in their Sermons betimes, leſt we be ouertaken with the reprobates, who truſting to their tranquillitie are ſo aſtoniſhed when the hand of God appeares and ſmites them, that they are vtterly vnable to ſtand, but rather fall downe ſenſeleſſe and amazed.

Whereas he puts *the whole land* for Babylon, he hath reſpect to the largeneſſe of the kingdome, that they might not thinke to preuent the aſſaults of the enemies by meanes of the prouinces wherewith they were inuironed on euery ſide: yea, notwithſtanding that he ſhewes the calamitie ſhall be ſuch, that it ſhall not only come in one way vpon them, but ſhall be as a deluge, ouerſpreading a great part of ỹ world. Moreouer, the Medes and Perſians are here called *inſtruments*, or veſſels of the wrath of the Lord in a contrarie ſenſe to that which the reprobates are ſo called by S. *Paul* Rom. 9. 22. For there the Apoſtle oppoſeth the *veſſels* of wrath to the *veſſels* of mercie; and teacheth, that the free grace of God ſhines in the elect, and his iuſt and ſenere iudgement in the reprobate. But the Prophets meaning is, that the Medes and Perſians are as darts in Gods hand, of whom he ſerues his turne to execute his wrath and vengeance.

Verſ. 6. *Howle you for the day of the Lord is at hand: it ſhall come as a deſtroyer from the* *Almightie.*

*Or, of the ſtrong, or, deſtruction of the deſtroyer.

HE followes the matter ſtill, and commands the Babylonians to *howle*; not that he directs his ſpeech to them, as if he were in hope that it ſhould profit them, but in ſhewing what effect it ſhould haue, hee intermingles this maner of ſpeech with great vehemencie. He ſpeakes of the *day of the Lord* after the vſuall phraſe of the ſcripture, becauſe that when the Lord deferres his iudgements, it ſeemes he ceaſeth from performing of his office, euen as Iudges do when they go not vp into their Iudgement ſeates. Let vs then obſerue this language well; the reaſon is, we would willinglie ſubiect the Lord to our fancies, that ſo he might by and by pronounce ſentence againſt the vnbeleeuers. But hee hath prefixed his owne time, and knowes the opportunities right well in which wicked men are to be puniſhed, and when to giue ſuccor to the good. In the next place he ſhewes that the rigour of Gods iudgement ſhall be ſo great, that it ſhall not only giue iuſt occaſion to the Babylonians to weepe, but alſo to *howle*, becauſe he will openlie diſplay his ſtrength for their *deſtruction*. For the verbe *Shadad* ſignifies to ſcatter and to deſtroy, whence *Shadai* one of the names of God, which ſome haue tranſlated Almightie, is deriued. Heere is then an elegant alluſion to this etymologie, as if he ſhould ſay, The Babylonians in their deſtruction ſhall feele it is not vaine that God is called *Shadai*, that is to ſay ſtrong, and Almightie to deſtroy. Doctrine.

Verſ. 7. *Therefore ſhall all hands bee weakened, and all mens hearts ſhall* *melt.

*Or, run out.

HE ſhewes that the Lord ſhal haue ſo great power to deſtroy the Babylonians, that they ſhall be vtterly deſtitute of any thing whatſoeuer, that might hinder or turne backe his wrath. For albeit they were very rich and mightie, yet ſhould they haue ſuch *deiected hearts*, and ſuch *weake hands*, that they ſhould neither haue will nor power to reſiſt. And thus by the way hee glanceth at the crueltie wherewith the Babylonians were puffed vp: ſeeing it is in the power of God to *diſſolue mens hearts*, to breake, looſen, or *weaken their hands*, or armes, in ſuch wiſe that all valour ſhall fall to the ground, and ſtrength ſhall be turned into ſmoke. Now when the heart quailes, what auailes caſtles, great troopes of men, riches, forts, and fortreſſes? what auailes a ſhop well fraught with tooles without a workeman? we haue experience of this daily, euen in thoſe to whom God notwithſtanding giues great meanes. And thence we may perceiue how vaine that confidence is, which wee put in the helps of fleſh, ſeeing they are ſo vnprofitable, if God doe ſmite our hearts but with the leaſt aſtoniſhment.

Verſ. 8. *And they ſhall be afraid, anguiſh and ſorrow ſhall take* them, *and they ſhall haue paine as a woman that trauelleth: euery one ſhall be amazed at his neighbour; and their faces* ſhall be like *flames of fire.*

BEcauſe the ſignification of the word *Tſirim*, is doubtfull, the Greeke tranſlatours haue turned it, Ambaſſadours. But here it ſignifies *anguiſh*, as may ſufficiently be perceiued by the ſimilitude of the *woman in trauaile with child*: which is afterwards added. For he heere ſets before them as it were in one word, that which he had told them before; to wit, that their hearts ſhould melt, and their hands ſhould be weakened, becauſe, ſaith he, *anguiſh and ſorrow ſhall ſurprize them.* But whence comes this aſtoniſhment? From God. The ancients called this aſtoniſhment, a diſtracted feare. Thus called they the hobgoblins viſions, and ſuch like things which frighted men, albeit they had no inward occaſion at all ſo to doe. This was not altogether from the purpoſe; but yet notwithſtanding they erred too groſly, becauſe they vnderſtood not that ſuch a thing proceeded from God.

Verſ. 7.

As a woman in trauell with child.] Surely the Babylonians had iuſt occaſion of feare, ſeeing themſelues aſſailed by valiant and warlike men; but yet the Prophet threatens them that they ſhall quaile and be in a *ſwound*, although they were ſtrong enough to reſiſt them; becauſe they ſhould bee dulled by a ſecret iudgement of God. To this appertaines that which he addes; namely, that *euerie one ſhall be amaſed at his neighbour*, euen as when men affrighted, looke gaſtly here and there: and not onely that, but alſo when there ſhall be any hope of ſuccour, yet they ſhall ſtand ſtill like blockes, as men depriued of all feeling. But the vehemencie of the feare is yet much more cleerely expreſſed in the member following, when he attributes vnto them *faces like fire*. For they are too ſparing, who thinke (as ſome doe) that this word ſignifies ſhame; as if it were ſaid in one word, they ſhal bluſh with ſhame. *Iſaiah* meant a greater and a more fearefull thing then ſo. When torments preſſe vs indeed, the *face* will be inflamed, and wee ſhall glow as being cloſed in with dolours: truely it were too light then to referre it to a bluſhing onely, in ſuch an horrible deſolation. For he deſcribes ſo ſtrange a calamitie, that for the bitterneſſe of it, *flames* ſhall ſparkle as it were out of the face: which indeed comes to paſſe, when men are vexed with extreame dolour. The ſimilitude *of a woman in trauile*, not onely expreſſeth the greatneſſe of the griefe, but alſo a ſudden hurliburly. Euen as the calamitie then ſhould be bitter and violent, ſo alſo *Iſaiah* ſaith, it ſhall be *ſudden*: and good reaſon, for the Babylonians, who wee furniſhed with ſo many forces, could neuer haue dreamed that they ſhould euer be moleſted by any means whatſoeuer.

Verſ. 9. *Behold, the day of the Lord commeth, cruell* with *wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land waſte: and hee ſhall deſtroy the ſinners out of it.*

HE repeates that which he touched heeretofore; to wit, that although the Babylonians reſted ſecurely in their abundance; that the *day of the Lord* notwithſtanding is at hand, which will aſtoniſh theſe ſecure fellowes. But yet it may be demanded, for what cauſe the day of the Lord is called *cruell*, ſeeing there is nothing more deſireable, then to inioy the preſence of God: neither is there any thing indeed but this onely, which makes vs happy. I anſwere, we muſt alwaies obſerue to whom the Prophet ſpeakes. For the Prophets were accuſtomed to deſcribe God in diuers ſorts, according to the diuerſity of the auditors: as *Dauid* alſo teſtifies where hee ſaith; that hee is mercifull and fauourable to the good, ſeuere and rigorous to the wicked: Pſal. 18. 16. 27. For what can the wicked conceiue in God, but an extreme ſeueritie? and therefore they tremble as ſoone as they heare him ſpoken of. But the faithfull on the contrarie, conceiue and receiue great ioy and ſweetneſſe in ſuch words; ſo as nothing can bee propounded vnto them more delectable. And therefore when the Prophets turne themſelues to the faithfull, they mingle ioy and gladnes therewithall in mentioning of God; becauſe they onely feele him gracious and mercifull vnto them: but if they ſpeake to the vnfaithfull, the iudgement of God

Queſt.

Anſ.

God is no ſooner propounded, but they adde teares and ſorrowes. For euen as the faithfull reioyce at the preſence of God, becauſe they apprehend his goodneſſe by faith: ſo alſo the wicked on the contrary are afraid, becauſe their conſciences reproues them, and findes them guiltie in regard their ſeuere iudge is at hand. And becauſe hypocrits alſo ſeeme to wait for the day of the Lord with great deſire, boaſting that he will aſſiſt them; the Prophets are wont to vnmaske them, teſtifying alſo, that this day ſhall be *cruell* and terrible.

Amos 5. 18.20.

Iſaiah alſo applies a deſcription to this prophecie, much vſed; the better to ſhew how greatly the wrath of God is to be feared. For inaſmuch as we are ſlow by nature, or rather blockiſh, wee moue not much if the Lord ſhould ſpeake of his iudgements ſimply. Becauſe therefore a bare and naked ſpeech ſhould haue little vehemencie, hee findes out new kindes of ſpeakings to awaken our drouſineſſe. By *ſinners*, hee meanes not all men in generall; but thoſe wicked and deſperate wretches which dwelt in Babylon.

Verſ. 10. *For the ſtarres of heauen, and the planets thereof ſhall not giue their light: the Sunne ſhall bee darkened in his going forth; and the Moone ſhall not cauſe her light to ſhine.*

TO the end men might be the more lively and effectually touched with the feare of Gods iudgemẽt, the Prophets are wont to adde exceſſiue manners of ſpeeche to their threatnings, which ſhould euen ſet the wrath of God as it were before their eyes; that ſo it might pierce into all their ſenſes: euen as if there were not one of the *elements* which ſhould not riſe vp on Gods behalfe to execute his vengeance. And yet theſe exceſſiue ſpeeches exceede not the heinouſneſſe of the offence: for it is impoſſible to ſet forth ſo horrible a repreſentation of Gods iudgement, but the feeling thereof ſhall be far more terrible. Well, he ſpeakes of the *Sunne*, *Moone*, and *ſtarres*, and the reaſon is, becauſe theſe are excellent teſtimonies of the fatherly kindneſſe of God towards men. Chriſt therfore ſhewes, that Gods goodneſſe doth in ſpeciall maner appeare, becauſe he makes his *Sunne* to ſhine vpon the good and bad: Matth. 5. 45. When the *Sunne*, *Moone*, and *ſtarres* then ſhine in the heauen, God giues vs cauſe of reioycing, euen as it were by a ſweete and amiable countenance. In as much then as in the brightneſſe of the heauens, he ſhewes a ioyfull and cheerefull face, euen as if he laughed: the darkneſſe which the Prophet here deſcribes, ſignifies as much, as if God hauing hid his face, would caſt men headlong into ſorrowes and into darkneſſe, becauſe he is angry with them.

There is the like deſcription in the ſecond Chapter of *Ioel*: and wee haue alreadie ſaid, that this manner of ſpeech is familiar in the Prophets; to let vs know, that all things ſhall turne to our ruine, if God be once againſt vs. True it is hee ſometimes ſhewes ſignes of his indignation in the *Starres*; but that is extraordinarie: and the darkneſſe which the Prophet here deſcribes, ſhall not come before the laſt cõming of Chriſt Ieſus. But this ought to ſuffice vs, namely, that all creatures which imploy themſelues for our ſeruice, as teſtimonies and inſtruments of the louing kindneſſe of God, ſhall not onely ceaſe from the ſeruice which now they doe vs; but ſhall euen arme themſelues for our deſtruction, as ſoone as God ſhall aſcend to iudgement.

Verſ. 11. *And I will viſit the wickedneſſe vpon the world, and their iniquities vpon the wicked: and I will cauſe the arrogancie of the proud to ceaſe, and will caſt downe the pride of tyrants.*

THe Prophet ſpeakes not heere of all the *world*: but Babylon being then the ſeate of the mightieſt Monarchy in all the earth, therefore it is that hee attributes this name *world* vnto it by a phraſe of ſpeech, hauing great weight in it. For Babylon then was as a *world*, and ſeemed to occupie almoſt all the earth. But in the meane while, he declares that nothing is ſo highly exalted in this ſame world, which God ſhall not eaſilie bring downe euen with his leaſt finger. On the other ſide, hee aduertiſeth that God will then take vengeance vpon the crueltie which the Chaldeans exerciſed. Let vs alſo therewithall obſerue, that hee ſets the malice and wickednẽſſe of Babylon in the firſt place, to the end wee might know that God is not to be eſteemed cruell, in regard he chaſtiſed it ſo ſeuerely, ſeeing hee ſmites not this people, but according as the meaſure of their *offences* and *iniquities* had deſerued. He takes away all occaſion of falſe accuſations then, to the end we might vnderſtand that God is not delighted with the calamities of men: for when hee deales with them according to their deſerts, all muſt haue their mouthes ſtopped, in regard hee neuer ſends bitter and ſharpe afflictions, but he findes the cauſe thereof in men themſelues. And yet we muſt keepe in minde that which I touched; to wit, that the Prophet greatly comforts the faithfull when he ſhewes them that he will puniſh the crueltie of the Babylonians at the laſt, howſoeuer hee ſpared them for a time.

Hee expreſſeth this immediately, in touching one particular vice; to wit, *pride*: for thence it was that Babel tooke libertie to oppreſſe the poore to the vtteruoſt, euen as ſhe liſted. But from thence ought we alſo to gather a very profitable doctrine; namely, that God muſt needes viſit vs ſharpely, if wee be *proud*, and pleaſe our ſelues in our ſelues. For vnder this word, the Prophet comprehends all maner of arrogancie and high imaginations. Be it then that men thinke themſelues ſomething; or that they admire their riches, and care for none in reſpect of themſelues; the Lord cannot beare anie

God can not indure the proud. Pro 8. 13. Iam. 4. 6. 1. Pet. 5. 5.

arrogancie, neither will he leaue it vnpunished. Seeing then that this is noted heere as the principall and most notorious wickednes amongst a great many other wherewith Babylon was stuffed, so also the wrath of God we see is most set on fire by this sinne. Now this *arrogancie* was not without *tyrannie* and crueltie as it ordinarilie falles out: and therefore he addes immediatlie the glorie *of tyrants*. For violences, outrages, and oppressions do follow, when men despise others: neither can it be chosen that a man should abstaine from offring violence vnto another, vnlesse he put off all perswasion and opinion of himselfe. Let vs pull down our peacocks feathers then, and learne we also to bring vnder our loftinesse to a true and voluntarie humilitie; vnlesse peraduenture we had rather be smitten downe and humbled to our confusion and destruction.

Vers. 12. *I will make a man more pretious then fine gold, euen a man aboue the wedge of Ophir.*

HE heere describes in particular the cruell and horrible warre which shall be made vpon the Babylonians: as also the faithfull being instructed by these prophesies, wished (by the spirit of prophesie) for that which was the extreamest and most cruell stratageme of warre, to wit, that the Medes and Persians might pluck the little children from their mothers breasts to dash them against the stones: the summe is, that Babylon shall not only be destroyed, but also whollie rooted out. For when he saith the life of man shall be *more pretious then gold*, he meanes, that the enemies shall be so fleshed in shedding of blood, that men shall not escape their hands for any ransome whatsoeuer. Why so? Because they shall loue rather to massacre then to take any *ransome*.

Quest.

Some may demand whether this discomfiture were so cruell as *Isaiah* heere describes it, for histories witnes otherwise: and *Daniel* himselfe (who was there present) saith, that the citie was taken only, Dan. 5. 30. This is the cause why some expositors haue beene driuen to referre euery thing which is said here of Babylon to all reprobates: but therein they haue wrested the text, for the Prophet by and by after speakes of the Medes and Persians. Moreouer, the threatnings which wil orderlie follow hereafter touching the Moabites, Tyrians, Egyptians, and other nations, doe sufficientlie shew that this prophesie is properlie against the Chaldeans, whom the Prophet placeth in the first rank: not that their destruction was so neere at hand as was the destruction of the rest; but because y Church had no greater nor more dangerous enemies then they. And wee must obserue that *Isaiah* spake not this whilst the Monarchie of Nineue florished, but whatsoeuer he foretold against the profane nations in the whole course of his ministrie, is put all vpon one heape as it were. Thus then the order of time was not kept, but the likenes of things was the cause why they haue put all these prophesies in one. For whence is it that *Isaiah* makes no mention of Nineue, seeing hee afterward sheweth that the Assyrians only were they which molested the Iewes (with whom the Babylonians were in league) but in regard that he speakes not of the histories of his time till he comes to the three and twentie Chapter, but only prophesieth of the iudgements of God which came to passe after his death?

Dan. 6. 1.

Now when he declares that Babylon shall be destroyed vtterlie; it is certaine he speakes not of one destruction barely, but vnder it comprehends the full ruin thereof, which followed long time after the first. For Babylon florished, yea after the Persians had subdued it, and kept the name and dignitie of a thrice renoumed citie. And howsoeuer it be true that another citie was built, called Ctesiphon, that part of the glorie and riches of Babylon might be taken away; yet notwithstanding the commoditie of the place, the sumptuous buildings and fortresses of the citie, caused that (the dignitie royall excepted) she was in nothing inferior to the head citie of Persia. Yea, after the death of *Alexander* the Great, when Seleucia was built neere vnto it, yet could it not staine the name and reputation of this so ancient a citie. From hence then we gather, that the things which are heere spoken, can not be restrained to one time. And yet is it not without cause that the Prophet threatens them so sharplie, seeing the change of their empire was the beginning of diuers calamities which followed thereupon afterwards. So that howsoeuer all the people were not slaine, yet notwithstanding in regard the citie was forcible assailed and taken by a sodaine assault, and that by night when all the kings court were drowned in drunkennes; it could not be but the Medes and Persians hewed all those in pieces which they met withall: and therefore we need not doubt but the most valiant of the enemies made many slaughters before they receiued all the people to their mercie. For will any man doubt but that this proud nation was dishonorablie handled by these barbarous conquerors, seeing it was vnpossible to subdue them by any other meanes?

The change of Babels Empire, the beginning of future calamities.

Now after that Babylon was by little and little brought vnder, shee by and by after changed her king, and after she had been a while vnder the gouerment of *Alexander* the Macedonian, she sodainly fell into the hands of *Seleucus*, who indeuored by all meanes to abate the greatnes of it, till at the last it was brought vtterlie to ruine. And thus whilst God suffered her to stand, she serued as a deformed and shamefull spectacle, that the accomplishment of this prophesie might be the more excellent and certaine: and therefore our Prophet rightlie affirmes, that the wrath of God shall not be appeased, vntill this den of theeues shal be wholly brought to nought. As touching the words, some of the expositors take *Enosh* (which we haue translated man) for a warlike and noble man: and *Adam* (which wee haue expounded person) for all handicrafts men. But in as much as the Etymologie

Alexander the Macedonian. Seleucus. Babel brought to ruin at last.

mologie agrees not well herewith; I doe not thinke the Prophet meant ſo: I am rather of opinion, that it is a repetition of words, which is common with the Hebrewes. Others take the word *Ophir*, (which I, according to diuers expoſitours, haue tranſlated, *pure gold*,) for a precious ſtone: but we gather from many places of the Scripture, that it ſignifies very pure and tried *gold*.

Verſ. 13. *Therefore I will ſhake the heauens, and the earth ſhall remoue out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hoſtes, and in the day of his fierce anger.*

THis is an other figure which ſerues for an amplification. For God cannot repeate this doctrine too often. The reaſon is, not onely to aſtoniſh the infidels, but alſo to bring conſolation to the good, who are often times diſquieted, when the wicked are at their eaſe, and haue all things at their deſire: which *Dauid* confeſſeth when he ſaith; I haue cleanſed mine heart in vaine, and waſhed mine hands in innocencie: Pſal.73.13. Theſe liuely images then are for good cauſe thus painted out before our eyes, to ſhew vs plainly the deſtruction of the wicked. And therefore it is as if *Iſaiah* ſhould ſay; Were it ſo that the verie *heauens* had neede to be ſhaken for the bringing downe, and the rooting out of infidels; euen that ſhould be done. For they thinke themſelues out of all danger, and ſo deepely rooted in the earth, as if it were impoſſible to plucke them vp: but the Prophet ſhewes that they greatly deceiue themſelues, becauſe the Lord will rather ſhake the heauen and *the earth* alſo, then that they ſhould not come tumbling downe from their greatneſſe, whereunto they are mounted vp aloft. Whence it followes, that although the world preſents a thouſand leaning ſtockes vnto vs, as well *high as low*, yet notwithſtanding there ſhall be no ſtedfaſtneſſe in any of them, vnleſſe God therewithall be mercifull vnto vs. And if this appeares in particular iudgements, how much more will it appeare in that generall iudgement, when Chriſt ſhall aſcend into the iudiciall throne of his maieſtie to pronounce ſentence of condemnation againſt all the wicked?

Verſ. 14. *And it ſhall be as a chaſed Doe, and as a ſheepe that no man taketh vp: euery man ſhall turne to his owne people, and flee each one to his owne land.*

HEe declares that outward ſuccours ſhall profit the Babylonians nothing at all: and by theſe ſimilitudes, ſhewes with what feare the ſouldiers ſhall be ſeazed. Now Babel did not onely ſtrengthen her ſelfe with the men of warre of her owne Countrie, but ſhe had ſtrangers alſo vnder her pay. He ſaith, they ſhall all reſemble little Fawnes or *Does*, which are very timerous beaſts: and to *ſcatered ſheepe*; ſo as they ſhall retire neither to their Enſignes nor Gariſons, nor yet keepe any order. And when he adds, *euerie one ſhall flee to his land*; it ſufficiently appeares from thence, that the Prophet ſpeakes not of the inhabitants of Babel, nor of her people; but of ſtrangers which had been called to her ſuccour. For it hath been ſaid heretofore, that the hearts of men are ſo in the hands of God, that when it pleaſeth him they ſuddenly recouer new ſtrength, who were before fearefull and amazed: and contrariwiſe, thoſe who haue ſhewed great valour and boldneſſe, loſe it all in an inſtant, and become weake and effeminate.

Verſ. 15. *Euerie one that is found, ſhall be ſtricken thorow: and whoſoeuer ioyneth himſelfe, ſhall fall by the ſword.*

HEe here confirmes that which he ſaid heretofore; to wit, that none ſhall eſcape out of Babylon, and that all thoſe which ſhall be therein ſhall periſh. *Xenophon* telles, how by the commandement of *Cyrus*, all thoſe which were met withall the firſt night, were put to death: and the next day, all thoſe which had not brought in, or laid downe their weapons. But we haue already ſaid, that this prophecie hath a further extent; becauſe this firſt taking was onely the beginning of all other calamities, whereunto Babylon was expreſly reſerued by the Lord, to the end it might be puniſhed the more often. Others expound the ſecond member otherwiſe then I haue tranſlated it: for in as much as *Saphah* ſignifieth, To loſe, or, To conſume; they reade, Whoſoeuer ſhall be loſt; and expound this of old men, who by reaſon of their age, can liue no longer: as if he ſhould ſay; they would not pardon, no not euen thoſe who are alreadie worne with age, and vpon the brim of their graues, yea when they ſhould haue one foote within as it were, and ſhould bee ready to yeeld vp the ghoſt. But becauſe this is a conſtrained expoſition, and that the very ſame verbe ſignifies, *To be ioyned*, I had rather follow *Ionathan*, and others, who thinke the Prophet ſpeakes of the bands and ſquadrons: as for example, when a Citie is to be taken, the ſouldiers ioyne together to beate backe the aſſaults of the enemies. Vnleſſe any had rather vnderſtand by theſe words, the confederates and companions which were ioyned together with the Babylonians, the more to amplifie the greatneſſe of this diſcomfiture.

Xenophon. Cyrus.

Ionathan.

Verſ. 16. *Their children alſo ſhall be broken in pieces before their eyes: their houſes ſhall be ſpoiled, and their wiues raniſhed.*

HEe paintes out an image of more then barbarous crueltie. For behold the vttermoſt extremitie of the enemies rage; when no age whatſoeuer ſhall be ſpared; when *little children* are ſlaine, who ſhould rather bee defended in regard of their young yeares.

And yet he further amplifies the crueltie, when he ſaith that this ſhall be done in the *preſence of their fathers and mothers*. That which followes of the *houſes which ſhall be ſpoiled*, and of the *women which ſhall be raviſhed*, tends alſo to the ſame end: and this falles out when the enemies hauing forgotten all humanitie, and being inflamed with crueltie, would ỹ thoſe whom they haue ſubdued were vtterlie rooted out, with their name alſo.

Verſ. 17. *Behold, I will ſtirre vp the Medes againſt them, which ſhall not regard ſiluer, nor be deſirous of gold.*

THe Prophet hauing propheſied the deſtruction of ỹ Babylonians, ſhewes therewithall alſo the authors; or, he rather expreſſeth, that God ſhall be the mouer of them: and therein alſo ſpecifies how or by whom this worke ſhall be done: for he ſaith, that *he will ſtirre vp the Medes*. Certainlie he could not conieƈture this by any humane reaſon; for there was then no enmitie nor diſſenſions betweene the Medes and the Babylonians. And although there had been diſcord; what was the power of the Medes then, to doe the Babylonians any harme? Seeing things were not ſo fitted then that the Medes could make warre with the Babylonians, it is very certaine that the Prophet was inſpired of God in this matter, eſpeciallie if we conſider that he foretold theſe things more then an hundred yeres before they came to paſſe. When he addes that they ſhall not couet *gold, nor ſiluer*, he excuſeth not the *Medes* of their rauening and auarice, as if they ſhould be ſo liberall as to deſpiſe gold and ſiluer: but he rather meant to ſay, that this warre ſhall be ſo cruell & terrible, that nothing ſhall be ſeene but a final deſtruƈtion; for example, becauſe the ſpeciall drift which the Spaniards aime at now adaies when they make warre, is only to ſpoile and rob, they doe more eaſily ſpare mens liues, and are not ſo addiƈted to ſhed blood as the Almans or Engliſhmen be, who thinke of nothing but killing their enemies.

The Spaniard.

Almans. Engliſhmen.

Now let it not ſeeme ſtrange to any man that the Lord who is louing & gratious doth yet notwithſtanding ſerue his turne of ſo cruel executioners: for he works iuſtlie euen by the wicked, and yet is not ſpotted himſelfe with their malice. Wherefore we muſt not iudge of the worke of God by the executioners thereof, who are caried away with ambition, couetouſnes, or crueltie: but wee ought to conſider therein the iuſt vengeance of God, which the Babylonians had well deſerued, becauſe of their wickednеſſes.

Verſ. 18. *With bowes alſo ſhall they deſtroy the children, and ſhall haue no compaſſion vpon the fruite of the womb, and their eyes ſhall not ſpare the children.*

SOme tranſlate, *They ſhall cut*, and thinke that this is ſpoken by an exceſſiue maner of ſpeech, as if they ſhould vſe the children of the Babylonians in ſtead of arrowes, in regard they daſhed them againſt the ſtones, that they might breake them with the greater violence. But I had rather take it more ſimplie, namely, that the crueltie of ỹ Medes ſhall be ſo great, that they ſhall not ſpare ſo much as the *little children*, which notwithſtanding are neuer touched except it be there where they commit exceeding outrages. In a word, that neither old nor yong ſhould be ſpared, as we haue ſaid erewhile. But we reade not that the Medes vſed any ſuch crueltie: and Babylon was in good eſtate, and floriſhed long time after this diſcomfiture: and although the ſeate of the kingdome was caried thence, yet ſhe kept her renoume ſtill, for the very day and night before that it was taken, there was no hurt done, except it were to thoſe which bare armes. In the meane while howſoeuer it was the Prophets meaning to comprehend other iudgements of God alſo which threatned the Babylonians, and came to paſſe long time after this firſt calamitie: yet is it not without reaſon, neither from the purpoſe that he deſcribes the maners of barbarous nations, that ſo the Iewes might the better vnderſtand that God had a iuſt recompence readie in his hand to execute vpō the Babiloniſh tyranny. No doubt but ỹ faithfull alſo vpō the ground of this promiſe made the imprecation cōteined in the 137. Pſalme, Bleſſed ſhal he be that takes thy children and daſheth them againſt the ſtones.

Verſ. 19. *And Babel the glorie of kingdomes, and the beautie and pride of the Chaldeans, ſhall be as the deſtruƈtion of God in Sodome and Gomorah.*

ISaiah meant to cōclude his propheſie touching the ruin of ỹ Babylonians in a briefe maner in this place, although he addes ſome amplifiƈations to confirme his ſpeech touching the full rooting of them out. For the Prophets ſpeake in ſuch ſort of the puniſhments of the wicked, that they leaue them no hope of mercie wherewith they might comfort themſelues. But as touching the faithfull, although it ſeemes now and then that they ſhould be chaſtened too ſeuerely, yet are they ſuſteined with this aſſurance, that the Lord will haue pitie vpon them, and will not vtterlie deſtroy them. Whence we ought to gather, that we muſt not alwaies iudge according to the outward appearance. For we ſhall many times thinke that the children of God are vtterlie vndone, whoſe ſaluation notwithſtanding is neere, yea euen in the midſt of death it ſelfe.

In Sodome and Gomorah.] This example is oft alledged by the Prophets, to the end wee might know that howſoeuer all chaſtiſements be not equall, yet notwithſtanding in as much as God is vnpartiall in his iudgements, the memorable example which he ſhewed thereof in the deſtruƈtion of *Sodom* appertaines to all reprobates: ſo as thoſe who harden themſelues in their ſinnes with the like obſtinacie, ſhall be no leſſe puniſhed then they were. And they diſtinguiſh betweene the puniſhments

Sodome and Gomorah.

Gen. 19. 24.

ments of the elect, and reprobates, in ſuch wiſe, that ſtill God left ſome ſeed to the Iſraelites; but to the wicked none: as we haue ſeene in the firſt Chapter; If the Lord, ſaith he, had not left vs a ſeed, we had bin as Sodome and as Gomorah. But he purſues the reprobate with all ſeueritie: and therefore the Prophets threaten them with the very ſame ruine which happened to the Sodomites; that is to ſay, an vtter deſtruction without all hope of recouerie.

Chap. 1. 9.

He ſaith it *is the ouerthrow of God*; to the end wee ſhould not thinke it came to paſſe by chance, or by the will of men. For euen as the fire fell not vpon Sodome & Gomorah from heauen at randome; ſo Babylon alſo was not deſtroyed by haphazard, but by the iuſt vengeance of God. Which being alwaies like vnto himſelfe, did execute his iuſt iudgement againſt them, and will ſtill doe the ſame againſt all reprobates euen vnto the end. Whereas Babylon is called the *glorie* and bright beauty of Kingdomes; this is added for amplifications ſake, to teach vs, that God cannot bee hindered from performing his worke by any *glorie* or excellencie whatſoeuer, that hee ſhould not vtterly roote out the wicked. For in regard that this deſtruction was incredible, therefore ſo much the more did an excellent example of Gods mightie power appeare in the confuſion of it.

No glory can withſtand Gods almightie power.

Verſ. 20. *It ſhall not be* *inhabited for euer, neither ſhall it be dwelled in from generation to generation: neither ſhall the Arabian pitch his tents there; neither ſhall the ſheepheards make their foldes there.*

*Or, ſit vpon.

BY the word *To ſit*, hee ſignifies a firme eſtate; as if he ſhould ſay, Neuer looke that Babel ſhall be reſtored any more. For all theſe phraſes of ſpeech tend to one and the ſame end; namely, the Babylonians ſhall be ſo deſtroyed, that their ruine ſhall be perpetuall. This alſo he further amplifies when he addes, that the deſtruction ſhall be ſo great, that the verie *Arabians* ſhall diſdaine *to pitch their tents there*, and the *ſheepheards their foldes*. Now wee may well ſay that this place was become wonderfull deſert, and inhabitable, ſeeing theſe vagabonds made no reckoning of it: for this nation of the Arabians in verie deed, did nothing elſe but trot vp and downe, and had no ſetled abiding. For hauing left their owne Countrie, becauſe it was barren; and therefore is called the deſert Arabia, (for of that wee ſpeake) and being giuen to nouriſh cattell and to hunting, they frisked it hither & thither, and abode in the midſt *of the fields*, eſpecially in places of beſt paſture. Thence it came that the Greekes called them by a name which ſignifieth dwellers in tents.

Arabians vagabonds and theeues.

The region of Babylon was wonderfull fruitfull before this deſtruction, by reaſon whereof this change was ſo much the more terrible, and as it were prodigious, whether in regard that it loſt the firſt fruitfulneſſe, or that all abhorred the ſight of it, becauſe of the continuall calamities wherewith it was waſted. Certaine it is the Prophet declares it ſhal come to paſſe, that not only the buildings ſhall be broken downe, but that the *land* alſo ſhall be *accurſed*.

Verſ. 21. *But Ziim ſhall lodge there, and their houſes ſhall be full of Ohim: Oſtriches ſhall dwell there, and the Satyres ſhall dance there.*

HE goes on in deſcribing a deſert place, and alludes to that he ſaid before; to wit, that Babylon ſhould be vnhabited. I cannot well tell how this word *Ziim* ſhould be tranſlated, in regard the opinions of the expoſitours are ſo diuers; who agree no more in this, then they doe about ſundry names of beaſts and hearbs. The vſe of theſe things continued not alwaies, and the Iewes being ignorant themſelues, haue not the knowledge of them; although ſome amongſt them are not aſhamed to brag of their skill in phyſicke: and yet notwithſtanding are ignorant not onely of the nature of plants, but of beaſts alſo. Whereas ſome are of opinion that *Ziim*, was a wild beaſt: others, that it ſhould be a bird: and ſome others a fourefooted beaſt: herein there is no great difference. For mine owne part, I make no queſtion but the Prophet meant in this place to ſpeake either of wild beaſts which cannot be tamed, or of birds which make their neſts in forreſts farre remote from men. And there will be no inconuenience in it, if we expound that which followes of Satyres, or Fairies, which the Frenchmen, according to the diuerſities of regions, in one place call Hobgoblins, Robingoodfellowes; and Bugbeares in an other. For as Satan abuſeth men by diuers impoſtures, ſo alſo he allots diuers names to euery one of theſe.

It is certaine that the word *Ziim*, is ſometimes taken in the Scripture for wicked ſpirits: for it comes of *Ziiah*, which ſignifies drineſſe or deſert: as *Iim* comes of *Iiaim*, which ſignifies feare. For in as much as the diuell workes ſtrange illuſions by Fairies and Satyres, therefore the names thereof are attributed vnto him. The Prophets drift is, to ſhew that there ſhould be ſuch deſolation, that the place ſhould not onely be forſaken of men, but the euill ſpirits alſo ſhould worke their illuſions there: for by the ſolitarineſſe of the place they take occaſion to terriſie thoſe which paſſe thereby. And looke how theeues and enemies ſhew themſelues more cruell when they come out of ſome obſcure place or caues: ſo alſo the diuels ſeeke for the night, darkeneſſe, and places far remote from mens ſight, to the end they may the more affright them which are fearefull and timerous of nature.

Verſ. 22. *And Iim ſhall cry in their palaces, and dragons in their pleaſant pa-*

laces: and the time thereof is readie to come, and the daies thereof shall not bee prolonged.

HEe sets forth that which hath been touched before, and shewes how horrible this change shall be; that it might appeare that this shall come to passe from the iudgement of God, and not by fortune. He also amplifies it whē he saith, that this shal happē not to houses, but to *pleasant palaces*. The shortnesse of *time* whereof he speakes here, may be referred to the first destruction; yet so, as it was requisite that the expectation of the faithfull should bee held the longer in suspence. I haue told you that Babylon was not so quickely ouerturned; and that the discomfiture made by the Medes, was not so great that the Citie might therefore be compared to a desert. He saith then, that the destruction thereof shall *shortly come*; the beginnings whereof were seene soone after, for the Iewes were to content themselues, in regard that this vengeance vpon Babylon was not promised them in vaine.

The holy Ghost in like manner is wont to prevent our heate and hastinesse, because we would haue God execute his iudgements out of hand, and should chastise the wicked as soone as we thinke good. But he only knowes the fit season, which yet wee are impatient in waiting for, by reason of the boiling of our passions. But if wee could meditate of his euerlastingnesse, we should easilie bridle this ouer great hastinesse by patience: but because we haue much adoe to hold in our importunitie, God doth somewhat incline vnto vs, shewing that *he will come by and by*. And yet let vs not iudge of the shortnesse of the time, according to our reason: but let vs lift vp our hearts to heauen, and despise the daies of this life. Aboue all, let vs learne to stoope as soone as we begin to see the iudgements of God comming towards vs, yea though it be in the least measure: although he deferre the execution of them for a long time. The second member is immediately added for a confirmation; to wit, that *the daies of Babylon shall not be prolonged*: as if he should say; The Lord hath appointed *a day*, so as none shall be able to make truce any longer.

A iust reproofe of our impatiency.

The meditation of Gods eternitie, the best bridle to curbe our impatiency.

We must not iudge of the shortnesse of time according to our carnall reason.

THE XIIII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *For the Lord will haue compassion of Iacob, and will yet chuse Israel, and cause them to rest in their own land: and the stranger shall ioyne himselfe vnto them; and they shall cleaue to the house of Iacob.*

BEcause the particle *Ci*, hath diuers significations, wee may conioyne this verse with the former, thus; *But yet the Lord will haue pitie vpon Zion*: and so it should shew how much the condition of the Church differeth from that which he described before. But I had rather take it for a particle rendring the cause; and that indeed agrees best to this place, as in many other texts: so as the sense shall be this; God shall destroy Babylon, *because he shall haue compassion of Iacob*; whom hee can neither despise nor reiect. Whence wee perceiue, that the Prophet hath indeuoured hitherto, to assuage the sorrow of this poore people; to the end they might learne to be of good comfort in those their afflictions, which God would at length auenge. Thus Babylon & the Church of God are here set before vs as in a glasse: Babylon (I say) exalted in her soueraigne power, who had so oppressed the poore and desolate Church, that shee was vtterly past hope (in a manner) that euer shee should be restored againe. But the Lord tumbling Babylon downe from her high seate, therein witnesseth, that he hath care ouer his people, how abiect or contemptible soeuer they seem to be. From hence we may gather a sweet cōsolation, when wee see that God thus gouernes all the world for our saluation. For all things aime to this end, that the elect may be saued; and not ouerwhelmed by any changes how many soeuer befall thē. But some will aske, whether *mercie and compassion* ceased to be in God for a time? Doubtlesse it continued in him alwaies: but the people which were so greeuously afflicted felt it not. For being forepossessed with the sense of his wrath, they iudged of themselues according to the outward appearance, and were not able to apprehend his mercie. And yet was the Lord euer like himselfe notwithstanding, & neuer left his mercifull nature. Thus then we must distinguish betweene the vnderstanding or knowledge of faith, and experience: for whilest the signes of Gods indignation appeare on all sides, in regard that (according to the iudgement of the flesh) we thinke hee is angrie; so his grace is hidden from vs: yet faith notwithstanding lifts vp our hearts aboue all darkenesse, to the end wee may behold God in heauen, who is fauourable towards vs.

Note this consolation.

Quest.

Ans.

We must distinguish betweene faiths apprehension, and experience.

He will yet chuse Israel (saith he.) The election of God is eternall: for hee chuseth vs not, as if he thought not on it before: and euen as we were chosen before the foundations of the world, so doth he neuer repent himselfe of the same his election, Ephes. 1. 4. Rom. 11. 29. But when the Lord corrects his children, this hath in it some appearance of reiection, as we may gather from the ordinarie complaints of the faithfull: Lord why hast thou put vs away for euer? Why is thy wrath kindled against the sheep of thy pasture? Psal. 74. 1. For we apprehend the election or reiection

Gods election eternall.

Psal. 74. 1

We often meaſure Gods affection towards vs by his outward worke. Our vocation a confirmation of our election. How God is ſaid to elect, and reiect vs.

tion of God according to our infirmitie, and meaſure his affection towards vs by the outward worke, (I ſpeake of that knowledge which proceeds from experience, which is corrected by the light of faith.) And therefore when the Lord calles vs, that is to ſay, when he confirmes his election, it is ſaid he chuſeth vs; and contrariwiſe that hee reiects vs, when he ſhewes vs any euident ſigne of his indignation. See then how we are to vnderſtand this verſe, to wit, that although the Lord ſhould ſo ſharplie correct his people as if he meant to caſt them off, yet notwithſtanding he will ſhew in the end by the effects, and will giue them to know that he hath elected them, when he ſhall giue ſufficient teſtimonie thereof, and ſhall take compaſſion vpon them.

Great difference betweene the chaſtiſements of the elect, and thoſe wherewith the reprobate are viſited. Note.

Now we may eaſily collect that which I ſaid erewhile, to wit, that there is great difference betweene the chaſtiſements which the faithfull indure, and thoſe wherewith the reprobates are viſited. For the faithfull bethinke themſelues forthwith of their election, whereby they take heart of grace: but the vnbeleeuers ſee nothing but thick darknes, bottomles gulfes, and fearefull confuſion on all ſides. As ſoone then as the Lord corrects vs, let vs by and by call to mind this difference, to the end we may confirme our hearts in the hope of an happie iſſue.

When he ſpeakes of their returne *into their owne land*, he therein ſets before them a ſigne of grace and reconciliation: for the land of *Canaan* was a pledge of adoption to the children of *Abraham*.

The land of Canaan a pledge of adoption to Abrahams poſteritie.

And the ſtranger ſhall ioyne himſelf with them.] He propheſieth of the calling of ỹ Gentiles, as if he ſhould haue ſaid, The Lord will not only put them into the poſſeſſion of the land of *Canaan*, but will alſo inrich them with a great increaſe: for he will ioyne the Gentiles with them, that of two peoples there may be made but one only bodie. This benefit then is not to be referred to a few daies, but appertaines to the whole Church, which God promiſeth to ſet at reſt in a ſure place. For the Prophet ſpeakes not only of the Church of that time, but of that alſo which ſhould be before, and vnder the kingdome of Chriſt, otherwiſe this addition ſhould be improper.

1
2
A propheſie touching the calling of the Gentiles.

Verſ. 2. *And the people ſhall receiue them and bring them to their owne place, and the houſe of Iſrael ſhall poſſeſſe them in the land of the Lord for ſeruants and handmaides, and they ſhall take them priſoners whoſe captiues they were, and haue rule ouer their oppreſſors.*

HE ſhewes that the *ſtrangers* ſhall willinglie accompanie the Iewes, and that in ſuch ſort, that they ſhall not refuſe to become their *ſeruants*. We haue ſeene the proofe of this when the people came out of Babylon, Ezra 1. 6. but this was onely a ſmall taſte of thoſe things which were done by Ieſus Chriſt, to whom all this muſt be referred. For the Lord in deed inclined the hearts of the nations which hated his people deadly, to be louing to them whom he meant to reſtore to their countrie and libertie by their meanes: but ſo farre was it off that many nations helped the Iewes after their returne from Babylon, that contrariwiſe the neighbours through enuie conſpired one with another to moleſt them. Ezra 4. 4. For they were not only bent againſt them to driue them out of the land of Canaan, but alſo to roote them from off the earth. Theſe things then were accompliſhed vnder the kingdome of Chriſt, to whom all power is giuẽ not only in earth, but in heauen alſo, Math. 28. 18. who by his Goſpell hath vnited the Gentiles with the Iewes, which before were ſtrangers, Epheſ. 2. 14. to the end they might not only help the Iewes to take poſſeſſion of their inheritance, but alſo to bring them vnder ſo, as to beare the yoke quietlie and willinglie.

And hereunto appertaines that which he addes *of ſeruants and handmaides*: for ſeeing the Iewes are the firſt borne in the houſe of God, we which are ioined vnto them ſeeme to haue bin aſſembled as it were vnder their hand, becauſe they were before vs, and obteined the firſt place before all other nations: which honor they might hold euen at this day, if by their owne frowardnes and ingratitude they depriued not themſelues of ſuch a dignitie; and yet their vnthankfulnes did not let the Lord to effect that which he here promiſeth. For the Apoſtles who were Iewes, ſubdued ſtrange nations by the word of God; yea euen thoſe which in times paſt held them priſoners, and to whom they paid tribute, to wit, the *Aſſyrians*, *Chaldeans*, *Perſians*, and at laſt the *Romane Empire*, ſo as *all the Gentiles* might iuſtlie be called *their heritage*, although they would not reigne ouer them, but winne them to God, that ſo together they might acknowledge one Lord and Prince. This then ought to be referred to the yoke & gouerment of Chriſt whereunto the Iewes ſubdued the Gentiles, and not to a worldlie kingdome and rule, as the Iewes falſlie imagin. *Exod.* 4. 22.

The Iewes might hold the honor of the firſt born ſtill in the houſe of God if their owne ingratitude deprined them not of it.

The Apoſtles meant not to reigne by their conqueſt, but to win men to God.

Verſ. 3. *And in that day ſhall the Lord giue thee reſt from thy ſorrow, and from thy feare, and frõ the ſore bondage wherein thou didſt ſerue.*

4. *Then ſhalt thou take vp this prouerb againſt the king of Babel, and ſay, How hath the oppreſſor ceaſed? and the gold-thirſtie* Babel *reſted?*

HEe addes a confirmation to the former promiſes: and thus God vſeth to prouide for our weakeneſſe, becauſe it is very hard for vs to giue credit to his word, but eſpecially then when things are troubled. And yet the Lord will this way proue the ſtedfaſtneſſe of our faith, when he ceaſeth not to promiſe vs ſaluation, and yet all hope thereof ſhall be quite and cleane cut off from vs. He confirmes this with many words, that ſo caſting off all doubt, wee ſhould not ceaſe to reſt our ſelues

God will proue the ſtedfaſtnes of our faith in promiſing vs ſaluation, and in the meane while withholding from vs all hope of obtaining the ſame.

ſelues vpon his gracious free promiſes, how deſperate ſo euer things ſeeme to be. And herewithall alſo he exhorts the Iewes to acknowledge, and neuer to forget ſo excellent and memorable a worke of God. Now of ſet purpoſe hee makes expreſſe mention of *the yoke and bondage*; thereby to teach the Iewes, that the Lord would take away all theſe impediments when it pleaſed him; and that nothing ſhould let him to deliuer his people, as ſoone as he ſaw occaſion. Let vs apply this doctrine to our vſe now, euen in this miſerable ſeruitude and vile bondage of Antichriſt, vnder whom poore Chriſtians are holden. For albeit they be inuironed and incloſed on al ſides in his nets and ſnares, yet haue they *God* for their deliuerer, who will eaſilie ouercome all manner of difficulties and impediments. And this may alſo bee referred to all vexations, miſeries, and troubles.

We are in theſe times to apply this doctrine to our vſes.

Moreouer, by the word *prouerbe*, or, *parable*, (for amongſt the Hebrewes it ſignifies graue ſentences, high & worthy of note) he ſhewes that this deſtruction of Babylon ſhall be ſo great, that men ſhall make a *prouerbe of it*; which they are wont to do in great and wonderfull things. This word *how*, is an interrogation proceeding from a taunting manner of aſtoniſhment: for it was incredible that Babylon (furniſhed with ſuch abundance of riches and ſtrength) could be ouerthrowne, and fall into the hands of her enemies. Hee iuſtly mockes then at their vaine and fooliſh confidence, in regard that being puffed vp with their intollerable pride, they thought themſelues inuincible and out of all danger. But it ſeemes contrarie to the modeſtie of the faithfull, to *mocke* at the miſerie of others: a man would thinke they ſhould rather haue compaſſion on them. But this is not againſt modeſtie, when our zeale is ordered according to the equitie of Gods iudgement: for by humane affection, we may bewaile the miſerie of thoſe who periſh through their owne folly; and yet therewithall deſpiſe their pride and furie. And euen as the Lord exalts himſelf againſt them, ſcorning their beaſtlineſſe; ſo alſo hee doth in this place command vs (which loue and deſire his glory) to contemne them, not after a proud and inſulting maner, but as magnifying and extolling his goodneſſe and power. By this example then it is lawfull for vs to ſcoffe at Gods enemies, when they are ouerthrowne and abaſed as at Antichriſt, whoſe power wee daily ſee to decay by little and little.

To ſcorne the wicked is not againſt modeſtie, when our zeale is ordered therein according to the equity of Gods iudgements. *Pſal.* 2. 4.

The word *Madhemah*, which is put in the end of the verſe, may be tranſlated *gils*, or of gold: but becauſe this word is conioyned with tyrant, or exactor, it is very like the Prophet ſpeakes of the couetouſneſſe and inſatiable deſire of gold, which the Babylonians thirſted after. For it often comes to paſſe, that how much the more, great Empires, Commonwealths, and nations haue of riches, ſo much the more doe they burne with luſt of increaſing and hauing.

Verſ. 5. *The Lord hath broken the rod of the wicked, and the ſcepter of the rulers,*

6. *Which ſmote the people in anger with a continuall plague, and ruled the Nations in wrath: if any were perſecuted, he did not let.*

HE now anſwers to the former interrogation, and would not that the faithfull ſhould any way doubt of the euent thereof, but rather that they ſhould ſtand aſtonied at ſuch admirable workes of God. For the interrogation ſerued to awaken vp their mindes to the greater attention. It is as much then as if he ſhould haue ſaid; It came not to paſſe by chance, or by any blinde paſſion of fortune, that you were not ſtill oppreſſed vnder a continuall bondage, but you are wholly to attribute it *to the prouidence of God, who brake ſo ſore a yoke of ſeruitude from off your neckes.* Now the wicked are at their wits end when they ſee ſuch workes, and ſtand amazed becauſe they ſee not the reaſon of them: but the faithfull know that this ought to bee attributed vnto God. Let vs learne then to admire the workes of the Lord, and let vs bee ſtricken with ſuch an aſtoniſhment, that we may acknowledge him to bee the author of them: and let vs not in any wiſe paſſe lightly ouer the leaſt of them; but eſpecially then when he manifeſts his power in the redemption of his Church, when by his admirable ſtrength, he redeemes any one of vs from vnder the ſeruitude of the diuell, the tyranny of Antichriſt, and from eternall death. For theſe are no common workes; and therefore wee may not in any ſort attribute the ſame to the power of man, or to any other cauſes whatſoeuer. Hee ioynes *the ſcepter of the rulers*, to the ſtaffe of the wicked; ſhewing by this repetition, that an vniuſt tyranny cannot be eſtabliſhed by a power imperial in any ſort whatſoeuer. Then by and by after, he more cleerly ſhewes, that the Monarchy of the Babylonians ſhall be aboliſhed, becauſe it was vniuſt and tyrannicall; and ſaith, that the people were ſmitten with an *incurable wound*, and extremely afflicted, becauſe they ouerflowed in all exceſſiue diſſolutions. By this we are admoniſhed, that howſoeuer God may ſeeme to winke at the tyranny of the wicked for a time, yet that he will ſpare them neuer the more for all that in the latter end, for they ſhall be deſtroyed euen as we know Babylon was, becauſe the Lord is iuſt, and continues alwayes like himſelfe.

Gods works ought diligently to bee obſerued, but eſpecially in the redemption of his Church.

Verſ. 7. *The whole world is at reſt and is quiet: they ſing for ioy.*

8. *Alſo the firre trees reioyced of thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, ſaying, ſince thou art laid downe, no hewer came vp againſt vs.*

HEere he ſhewes how Tyrants are hatefull to all the world, for they are no ſooner dead or deſtroyed, but all *leape for ioy*, ſhewing what affection they caried towards them, which

Tyrants hatefull to all the world.

which for feare before they dissembled. Then shall you see men vtter forth their discontentments and hatreds: and not men only discouer their ioy, but euen the dumb creatures also, as the Prophet addes afterwards, speaking of the *firre trees*, and *cedars*, by way of amplification; for as all things are ouerturned and peruerted by tyranny, so also it being abolished, it seemes all things are put into their perfect estate againe.

Now to the end the speech might haue the greater vehemencie, he addes a figure called Prosopopeia, by which he brings in *trees* speaking and reioycing, that they shall stand quietlie now this tyrant is dead. So then ỹ Prophets drift is to shew that the heauenly Iudge can not indure tyrants alwayes to vsurp, whom all the world detests & hates. Whence we may gather, that albeit men be silent, and dare not open their lips whilst tyrants beare sway, yet the Lord notwithstanding heares their secret grones and complaints. Let vs not wonder then if tyrants be cut off by such admirable meanes; for it is neeessarie that God who is priuie to all the outrages which they commit, should fauour and assist the innocent.

God will not alwayes suffer Tyrants to vsurp.

Vers. 9. *Hell beneath is moued for thee to meete thee at thy comming, raising vp the dead for thee,* euen *all the princes of the earth, and hath raised from their thrones all the kings of the nations.*

EVen as before he attributed gladnes to Trees, so now also by the same maner of speaking hee attributes speech to the *dead*. For he brings them as it were out of their *graues*, to the end they should deride the pride of this tyrant; and all the words following are nothing else in a maner but most pleasant taunts and flouts. For when great kings approch neere a place, people tremble; they go before and receiue them with great pomp and preperations: so *Isaiah* faines that the dead shall goe before this tyrant, who after his death shall descend into his sepulchre, that they may do him homage, but yet such as to him appertaineth. Which is as much as if he should say, His death shall not only be acceptable to the liuing, but to the dead also, so as they shal receiue him honorablie according to his deserts.

Vers. 10. *All they shall cry and say vnto thee, Art thou become weake also as we? Art thou become like vs?*

BEhold what taunts the dead shall vtter against this tyrant, whē he shall be in their companie; as if they asked a reason of him, why he also is dead as well as others. And therefore the Prophet being astonished with the noueltie of such a thing, brings in the dead enquiring thereof with admiration, as of a thing vtterlie incredible. For tyrants are so blinded with their greatnes, that they thinke themselues no mortall creatures, but make themselues halfe gods, and worship themselues. For this cause it is well inough perceiued after their death, that their condition differed in nothing from other men; howsoeuer they thought themselues exempted out of their ranke.

According to this sense, the dead reproch him with a wonderfull nipping derision, in saying, that he is *made like vnto them:* because death onely giues vs to know (as the satyrike Poet speakes) how weake a thing the bodie of man is. *Dauid* also speaking of Princes, and of their dignitie, saith thus; I haue said you are Gods: yet must you die like men, and fall like one of the people: Psal. 82. 6, 7. For the bodies of Princes must needes bee eaten and consumed with wormes at the last; although sumptuous and glorious sepulchres be prepared for such kind of persons.

See Chap. 5. vers. 9. sect. 2.

Vers. 11. *Thy pompe is brought downe to the graue, and the sound of thy viols: the worme is spread vnder thee, and the wormes couer thee.*

HE mentions the royall pompe, to the end one might more diligently note this mutation, when they should compare the former things with the latter: and thus shewes that nothing could let this tyrant from being brought into a like estate with others. Vnder *the instruments of musicke*, hee comprehends all pleasures and voluptuousnesse, wherein Kings are wont to take delight: because by the sweete harmonie thereof, they not onely forget death, but also by these mixed sounds, all cares are driuen away, so as their mindes are somewhat intoxicate therewith.

In the second part of the verse, the dead doe pleasantly say vnto him; *Thou hast* a bed fit for thee. For in stead of tapestrie, or a soft pillow, thou hast mothes; and for a sumptuous couerlet, thou hast *wormes*. To be short, we haue heere a liuely image of mens fooliish confidence, who being besotted with the present prosperitie and peaceable estate of their affaires, reioyce and cheere vp themselues. This doctrine ought to be diligently obserued: for howsoeuer men know well enough what their condition is, and haue death still before their eyes; yet are they so dulled with ambition, and tickled with pleasures, yea bewitched with vaine glory, that they vtterly forget themselues.

Vers. 12. *How art thou fallen from heauen, O Lucifer sonne of the morning! and cut downe to the ground, *which didst cast lots vpon the nations?*

*Or, which weaknedst men.

ISaiah continues the matter which hee began before in the person of the dead; and concludes, that this tyrant differs in nothing from others, although by all his flatteries he indeuoured to perswade himselfe that he was some god. He vseth an elegant similitude in comparing him to the *starre of the morning*; calling him the sonne of the twilight, and that because

becauſe of his excellencie and glorie, which made him ſhine far aboue all others. Whereas ſome haue expounded this place of Satan, they haue done it ignorantly: for the ſcope of the text doth ſufficiently ſhew, that it ſhould be vnderſtood of the King of Babylon. But when men ſnatch vp places of Scripture at randome, and conſider not the coherence of the text, we neede not meruaile if wee often meete with ſo many errours. And yet was it a more abſurd blockiſhneſſe, when they made *Luciſer* the prince of diuels, making folkes beleeue, that the Prophet gaue him this name. But for as much as ſuch inuentions haue no colour at all; let vs leaue them for fables as we found them.

The expoſitours haue been deceiued in the ſecond member of the verſe, in tranſlating the Hebrew particle in the paſſiue ſignification, ſaying, Thou art weakened; ſeeing it is in the actiue ſignification. Notwithſtanding, becauſe the verbe whence it is deriued, ſignifies to caſt the lot; and that the particle *Sur*, is ioyned therewith, this ſenſe agrees well, that this tyrant *diuided all regions by lot*, as the Lord and Maſter of them, and drew them to himſelfe, as if they had appertained to his ſucceſſion. And yet I reiect not the other expoſition; namely, that he weakened the people.

Verſ. 13. *Yet thou ſaidſt in thine heart, I will aſcend into heauen, and exalt my throne aboue beſides the ſtarres of God: I will ſit alſo vpon the mount of the *Congregation of God*.*

*Or, couenant.

*Or, in the ſides of the north.

This phraſe To ſay, expounded.

THis muſt bee ioyned to that which went before. *To ſay*, in this place is taken to reſolue in himſelfe; according to the Hebrew phraſe. For he derides the pride of the Babylonian, who reſting vpon his greatneſſe, durſt be ſo bold as to promiſe himſelfe continuall happineſſe; euen as if it had been in his power to bring the euents of things to paſſe at his pleaſure. Wherein wee haue a faire looking glaſſe to behold the fooliſh pride wherewithall the wicked are puffed vp; which alſo ſometimes they are not aſhamed to vomit forth. Neither muſt we heere conſider the perſon of one tyrant onely, but the damnable furie of all the wicked, which make their concluſions in ſecret, no otherwiſe then if they were able to diſpoſe of all things according to their owne fantaſie. Whoſe plots S. *Iames* deſcribes in liuely colours; We will goe into ſuch a Citie, ſay they, wee will buy, and ſell, and get gaine: and yet in the meane while, they know not what ſhall come to paſſe to morrow: Iam. 4. 13. They neuer thinke they are vnder Gods hand; but haue this ſottiſh conceit, that they will doe all things by their own ſtrength. I grant that this brag, *I will aſcend into heauen*, and that which followes alſo, is ſo abſurd, as it ſeemes impoſſible how it could come out of the mouth of a mortall man: but in regard it was not the Prophets meaning to ſet downe the ſpeeches of *Nebuchadnezzar*, word for word, let it ſuffice vs to conſider the thing it ſelfe. For to ſpeake the truth, whoſoeuer he be that attributes more vnto himſelfe then the condition of men can beare, hee exalts himſelfe againſt God, as the Giants did, of whom the prouerb ſpeakes: whence it followes, that all their deuiſes ſhall come to confuſion. But eſpecially hee, who paſſing beyond the bounds of his calling, prouokes the Lord againſt him by his boldneſſe. And therefore let euery one of vs content himſelfe with his eſtate, and not deſire to be mounting vp aloft: but let vs rather continue in that degree wherein God hath placed vs. Indeed if God reach out his hand vnto any, and lift him higher, he may go further: but he ought to vſurpe nothing to himſelfe, nor to clime vp thereunto of his owne head. And concerning thoſe who are exalted vnto high degree and dignitie, they ought to carry themſelues humbly and modeſtlie; not feinedly, but with ſuch meekeneſſe of ſpirit, as if they were not exalted at all.

Beſides, we may ſufficientlie ſee wherefore the Prophet accuſeth this tyrant of Babylon particularly of ſuch outrage, and alſo what the ſcope is to which theſe figuratiue ſpeeches do aime, the rather by thoſe that follow, to wit, that he deſired *to mount into the mountaine of the teſtimonie*, and by ſuch pride to make himſelfe equall with God. For howſoeuer he made theſe diſcourſes after the ordinarie maner of men, that he was able to conquer the Iewes, yet becauſe he deſpiſed the helpe of God, vnder which they ſhrowded themſelues, as he had often heard tell, it was as much as if he had conſpired to ouerthrow the heauens. Now in ſtead of the mount of Zion, he puts *the ſides of the north*, which deſcription is alſo conteined in the 48. Pſalme. The mountaine of Zion in the ſides of the north, is the citie of the great King. He called it before the mountaine of the teſtimonie, which title is drawne from the verbe *Iaad*, which ſignifies, to vnite, to agree, and make peace. And therefore *Moed* ſignifies peace, couenant, and day prefixed. Laſtly, it may be referred to time, place, and perſons. But I had rather take it heere for couenant, or agreement. For the Lord ſpeaking of the Tabernacle of the couenant in Exodus, ſaith, I will there make appointment with you. Exod. 25. 21. 22. 29. 42. We muſt not thinke then that he ſpeakes heere of an aſſemblie of men, as when the profane meete in fayres or in their feaſt dayes: but that the Lord meant there to ſhew a ſigne of his preſence, and to ratifie his couenant; which we ought diligentlie to obſerue, becauſe this condemnes the ſacrilledge of this wicked king, who rather fought againſt ỹ very *heauens*, then againſt an earthly place.

Verſ. 14. *I will aſcend aboue the height of the cloudes, and will be like the moſt high.*

A Man would maruell that the Prophet doth thus accuſe the king of Babylon, as if he would be check-mate with God, ſeeing that (as wee haue ſaid) ſuch a thought could

could not once enter into any mans heart, but that he muſt needs quake and tremble for feare. For euen as there is in vs ſome ſeed of religion by nature, ſo alſo are we conſtreined in deſpite of our teeth to beare ſome reuerence to this diuinitie, which we thinke to be the moſt excellent aboue all things. And there is no man ſo ſenſeleſſe that would imagin to caſt God out of his throne, becauſe we are all taught by nature rather to honor and worſhip God. And therefore howſoeuer the heathens knew him not, yet notwithſtanding they worſhipped their Idols. Thus we may imagin, it was not likelie that the king of Babylon meant to driue God out of heauen, and to reigne there himſelfe. Yet doth not the Prophet accuſe him without cauſe: for although the vngodlie reſolue not to reigne in Gods ſtead, yet notwithſtanding they fight againſt him whē they exalt themſelues more then they ought; hereby attributing that to themſelues which is proper vnto him: which is as much in effect, as if they meant to pluck him out of his ſeate. And what did ſatan elſe when he deceiued the firſt man? You (ſaith he) ſhall be as gods, Gen. 3.5. Therefore all ſuch as dare attribute more to themſelues then God permits, do lift vp themſelues no otherwiſe then if they meant to proclaime open warre againſt him; for where pride gets the maſterie, there of neceſſitie muſt be the contempt of God.

Where pride gets the maſterie, there the contempt of God muſt needs follow.

And thus alſo we may note that which we haue touched before, to wit, that this tyrant bent himſelfe of ſet purpoſe againſt God as it were in ruſhing himſelfe againſt the Church which is his holy heritage. Seeing then that he violated the heauenlie Sanctuarie, this ought not to ſeeme any exceſſiue maner of ſpeech vnto vs. Now from hence we obſerue a doctrine full of conſolation: for wee are taught that the wicked doe arme themſelues euen againſt God, as oft as they ſet themſelues againſt his Church. This king heere is not accuſed for lifting himſelfe aboue the Angels, but for indeuoring to ouerwhelme the Church of God. Now the ſeruice of God at this day is not ſhut vp in any certain place, but is ſpread thorowout the whole world. In what part ſoeuer then the name of God is called vpon, if there any tyrant do purpoſe or practiſe the deſtruction of the faithfull, let vs know that ſuch a one ſets not himſelfe ſo much againſt men, as againſt God, who will not long indure the proud ſo to make warre vpon him. We ſhall finde the like example hereafter in *Senacherib*, of whom the Prophet ſaith, that in threatning and offring violence to Zion, he did it to God himſelfe. Let vs therefore be aſſured that we are ſo vnder the protection of God, that whoſoeuer doth vs wrong, ſhal haue God for his enemie. He that hurts you (ſaith the Lord) hurts the apple of mine eye. Zach. 2.8. He alſo teſtifieth that he dwels in the midſt of the Church, Pſal. 46.5. ſo as none can aſſaile it but he muſt beare the firſt brunt. He will then ſurely take vengeance of all the wrongs which the Church indures, although he ſuffer it to be afflicted for a time.

The wicked arme themſelues againſt God, as often as they ſet themſelues againſt his Church.

Chap. 36.18. 19.20. & 37.4.6.17.

He that wrongs any member of Chriſt, may aſſure himſelfe to haue God for his enemie.

Verſ. 15. *But thou ſhalt be brought downe to the graue, to the ſides of the pit.*

HE hath heretofore ſhewed, how it was the King of Babel that enterpriſed to ſet his ſeate aboue the cloudes. And now he oppoſeth an euent quite contrarie; to wit, *the ſides of the pit*, or caue, that is to ſay, ſome corner of the ſepulchre into which he ſhould be caſt. For he ſaid before, that this tyrant would aſcend aboue the mountaine of Zion in the *ſides* of the north, becauſe the place on this ſide was high aboue the reſt. Now he takes this word *ſides* in a contrarie ſenſe, as if he ſhould ſay, that he ſhall be put in the moſt contemptible place of the pit or ſepulchre, euen as when a man thruſts one into ſome darke or by-corner. For if ſo be a ſepulchre be large and ſpatious, they deſire to lay the honorableſt perſonage in the midſt of it: but he ſaith, that this fellow ſhall be caſt into ſome hole, or into the *ſides* that ſhall be left emptie. See how the Lord ſcornes the pride of the wicked from an high, ſo as when they ſhall haue deuoured all by their couetounes, and pierced the cloudes & the heauens with their pride, yet will he expoſe them to deriſion at the length, hauing ouerturned all their enterpriſes eué in leſſe then the twinkling of an eye.

Verſ. 16. *They that ſee thee ſhall looke vpon thee and conſider thee, ſaying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, and that did ſhake the kingdomes?*

THE Prophet ſcornes this wicked king againe in the perſon of the dead, and yet this may alſo be vnderſtood of the liuing: but it is better to referre this whole ſpeech to the dead, vnleſſe we had rather vnderſtand it of the ſepulchre, which is almoſt all one in effect. Now we are wont to ſtretch forth our neck, and to ſtand vpon the tipto when any admirable or rare thing is preſented to our view. So in regard it was a thing almoſt incredible that this king furniſhed with ſo great power ſhould be dead, the Prophet ſaith, that all haue caſt *their eyes* vpon him to behold him diligentlie, as if they could hardly beleeue that to be true which they ſaw euidentlie before them. They aske in the firſt 1
place whether it be poſſible that he which *made the world to tremble* with his looke only, could be ſo ſuddenlie & eaſilie brought low. Next, the Prophet ſhewes how all his wicked 2
deſires and enterpriſes are ouerthrowne; as alſo that tyrants with their crueltie are like to cloudes, which poure downe water or haile on a ſudden as though they meant to deſtroy the whole world, but they are ſcattered and gone in an inſtant. And this ſimilitude that ſame good old father *Athanaſius* vſed, when ſome threatned him with the furie of *Iulian*. Now the Prophet ſhewes that this change came from the hand of God, who by his only will can ouerthrow the whole world.

See Martin Luther vpon the Pſalme of degrees, fol. 33.

Vers. 17. *Hee made the world as a wildernesse, and destroyed the Cities thereof, and opened not the house of his prisoners.*

IN this verse he expresseth the crueltie and inhumanitie of this Tyrant; namely, that he brought the world to a *wildernesse, raised the Cities, deliuered not his prisoners.* Those who haue obtained victorie, haue been accustomed sometimes to release their prisoners, that they might win their hearts by gentlenesse: but Tyrants had rather bee feared then loued: because they perswade themselues, that the onely safe way to raigne, is to make themselues feared of all, through a brutish cruelty. We need not wonder then at their so miserable and wofull an end: for it cannot bee but God must render them like for like; after hee hath corrected his Church by their crueltie, shewing no more mercy to them, then they did to others. Thus then he shewes how miserable Tyrants are, in regard they haue both God and men their enemies.

1 2 3

Tyrants had rather be feared then loued.

Vers. 18. *All the Kings of the Nations,* euen *they all sleepe in glorie, euerie one in his owne house.*

19. *But thou art cast out of the graue like an abominable branch:* like *the rayment of those that are slaine, and thrust thorow with a sword, which goe downe to the stones of the pit, as a carkase troden vnder feete.*

HEe opposeth the King of Babylon against other Kings; to shew that hee shall be more wretched after his death, then they all. And thus he amplifies the iudgement of God (who should execute vengeance vpon the cruelties done to his Church) by comparison. This place is the cause why I dare not restraine that which *Isaiah* speakes heere of the King of Babylon, to the onely person of *Nebuchadnezzar:* because we finde not by histories, that hee was depriued of *buriall.* Although the Iewes tell, how *Euil-merodach* commanded hee should be taken out of his sepulchre, because the great Lords of his kingdome durst not doe him homage, till they were certaine of the death of his father. But S. *Ierome,* howsoeuer hee be credulous enough in other things, yet holds this as a fable. He speakes not then of one man particularly, but of the whole Kingdome: euen as when the Scripture speakes of Antichrist, it comprehends the estate of all the Popes. And therefore he scornes the pride of all Tyrants, vnder the person of one, testifying what their issue shall be; to wit, that they shall fall into such miserie, that not so much as a small handfull of dust shall be giuen them for their buriall: howsoeuer in times past they were like insatiable gulfes, whom all the wealth in the world was not able to satisfie. Those which haue scarse one foot of land, haue notwithstanding the honour of buriall; and this was esteemed sacred and inuiolable aboue all things among the Patriarks: for it was a great dishonour to be depriued of this priuiledge. Yet he shewes that the Kings of Babylon should receiue such an opprobie, that being *cast out of the sepulchre* of their fathers, they should be a spectacle of disdaine vnto all. But some may aske, whether it were so great a matter in Gods sight, to bee buried with a mans predecessors, that it should be esteemed as a punishment and curse to be depriued of it? I answere, he speakes not of the sepulchre here, as of a thing necessarie to saluation: and yet that it was reputed a great shame for this Tyrant to want buriall.

Quest.

Ans.

First of all then let vs consider why buriall was so esteemed among all Nations. Doubtlesse this came from the Patriarks, whose bodies the Lord commanded to bee buried, in hope of the last resurrection. The carkases of beasts are cast out, because they are ordained to none other end but to turne to rottennesse: but our bodies are couered with earth, that being laid vp therein, they may wait for the last day; at which time they shall be raised vp to inioy the soule in an eternall and blessed life.

The reason why we are buried, and beasts are not.

Whereas diuers superstitions are crept in touching the buriall of the dead, it is certaine that Satan hath brought this to passe by his subtletie; who is wont to corrupt and peruert all things, which yet in their owne nature are good and profitable: for he hath forged infinite waies whereby to bewitch men. But concerning the Iewes, we are not to meruaile if they had many ceremonies in this behalfe, neither ought wee to condemne them for it: for they had not so cleere and manifest a reuelation of the resurrection, because Christ was not yet reuealed. But the matter is farre otherwise now, seeing we behold our resurrection in Iesus Christ apparently, and the vaile being taken away, wee now see the promises as in the sunshine, which were obscure to the Iewes. If at this day then any would bring in and reuiue the ancient ceremonies; such a one should suppresse the light, and doe great wrong vnto Iesus Christ: for, they indeuour to put a vaile before him, who hath discouered himselfe vnto vs with open face. Notwithstanding it is not vnprofitable to regard the interring of the corps, because it is a witnesse of the last resurrection, which wee yet wait for. But we ought vtterly to reiect all such superstitions, and pompe of funerals, which indeed euery faithfull man should abhorre.

Buriall of the dead ought to be retained, but superstitious customes therin to be reiected.

But if any bee left vnburied, wee must consider the cause. For many Prophets, Martyres, and holy personages haue been depriued of buriall. Wee heare how the Church complaines, that the bodies of Gods seruants were cast out to the beasts and birds, and that there was none to bury them: Psal. 79. 2. And wee daily behold how they burne, drowne, and hang the seruants of Iesus Christ, whose death notwithstanding is pretious and blessed in Gods sight. For euen as the Crosse of our Lord was blessed; so also the gibbers,

2. *Thes.* 2.

The cause why some are left vnburied.

Psal. 116. 15

bands,

bands, chaines and deaths which his members endure do partake of this bleſſing, yea, and that in ſuch wiſe, that they far ſurmount the felicitie, decking-maieſtie, and pomp of all the kings of the earth: ſo as according to S. *Paules* example, they may boldly glory in theſe afflictions. Rom. 5. 3. 2. Cor. 12. 9. Gal. 6. 14. Moreouer, albeit we can ſee nothing but a ſigne of Gods wrath vpon thoſe whom he depriues of buriall, yet muſt we haue our recourſe to the former, and ſuch like ſentences.

Iere. 22. 19. Now as *Ieremiah* threatned *Ioachim* that he ſhould be buried as an aſſe, becauſe he deſerued rather to be laid with the brute beaſts then with men, who after death are ſeparated from the condition of beaſts by meanes of buriall: euen ſo, in as much as this Babylonian had exalted himſelfe aboue all, it was good reaſon he ſhould be deiected beneath all, ſo as his bodie might remaine without buriall. *Iſaiah* then foretels that this tyrant ſhall not be buried *in his houſe*, that is to ſay, in the Sepulchre of his anceſters and predeceſſors: for we muſt not thinke that the Sepulchres were within the houſes. The ſimilitudes which are conioined do further expreſſe the iuſt ignominie of this tyrant: for, as *burſtfull and vnprofitable trees* are pluckt vp by the roores, ſo he ſhewes that the king of Babylon was not worthie to remaine among men. Afterward, he compares him to the *garments of the ſlaine*, becauſe thoſe which die in battaile are not buried according to the accuſtomed maner, but as bloodie and ſtinking carrions troden vnder feete are tumbled into the pit clothes and all, leſt they ſhould infect the aire with their ſmell. Neither will any man offer to touch clothes defiled with blood and mire, for feare of drawing ſome infection frō them. Now we can not affirme that this hapned to the kings of Babylon, yet no queſtion but it was fulfilled, neither ought we to doubt any thing at all of it.

Verſ. 20. *Thou ſhalt not be ioyned with them in the graue, becauſe thou haſt deſtroyed thine owne land, and ſlaine thine owne people: the ſeed of the wicked ſhall not be renoumed for euer.*

NOw he ſhewes the reaſon why the king of Babylon is vnworthie of buriall, to wit, becauſe he which had *deſtroyed his owne land*, was neither worthie to be receiued into it, nor couered therewith. For euen as the earth ſuſtaines vs whilſt we liue, ſo alſo doth it couer vs being dead, and keepes vs in her bowels vnto the comming of Ieſus Chriſt. It is then a iuſt puniſhment of crueltie when ſhe refuſeth to receiue thoſe into her boſome that haue offred her violence, and defiled her. He yet addes a more fearefull threat, to wit, that God will poure out the remainder of his plagues vpon the ſucceſſors. Yet when he ſaith, *The ſeed of the wicked ſhall not be renoumed for euer*, we may expound this member two waies, either that the race of the wicked 1 ſhall not long endure, or that it ſhall be vt- 2 terlie put out. The diuerſitie of the interpretation conſiſts in the word *alwaies*, for it is either referred to the time paſt, or to come. To the time paſt thus, Although the *ſeed of the wicked* haue borne ſway for a while, yet the memorie thereof is vaniſhed and gone in the end. In the time to come, thus, God will ſo blot out the *race of the wicked*, that there ſhall be no more mention of them. Now it is vſuall with the Lord to curſe the ſeed of the wicked; as on the contrarie he bleſſeth the of-ſpring of the faithfull. And euen as the memorie of the iuſt indures for euer, ſo alſo doth it follow of neceſſitie that the remembrance of the wicked ſhould be vtterlie extinct and aboliſhed. Now howſoeuer we ſee not theſe things fulfilled with our bodily eies, yet haue we ample and pregnant teſtimonies for it, whereby the truth of the doctrine is ſufficientlie confirmed vnto vs. 1 2 *Pſal. 112. 6. Prou. 10. 7. Pſal. 34. 16.*

But we are now to obſerue the reaſon of this vengeance, to wit, the Lord will hereby puniſh the pride of reprobates who wil needs aduance their names, and leaue a perpetuall renoume thereof behind them: and hereunto tend all the counſels, enterpriſes, and endeuors of prophane men. Contrariwiſe, the Lord blots our their name and memorie, which yet ſeemed to be ingrauen in euerlaſting monuments. Thus it comes to paſſe that they are not only expoſed to contempt, but euery one deteſts and abhors them. Which in cōcluſion befalles all tyrants, for howſoeuer they be flattered and applauded of all whilſt they liue, yet are they and all their poſteritie held in vile eſtimation when they are dead and gone. And thus it appeares they are deteſtable to God, Angels, and men. Tyrants flattered of all whilſt they liue, but being dead, they are deteſted of all.

Verſ. 21. *Prepare a ſlaughter for his children, for the iniquitie of their fathers: let them not riſe vp nor poſſeſſe the land, nor fill the face of the world with* enemies. * Or, Cities.

HEere *Iſaiah* propheſieth againſt the king of Babylon in plainer termes then heretofore. Now we muſt remember what I haue ſaid alreadie, to wit, that hitherunto he hath not ſpoken of one particular man only, but of the whole kingdome: and now he alſo takes away the ambiguitie of this maner of ſpeech. Whereas the old tranſlation hath it, Prepare his ſonnes to the ſlaughter, it comes not neere enough to the right ſenſe, for the letter *Lamed* being put before ỹ word *ſonnes*, ſhews it ſhould be tranſlated, *Prepare a ſlaughter for his ſonnes*. Now let vs ſee to whom this ſpeech is directed, for we muſt of neceſſitie vnderſtand that he here couertlie ſpeakes to certaine officers, ſergeants, or executioners, whom God commands to *prepare* themſelues for the execution of his iudgement. And who are they? partly the Medes and Perſians, as alſo others, by whom Babylon was raſed to the foundation. It was not vtterlie deſtroyed when the Perſians tooke it (as we haue ſaid before.) Thus then he ſpeakes to thoſe whom God had ordeined in his ſecret counſell to deſtroy Babylon. This phraſe of ſpeech

hath greater vehemencie in it then if he had barely ſaid, The ſlaughter is prepared: for he ſhewes that God not onely diſpoſeth of that which the wicked are to doe, but that hee alſo hath executioners at his commandement, to auenge himſelfe vpon their iniquities.

Obiect. Whereas he by and by addes, that *the iniquitie of the fathers* ſhal be puniſhed by meanes hereof: it may at the firſt ſeeme ouer ſeuere, to couple the children with the fathers, as touching the puniſhment which the fathers haue deſerued, and ought to beare. And yet ſeemes it to be more hard, that the puniſhment due to the fathers ſhould be extended to the children, and their childrens children. But this abſurditie may eaſily bee auoided, if we interpret the Hebrew word *Aon*. Miſerie: becauſe it ſignifies as well the puniſhment of the ſinne, as the ſinne it ſelfe. But becauſe ſuch ſentences are found in many places of the Scripture; to wit, that God will viſit the iniquitie of the fathers vpon the children: we need ſeeke no ſuch euaſion. Neither doth the place in *Ezechiel*; The ſonne ſhall not beare the iniquity of his father: Ezech. 18.20. croſſe this. For God puniſheth not the innocent: neither muſt we ſo vnderſtand this place, as if the puniſhment due to the anceſtors, were conueied ouer by God vnto the children, altogether guiltleſſe: for the fault of the children is forth-with coupled therewithall.

Anſ. *Exod.* 20 5. & 34 7. *Deut.* 5.9. *Ier.* 32.18. *Ezek.* 18.20.

But leauing now to ſpeake of that vniuerſall curſe of all mankinde, whereunto all of vs are ſubiect from our mothers wombes; let vs take an example from ſome wicked one; whom when God reiects with his whole race, truely we haue no cauſe at all to complain of it. For his bleſſing is free: and it is not lawfull for vs to compell him to beſtow it equally vpon all: becauſe he may diſpoſe of his grace according to his owne good pleaſure; and it is the dutie of euery of vs apart, to acknowledge, that whatſoeuer good thing wee haue receiued, it is none of our own properly nor naturally, but comes vnto vs from elſewhere; namely, frō Gods free libealirty. If ſo be then that he reiect any; muſt it not alſo needes follow, that his ſeede ſhould bee accurſed? For what can remaine in thoſe which are deſtitute of his grace, but a maſſe of impiety? And if they deſerue eternal death, much more are they worthy of tempotall puniſhments: for hee who expects the cutting off of his head, ought much more to iudge himſelfe worthy of the priſon and ſtripes. Wee muſt obſerue this point diligently. For I hold the ſolution of thoſe but childiſh, who thinke the Lord puniſheth the children of the wicked with temporall puniſhments, becauſe of the iniquities of their fathers: thinking it not vnbeſeeming for the Lord to correct thoſe that are innocent. Now we know he neuer puniſheth ſuch as haue not deſerued it: beſides, he is naturally inclined to mercy. But how ſhould he ſpare the wicked, if he ſhould exerciſe his wrath againſt the guiltleſſe? This then muſt be held as a thing reſolued; to wit, that all ſuch as are deſtitute of Gods grace, are ſubiect to the iudgement of eternall death. Whence it followes, that the children of reprobates, whom the curſe of God purſues, are ſubiect to the ſame condemnation with their fathers. And therefore *Iſaiah* ſpeakes not of innocent children, but of the loſt and deſperate; which, it may be, haue ſurpaſſed their fathers in wickedneſſe: and therefore are iuſtly coupled with them, and adiudged to the ſame puniſhments with them; becauſe they haue walked in their ſteps. But ſome may ſay, that then they beare their owne puniſhment; and not that which their fathers haue deſerued. I grant this to be true in part: but the reiection began before in their fathers; for which cauſe they are alſo forſaken and caſt away of God. And yet their fault is not ſo particular as if they were not guiltie at all; but being inwrapped in the ſame ſinnes in regard of reprobation, they are alſo liable to the ſame miſeries and puniſhment. I know wel enough that this ſolution will not ſatisfie thoſe who neuer ceaſe to diſpute & braule againſt God: but if ſo be I ſatisfie the faithfull, and thoſe that are not contentious, I paſſe not much what the reſt ſay. As for the faithfull, I doubt not but they will content themſelues with this ſolution, which I dare affirme to be moſt true.

In the end of the verſe, ſom tranſlate, That they fill the world no more with enemies: as if the Prophet meant to ſay, that all the wicked are the enemies of mankind; yea, euen of the whole earth: and therefore that the Lord prouides for the ſafety of all, when he ſweeps them from the earth: otherwiſe it ſhould be choked by them, as with thornes and briars. It ſeemes that this ſignification expreſſeth ſomewhat more; becauſe the earth receiues vs into her lap, if we diſcharge our dutie: but if wee be contemners of God, it nouriſheth and ſuſtaines vs vnwillingly, as her very enemies. Yet had I rather follow the other ſignification, which is more generally receiued: for I thinke the Prophet meant to ſay, that the wicked grow vp into a ſtocke and linage, and bring forth children in great abundance; ſo as they exceed their progenitors in number, and are more glorious in ſhew: and thence came the prouerbe, that an ill weede growes apace. Now whereas wee behold an infinit multitude of wicked ones, which haue couered the face of the whole earth as it were, we may euen thanke our ſelues for it: and yet the Lord neuer deales ſo ſeuerely with vs, but hee reſerues alwaies ſome good ſeede, although it be very thin ſowne: yea he alwaies hath an eye vnto ſome corner of the world, where he may giue his ſeruants ſome litle breathing. And if he ſhould diminiſh the multitude of the wicked nothing at all, it is certaine they would forthwith ouerſpread the whole earth. By this is confirmed that which wee haue ſaid before; to wit, that the children of the Babylonians were not *ſlaine* cauſleſſe; becauſe it is here ſaid, it was to the end they ſhould not *fill the world with Cities*. It followes then, that they were wicked, and therefore cut off by the iuſt iudgement of God; that by this meanes hee might prouide

We may thanke our ſelues that the wicked are ſo multiplied.

for

for the ſafetie of men; and that the Lord cannot be accuſed of cruelty or hard dealing.

Verſ. 22. *For I will riſe vp againſt them (ſaith the Lord of hoſtes) and will put off from Babel the name and the remnant, and the ſonne, and the nephew, ſaith the Lord.*

NOw the *Lord* teſtifieth, that *he* will doe that himſelfe which he before had commanded others to do by the miniſtrie of the Prophet: ſo that we muſt obſerue both the one and the other, namely, that it is a worke of God when the wicked come to nought, although he vſe men as inſtruments to execute his iudgements. For he ſpake thus to them heretofore: *Prepare a ſlaughter*, verſ. 21. Whence we haue to note not only the power of God, but alſo the efficacie of propheſie. When the Prophets (ordeined of God) giue commandement to all nations to do this or that, it is then ſo farre off that men can hinder the euent thereof, that they are euen conſtreined to performe the will of God. Now becauſe we ordinarilie ſtay our ſelues vpon men, and in forſaking God attribute the power of doing all things vnto them, we muſt hold this principle, that ſeeing God worketh by them, himſelfe is properlie the author of the worke, whereof they are only but the executioners and inſtruments. This is clearely inough laid open vnto vs by the dependance of the places following.

Though God vſe men as his inſtrumēts in bringing the wicked to nought, yet the worke is properly ſaid to be his owne.

I haue thought it beſt to reſolue the letter *Vau* into a particle of ſhewing the cauſe: for he yeelds the reaſon wherfore he commands the Medes and Perſians to prepare a deſtruction and ſlaughter for the Babylonians: *for I will riſe vp againſt them*, ſaith he: and this phraſe where God ſaith he will *ariſe*, is very frequent. Thus alſo the Prophet applies himſelfe to our capacitie, becauſe the maieſtie of God is ſo high that we can not comprehend it. We thinke he takes his eaſe, and is idle, whileſt he winks at the wicked: and therefore when he will cauſe men to feele his power, and giue ſome teſtimonie thereof by ſome viſible worke, he ſaith he *will ariſe*.

This phraſe I will ariſe, expounded.

The epithite which he afterward addes, calling him *The Lord of hoſtes*, ſerues for a confirmation of this ſentence: as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, I haue not giuen theſe Commandements to the nations of mine owne head, for it is *God* that gouernes and leades all the battailes vnder his owne hand. Seeing ℣ Prophet is ordeined then to pronounce the ſentēce on *Gods behalfe*, he may alſo *command* mē, to ℣ end they may yeeld obedience vnto him. He yet repeates the ſame thing in the latter end of the verſe, ſhewing that he ſpeakes nothing but that which the Lord gaue him in charge, that ſo the propheſie might be the more autenticall. Now it hath been often told vs before, that Babylon was not thus ruinated till after the death of *Alexander* the Great. By the *ſonnes, and nephewes*, he meanes not only the Poſteritie, but the Memorie which the wicked would obteine, ſo as they might be long renoumed after their death. God tooke euen this alſo away from Babylon, that ſo no remembrance ſhould remaine thereof at all, but only reproch and ignominie.

ſayth the Lord.

God cuts off not only the poſteritie of the wicked, but their memorie alſo. Pro. 10.7.

Verſ. 23. *And I will make it a poſſeſſion to the hedghog, and pooles of water, and I will ſweepe it with the beaſome of deſtruction, ſaith the Lord of hoſtes.*

HE yet againe confirmes the ſame things which he ſpake heretofore touching the future deſtruction of Babylon, to wit, that men ſhall hereafter inhabit it no more, but it ſhall be made an hidious Caue, into which wilde beaſts ſhall retire. Some ſay that the word *Kipod* (which we haue tranſlated *Bittur*) ſignifies a Beuer, others an Hedghog, other a Torteis. But it is very likely by the circumſtance of the place that our Prophet ſpeakes of a beaſt which frequents the waters; becauſe afterwards he mentions *pooles*, or mariſh, which in deed properlie belongs to the ſituation of the place: for howſoeuer Babylon was not compaſſed in with pooles, yet is it ſituated in a moiſt ſoile. Euphrates waters the region on the one ſide, and Tigris on the other: thence it is that the Lord threatens to drowne it.

Verſ. 24. *The Lord of hoſtes hath ſworne, ſaying, Surely like as I haue purpoſed, ſo ſhall it come to paſſe, and as I haue conſulted it ſhall ſtand,*

IT was needfull to adde an *othe* for the more full confirmation of the threatning. For nothing is more hardly beaten into our heads then to heare tell of a preſent deſtruction of the wicked, becauſe we ſee them floriſhing, furniſhed with all kind of helps, ſeeming to be out of all dangers, & vtterlie ſecure. Therfore wee are at our wits end in beholding them, being ſo dazled with their glorie, that we can ſcarſly beleeue God when he threatens their ruin and perdition; and therefore he addes an *othe*, that they might haue no occaſion to hang in any ſuſpence. Whence we may ſee how gratious & louing he is towards vs in ſuccoring our weaknes by applying this remedie vnto it, for otherwiſe his bare word ought to ſuffice. This ſerues then for the great conſolation of the faithfull, as we ſhall ſee hereafter. But this ſhort forme of an othe which he vſeth ought to be well knowne vnto vs, becauſe we meete often with it in the ſcriptures: and thereby the Lord bridles vs leſt we ſhould take too great libertie in oths which ſlip out of our mouths at randon with too much boldnes: for he ſuppreſſeth the greater part of the othe, *If I performe not this which I haue decreed, let men take me for a lier, and hold me no more for God*: this I ſay, or ſome thing elſe like vnto it (fearefull to vtter) ſhould be heere ſupplied. Men ought then to refraine their tongues, leſt they ouerflow too lightlie in execrations, making horrible impre-

The reaſon why God is faine to adde an oth to his threatnings.

See the like in Chap. 22. 14.

Oths ſlip out of our mouthes at randon with too much boldnes, but Gods ſparingnes in ſuppreſſing the greater part of his oth ought to bridle our intēperancie.

imprecations against themselues: yea let them rather learne by the Lords example here, to hold in their rebellion.

Vers. 25. *That I will breake Ashur to pieces in my land, and vpon my mountaines will I tread him vnder foote: so that his yoke shall depart from them, and his burden shal be taken from off their shoulder.*

2. King. 19. 35. Chap. 37. 36

SOme thinke this is spoken of the host of *Senacherib*, which was destroyed by the Angell, whilest the siege was before Ierusalem. If wee shall receiue this interpretation, the sense will be thus; to wit, The Lord will shortly shew some euident proofe of this ruine, wherewith hee threatned the Babylonians. For those which heard the propheties, might aske, What shall the ruine of Babel profit vs, when she hath destroyed vs first? were it not better for vs to remain in our own lād, & that she might continue safe? What consolation can we take in her destruction, seeing with her our selues must also perish? And truely I make no question but *Isaiah* sets before them a proofe of Gods fauour in the destruction of their enemies; which was either come to passe already, or should shortly happen. I dare not affirme in what time the Prophet foretold this, vnlesse there bee some probable coniecture, that the discomfiture of the host of *Senacherib*, made by the Angell, was already accomplished. According to this sense the Prophet should take this famous example, to giue them good hope of the deliuerance to come: as if hee had said; You haue heeretofore felt how miraculously God assisteth his people in time of neede. And this is the reason which makes me thinke the armie of *Senacherib* was already destroyed. It was needfull then that there should be some vse of this doctrine.

There may be some probable coniecture that Senacherib was discomfited before the time of this particular prophecie.

Obiect.

But Babylon beganne not to molest the Iewes, till she had subdued the Assyrians, and transported the Monarchy. To what end then should the Prophet speake of the iudgement which God would bring to auēge the wrong done to his people, when as the Iewes had as yet nothing to doe with the Babylonians?

Anſ.

There is no absurditie to say, that a thing alreadie come to passe, should be mingled with a prophecie: neither were it amisse to say, that the Assyrians should here be put for the Caldeans. For although they had no Monarchy, yet is it very likely they were alwaies first prepared, as oft as war was to be made with the Iewes: and so fought vnder the leading of others, that in the meane while they made the greatest parte of the armie. First, they were neerer hand then the Caldeans, and those which then ruled, knew well that such people would be loyall and obedient, because of the ancient hatred which they bare to the Iewes. Adde hereunto, that it was the benefit of the Conquerours to subiect the conquered by continuall warres, vntill they were inured to beare the yoke. All which considered, it is not amisse that *Isaiah* speaking of Babylon, comprehends all the forces thereof vnder the name of *Ashur*; so taking a part for the whole.

No absurditie would follow, if the Prophet should put the Assyrian here, for the Caldean.

Thus there is no reason that constraines vs to expound this place of the discomfiture performed by the Angell in the host of *Senacherib*. For as I take it, the Prophet meant only to affirme, that God would put an end to the tyrannie of the Assyrians; so as they should not be alwaies so mightie: as if hee should say, Although God permit the wicked to beare rule ouer you for a time, yet this domination or superioritie shall not last euer; for hee will one day deliuer his people from the seruitude which oppresseth them, by *breaking the yoke* from off their necks. And as hath bin said already, although the Assyrians were subdued by the Caldeans, yet did they not cease for all that to be enemies to the church still. But Babylon, which succeeded *Niniue*, hauing the preheminence by transporting thereof, began to make warre with the Iewes.

Where it is said, that *Ashur shall be broken in Iudah*: wee must not take it as if they should be slaine there, or destroyed by some discomfiture; but that the elect people should be deliuered from their tyranny: by means whereof their dominion should be abolished. The *breaking* therefore is not referred so much to the persons, as to the Empire. That which he adds touching the *yoke and the burden*, cānot be properly vnderstood of the Assyrians onely, who yet neuer had taken Ierusalem. And therfore we must note that succession, whereof I spake heretofore: because the Caldeans had no occasion to make war, vnlesse it were because they boasted to haue the preheminence ouer the Assyrians. Now yee see the cause why I thought good to extend this prophecie to that deliuerance whereby the Lord shewed himselfe the protector of his people against the Caldeans and Assyrians; because the *yoke* was then shaken off, vnder which the Iewes were miserably hampered: yea, thus it comprehends the deliuerance purchased by Christ, whereof this was but a beginning.

Some thinke touching that which followeth concerning the *Mountaines*, that they haue put the plurall number in stead of the singuler, as if hee spake of mount Zion: but I had rather translate it otherwise. For in as much as Ierusalem was situated among the mountaines, the whole countrie was contemned for that regard. Wherefore the Prophet speakes by way of derision, granting to the enemies that the mountanous region was indeed the lesse esteemed because of them. But this contempt serued to amplifie the power of God, who deliuers his *Mountaines* from vnder the dominion of a mightie Monarchie. Hereunto appertaines that which is conteined in the twentith Chapter of the first book of Kings, verses 23. 28.

Vers. 26. *This is the counsell that is consulted vpon the whole world, and this*

is

is the hand ſtretched out ouer all nations.

The Lord contents not himſelfe with a confirmation or two: no, he hath much adoe to refraine from aſſuring vs more and more of one and the ſame thing; and all becauſe he knowes how greatly our vnderſtanding is naturellie inclined to diſtruſt: for no repetitions ſuffice vs, although hee makes neuer ſo large promiſes in many words, and addes his othe thereunto. The Lord then we ſee is deſirous to remedie this euil, and thereto tends the repetition, that we ſhould not eſteeme it as ſuperfluous. For thoſe who think the Prophet (or rather the ſpirit of God) ſhould heape vp too many words, haue not yet attained vnto any knowledge of their owne weakenes. Well, in the firſt place he propounds the *will* and *counſell* of God: ſecondly his *power*. Whence comes it that we doubt of his word, but becauſe wee attribute not that ſtrength vnto God which to him belongeth, neither are we well perſwaded of his power? Theſe two things are wholie the cauſe of our incredulitie, againſt which wee ought to oppoſe two other things, which *Iſaiah* heere recommends vnto vs, to wit, the *counſell*, and the *power* of God. For we muſt in the firſt place hold it without controuerſie that the Lord is true, becauſe he pronounceth nothing but that which is ſtable and *immutable*: ſecondly, that he is *almightie*, that euery knee muſt bowe vnder his hand. Now it is not for vs to ſearch into the ſecret counſell of God, becauſe the Prophet commands vs heere to reſt our ſelues contented in the decree which the Lord hath manifeſted vnto vs by his word. We muſt not then flie any higher to prie into the ſecrets of God, but muſt reſt ſatisfied with the infallible teſtimonies which hee propounds vnto vs by the mouth of his Prophets. Let vs therefore with all our affections imbrace the promiſes of God, and ioine his power thereunto, becauſe his *mightie hand* ought neuer to be ſeparated from his *mouth*.

But we muſt take heed we imagin not an idle power after the maner of Philoſophers, but ſuch a one as the ſcriptures do informe vs of, that is, a power full of efficacie, and ſpeedie in execution. But ſome may here demand why mention is made *of all the world*, and *of all nations*, ſeeing he ſpeakes only of Babylon? We muſt remember what I haue ſaid heretofore, to wit, that the Empire of Babylon hauing conquered Nineue, did ſpread it ſelfe ouer all the Eaſt, and that diuers nations were ſubiect vnto it, for which cauſe the ruin thereof was alſo the ruin of the whole world: for ſuch Monarchies can not fall, but they muſt needs pull great deſtruction vpon others with them. Wherefore ſeeing the huge maſſe of ſo great an Empire might peraduenture haue called the certentie of this propheſie into queſtion, *Iſaiah* ſhewes, that albeit it ſhould ouerſpread far and wide, and comprehend infinit multitudes of people, yet none of all this ſhould let God to put his decree in execution.

The Lord is deſirous to cure our infidelitie.

Thoſe who thinke the ſpirit of God is wont to vſe too many repetitions, haue not yet thoroughlie felt their owne weakenes.

We muſt oppoſe the counſell and power of God againſt our infidelitie.

Let vs with all the powers of our affections imbrace the promiſes of God, and ioine his power thereto.

Queſt.

Anſ.

Verſ. 27. Becauſe the Lord of hoſtes hath determined it, and who ſhall diſannull it? and his hand is ſtretched out, and who ſhall turne it?

HEere the Prophet vſeth an exclamation as it were the better to confirme the former ſentence. For hauing told them that this was the counſell of the Lord, to the end he might ſhew them it is ſo inuiolable that it can not be broken, Pſal. 33. 11. he asks the queſtion as of a thing vtterlie impoſſible: Who (ſaith he) can diſannull his counſell, or turne his hand back? and thus by this exclamation he ſets himſelfe boldlie againſt all creatures. For the Lord no ſooner decrees a thing, but he ſtretcheth forth his hand: Is it once lifted vp? the worke then muſt of neceſſitie be put in execution. Now he not only excludes men by this his exclamation fro being able to hinder the decree of God, but all things elſe whatſoeuer; yea, be it that any other creature beſides the diuell or man would ſet it ſelfe againſt his will. To conclude, he ſhewes, that God is not ſubiect to repentance or change, but whatſoeuer falles out, were it in the greateſt confuſion in the world; yet is he alwaies like himſelfe; neither can his enterpriſe be foreſtowed by any occaſion. Num. 23. 19.

Obiect.

If any replie, that God hath changed his counſell ſometime, as when he pardoned the Niniuits, *Abimelech*, or *Pharaoh*: the anſwere is eaſie. For when the Lord ſent *Ionah* to the Niniuits, he manifeſted not that which he had decreed in his ſecret counſell, but meant to touch their hearts, and to bring them to repentance by the preaching of the Prophet, that he might ſhew them mercie, Ionah 3. 3. & 3. 10. The like he did when he threatned *Abimelech* and *Pharaoh*, becauſe they had taken *Abrahams* wife vnto them, Gen 12. 17. and 20. 3. for the Lord by fearing them cauſed them to change their courſe, leſt they ſhould be puniſhed for their obſtinacie.

God ſent a meſſage to the Niniuits by Ionah, but he manifeſted not that which he had decreed in his ſecret counſell, which was to ſhew them mercie.

Verſ. 28. In the yeere that king Ahaz died was this burden.

The fifteenth Chapter ſhould begin heere.

THis ſhould be the beginning of the fifteenth Chapter, becauſe the Prophet enters now into a new argument: whence it euidently appeares how ill the Chapters haue been diuided, or rather torne in ſunder. For hauing ſpoken of the Babylonians, he comes to intreate of the Philiſtins, of whom he was to ſpeake before he came to mention other nations. Now theſe were the Iewes neere neighbours, and hated them deadly: theſe were the remainder of the nations which the Iſraelites had ſpared, although the Lord had expreſly commanded that to be wholie rooted out. The peoples infidelitie was the cauſe why the Lord ſuffred this remnant to remain euen as thornes to prick their eies, which puniſhment God had threatned them with before, as the Scripture teacheth, Numb. 33. 55. Deut. 7. 16. Wherefore in regard there was

deadlie feode betweene these two nations, there came no sooner any damage vnto the Iewes, but the Philistims counted it their gaine. For they desired to see the Iews rooted out, neither could any newes be better welcome vnto them, then to heare that the people of God were ouerwhelmed with all manner of miseries and calamities. This is the cause why the Prophet prophecieth against them, as against the perpetuall enemies of the Church.

The cause why the Prophet prophecieth against the Philistims.

Now the *time* is to be noted wherein this vision was represented vnto the Prophet: because the Philistims were very strong during the life of *Ahaz*: and this wretched hypocrit was punished for his disloyaltie, because by forsaking God, he fled vnto outward helpes; as namely, vnto men. And therefore in his time the Philistims recouered the Cities that *Vzziah* had taken: yea they gathered more strength after his death, because they hoped to attaine their enterprises, by reason that the heire of the Kingdome was but a childe. For *Ezechias*, who was the new King, had as yet neither wisedome, counsell, nor authoritie. It is needfull then to obserue these circumstances diligently, because *Isaiah* respects not the Philistims so much (although hee speakes of them) as the faithfull whom hee would comfort by this prophecie, and fortifie those with good hope, who might otherwise haue thought Iudah to haue been laid waste, in regard it was assailed with enemies on all sides, no succour appearing from any place whatsoeuer. *Isaiah* then seekes to establish the faith of these poore afflicted ones, destitute of all succour; and bids them be of good courage, because God will vndoubtedly help them. He calles this prophecie *a burden*, because it would be vnwelcome and troublesome to the Philistims, who thought themselues safe in regard that the Iewes were miserably oppressed; neither was there any hope left them of a better estate. He shewes then that the destruction of the Philistims also draws neere.

Why the Prophet calles this prophecie a burden.

Vers. 29. *Reioyce not (thou whole Palestina) because the rod of him that did beate thee is broken: for out of the Serpents roote shall come forth a Cockatrice, and the roote thereof shall be a fierie flying Serpent.*

IN the very entrance, hee beates backe that vaine confidence wherewith the Philistims were rashly puffed vp: and in adding, *thou whole*, he signifies that all, how many soeuer, shall haue their part in this calamitie. As if he should say; That region shall not be spoiled in one place onely, but there is not the least corner which shall not feele it: and as farre as the land doth reach, so farre shall the destruction and ruine thereof be perceiued on all sides. As touching that which he addeth of the *rod broken*; some referre to *Ahaz*, but besides the purpose; for he was ouercome in all the warres which hee had against the Philistims. And therefore it should rather be referred to *Vzziah*: and yet am I loth so to restraine it vnto him, that it should not therewithall be vnderstood of the whole body of the Iewish Nation. It is as much then as if he had said to *Palestina*, or Palestin; Thinkest thou to take thy rest, whilest the Iewes which afflicted thee in times past, are destroyed? No, thou greatly deceiuest thy selfe: for ere long thou shalt be vexed much more. This is the cause, as I haue said, why I restraine not this to one particular person; but rather as I take it, vnder the person of one, hee points out the whole body of the Iewes. He forthwith addes the reason why Palestin should *not reioyce*; to wit, because the Iewes shall be better able to annoy them then they were in former time. For if the Philistims receiued any detriment by the Iewes before, they should feele it ten times more heauy hereafter. The which he sets forth by a very fit similitude: for the *Cockatrice* is more dangerous then the *Adder*, and the *fierie Serpent* more hurtfull then the *Cockatrice*. But God be thanked wee are not annoied with these hurtfull beasts in this Country. The Prophets meaning is nothing else then, but to shew that the Philistims greatly beguiled themselues, in thinking that the Iewes should not ouermatch them. And therefore I consent not vnto them, who refer the name of the *Cockatrice*, and *flying Serpent*, vnto *Hezechias*. For howsoeuer they haue great shew of reason for it, because *Hezechias* conquered all that the Philistims held, euen vnto *Gaza*: yet the Prophet meant to stretch this promise further. Let vs know then, that albeit we begin at *Hezechias*, yet notwithstanding this fauour appertaines to all the Iewes, as to the whole body. Now from hence wee may gather a generall doctrine; namely, that when wee are oppressed with aduersities, and the wicked *reioyce* thereat, as if wee were vtterly confounded, and they were the only happy men; the Lord testifies, that all this their ioy is but in vaine. God will euermore vphold his Church, and set her in her first estate, though all men should iudge her cast away. The children of God shall get new strength, which wil breake the hearts of the wicked for very despite: not that the faithfull wish or purpose any such thing; but because it must so come to passe: for God hath so ordained it. Neither are these names of *Cockatrice*, and *fierie Serpent*, any names of disgrace vnto them; for they are not such by nature, but are so called, in regard they are deadly to the wicked, though harmelesse in themselues. For it comes to passe by the iust iudgement of God, and the malice of the wicked, that that which is in it owne nature profitable and healthfull vnto them, is turned into losse and poison. Such is the nature also euen of God himselfe, and of his Gospell: 2. Cor. 2. 16.

2. *Kin.* 18. 8.

The reioycing of the wicked lasts but a while.

In that Gods children are hurtfull to the wicked, it is not from their owne disposition, but from the wickeds malice. *Psal.* 18. 27.

Vers. 30. *For the first borne of the poore shall bee fed, and the needie shall lie downe in safetie: and I will kill thy roote*

*root with famine, & * it ſhal ſlay thy remnant.*

* Or, he.

The prophets in their denunciations againſt the wicked, reſpect not ſo much, as the comforting and incouraging of the faithfull who are oppreſſed by them.

THe Prophet, as hath beene alreadie ſaid, had not reſpect ſo much to the Philiſtims (whom his threatnings feared nothing at all) as to the Iewes, whom he meant to comfort in their afflictions: for they were ſo oppreſſed that they were now neere vnto deſpaire; and therefore he calles them the *firſt borne of the poore* by a note of excellencie, in regard of their miſeries: for being now brought into vtter extremitie, they held as it were the *firſt ranck of all wretched people.* Now he promiſeth that the Lord will deliuer them from ſuch calamities, and will then feede & nouriſh them as at the firſt: whereby we may ſee that the Philiſtims were deſtroyed and cut off for the ſaluation of Gods people: who alſo had made this promiſe vnto *Abraham* and his poſteritie, ſaying, I will bleſſe thoſe which bleſſe thee, and curſe thoſe which curſe thee: for they muſt needs haue God for their enemie, who offer violence to his children. Then the Prophet compares them to ſheepe, whom wee ought to reſemble, if we meane to haue God hold vs vnder his protection. We meete with no one thing oftner in the ſcripture then this ſimilitude. Doth the Lord correct vs then? Surely wee may well be compared to *ſtrayd ſheep*, laid open to the violence of wolues and theeues: but if contrariwiſe he ſmite our enemies, he will gather vs againe together, that wee may reſt in a quiet and ſafe place. This is it which the Prophet ſignifies by ſaying they ſhall *reſt in ſafetie.* The Lord then promiſeth two things here, firſt good paſture, that is to ſay, all things needfull for food and rayment: ſecondly ſafetie and defence, to the end we may reſt incloſed & ſhrouded againſt all dangers. Theſe are the two duties belonging to a good ſhepheard: & in theſe two are included all things neceſſarie for ſaluation.

Gen. 12. 3.

They muſt needs haue God their foe, that offer violence to his children.

Pſal. 95. 7. *Pſal.* 100. 3. *Iohn* 10. 16. 27.

Two duties required in a good ſhepheard.

In the ſecond member he directs his ſpeech againe to the Philiſtims, whom he compares to a *tree*, that hath his roots ſo deeplie fixed in the earth, that it ſeemes a thing impoſſible to pull it vp; but yet if the *roote wither*, it muſt alſo of neceſſitie loſe his vigor, though it be neuer ſo profoundlie ſetled. Whence we are to gather, that the eſtate of the wicked is neuer ſo firme, but that God will eaſily ouerturne it: for he will not only prune off the bowes, but will *parch*, and bring to nothing the very *roote* that lies hidden in the earth.

The ſtate of the wicked is neuer ſo faſt rooted, but God can eaſily diſplãt them.

That which followes, *he ſhall ſlay thy remnant*, is commonlie referred to *Hezekias*; but as I haue alreadie ſhewed, I had rather extend it generallie to the whole bodie (of which he ſpeakes as of one man) of the King as head, who repreſented Ieſus Chriſt. We may alſo referre it to the Aſſyrian, and to all others whom God vſed for the rooting out of the Philiſtims. For the Iewes are accuſtomed to ſpeake thus indefinitly, when they minde to point out the officers by whom God executes his iudgements.

Verſ. 31. *Howle ô gate, crie ô Citie, thou whole land of Paleſtina art diſſolued, for there ſhall come from the North a ſmoke, and none* ſhalbe *alone, at his time appointed.*

HEre the Prophet vſeth amplifications to ſeale vp the truth of his propheſies in the hearts of the faithfull, and the more effectuallie to imprint thoſe things therein which without theſe would hardlie haue beene beleeued. It hath been ſaid elſewhere, that the *gates* ſignifies the places moſt frequented, in which they kept their meetings. He threatens then that all the Cities ſhall lament, yea and that extraordinarily, becauſe the moſt honorable aſſemblies ſhould make it. That which is added touching the *ſmoke*, may be taken for the fire, ſo as the thing it ſelfe ſhould be ſhewed by the ſigne, becauſe the ſmoke appeares before the fire burnes forth. By *North* we may vnderſtand as well the Aſſyrians as the Iewes, ſeeing both of them were ſituated on this ſide of the Philiſtims: yet had I rather referre it to the Iewes: I meane not now to ſtand refuting of the contrarie opinion. As we haue ſaid heretofore then, the Philiſtims thought themſelues great gayners by that which the Iewes loſt, when the Aſſyrians had done them any ſcathe. Which alſo happened not long ſince to many nations, who tooke pleaſure to ſee their enemies deſtroyed by the Turks: for they knew well inough that ſuch victories brought heauines and damage vnto them. So as when they whoſe ruin they thirſted after were vanquiſhed, the way by that meanes was laid open for ſuch as in the end ſubdued them.

Whereas he addes in concluſion that *none ſhall be alone*, it appertaines to the enemies, who ſhall be ſo furniſhed with power and authoritie in the *day preſixed*, that is to ſay, when God ſhall haue decreed the deſtruction of Paleſtina, that none ſhall remaine idle in the houſe, but all ſhall be readie and prepared to march forward. As if any in praying the authoritie and power of ſome Prince ſhould ſay, that all his ſubiects aſſemble themſelues and are in a readineſſe as ſoone as he holds vp but his leaſt finger.

Verſ. 32. *What ſhall then one anſwere the meſſengers of the Gentiles? that the Lord hath eſtabliſhed Zion, And the poore of his people ſhall truſt in it.*

I Had rather interpret this of all Nations ſimply, then of any one in particular: for as ſoone as ſtrangers are entred into a Citie, they are wont to inquire what is done there, to the end they may get ſome newes. It is as much then as if he had ſaid; *What anſwer ſhall they giue to ſtrangers, when they ſhall inquire after newes?* What ſhall be the common talke after the Philiſtims be vanquiſhed? This, *The Lord hath eſtabliſhed Zion.* His meaning is then, that the ouerthrow of the Philiſtims, ſhall be ſuch an excellent pledge of Gods mercy towards his people, that all ſhall thereby vnderſtand, that

that the Lord is the keeper and protector of them whom he had chosen to himselfe. For this *establishing* is nothing else but Gods free adoption, wherein hee promised to be the God of *Abraham*, and of his seede: Gen.17.7. Secondly, he established it when hee willed that his Temple should be built in Zion, to the end his name might there bee called vpon. And yet did not this foundation consist of morter or stones, but in the promises concerning eternall life: which grace was alwaies knowne to all the faithfull. For this cause the Prophet shewes that the destruction of the Philistims shall be a memorable example by which all nations, yea those that are furtheſt off, shall vnderstand that God conserues and keepes his chosen people.

Shall trust in it.] Hee meanes not that the faithfull shall put their trust in Zion; as wee say that we must hope in God: but that the inhabitants of Zion shall dwell in a quiet and secure place; as the Prophets often affirme, that saluation is in Zion: Ioel 2.32. He would not that the faithfull then should put their trust in the Church, but shewes that they are conserued and kept in it, because the Lord vpholds and defends it. And yet will hee try our faith, lest we should wholly make our heauen here: and therefore he calles them *poore*, that none should thinke to be exempt from common calamities, although God hold vs vnder his protection. But could there be any greater consolation brought vs, then to heare that the inhabitants of the Church are out of all dangers, notwithstanding they be subiect to infinite miseries? Let vs then apply this consolation to our selues in the midst of all our troubles, and let not impatience cause vs to giue ouer, seeing we perceiue that God hath care of vs, and that we are assured of safetie vnder his wings.

Though God hath taken vs vnder his protection, yet we must not thinke we shall therefore be freed from correction.

Reade the Comment vpon the 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. verses of this Chapter, for the better vnderstanding of this Chapter ensuing.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *The burden of Moab. Surely Ar of Moab was destroyed and brought to silence in a night: surely Hir of Moab was destroyed and brought to silence in a night.*

HEre *Isaiah* prophecieth against the Moabites, who were neighbours to the Iewes, and knit vnto them by consanguinitie. For we know that the Moabites descended from *Lot*, nephew to *Abraham*: Gen.19.37. Seeing then there was so neere affinitie betweene them, humanitie required at the least that these two peoples should haue entertained one another louingly. But the Moabites would not be moued by any coniunction whatsoeuer, to bee friends with the Iewes; but were their deadly enemies, and as soone as occasion was offered, molested them; shewing thereby their stubburne and churlish nature. The Prophet then *threatens their ruine also*; because they exercised so great cruelty against that people, whom they should haue loued with a brotherly affection.

Note whereunto the prophecies tend.

Now we are still to keepe in mind the end whereunto these prophecies tend: for it is hard to say whether the Moabites profited by them; no though they had heard that which we here reade from the Prophets own mouth: but he neither spake in their hearing, nor yet sent this prophecy vnto them in writing. He had respect therefore rather to the faithfull then to them; and that for two reasons: first, that in seeing so many changes happen; namely, the ouerthrow of Cities, the destruction of Kingdomes, one of them succeeding another: they should be far off from thinking that the world was guided by a blinde rage of fortune, but in all these things might acknowledge the prouidence of God. For if none of all this had bin foretold, men (hauing their mindes snarled in vanitie, and not perceiuing the least of Gods workes) might easilie haue concluded, that all things had been guided by chance. But being admonished thereof afore hand by the Prophets, they might behold the iudgements of God as from an high Tower. As wee at this day behold in the prophecies of *Isaiah* (no otherwise then if he had pointed that out vnto vs with his finger, which was then hidden) the Lord sitting in his throne, and ordaining all things to fall out according to his good pleasure: for howsoeuer the wicked offered violence, first to one, and then to another, according as their malice carried them; yet God vsed them as his instruments to execute his iudgements. The second end which the Prophets aimed at was, that among all the garboiles which fell out in the world, the Iewes might know that God had a care of their saluation; and that he might shew how deare his Church was vnto him, when hee should take vengeance vpon her enemies, that had vsed her so vnkindly.

Ar of Moab.] *Ar*, according to the Hebrewes, signifies a Citie: and so *Kir* as much as to say, as a wall. But in regard that Ar of Moab was one of the chiefe Cities of the Mobites, some take it here for a proper name. And yet wee may so expound both names, as if the Prophet threatned the ruine of those Cities wherein the Moabites gloried most. But I willingly receiue the common interpretation. And so *Isaiah* hath here set before vs such a description, as wherein we may behold the destruction of the Moabites; to wit, when

when their principall Cities are made euen with the ground.

By *night*, hee ſignifies a ſudden and vnexpected downefall which the Moabites did not ſo much as dreame of. For in regard that the night is appointed for reſt, if any accident fall out therein, all men are affrighted greatly, as at a thing vnlooked for. And beſides, he meant to taxe the careleſneſſe of the Moabites, becauſe they thought themſelues exceedingly well fenced on all ſides, as men out of all dangers. *Brought to ſilence*: That is, to be deſtroyed; and therefore *ſilence* is taken for death. But others leauing the ſimilitude, haue rather tranſlated, *She is cut off*: which I leaue in ſuſpenſe. But this which *Iſaiah* denounceth againſt the Moabites, the ſcripture affirmes to befall the reprobates: to wit, that their deſtruction drawes neere, ſo as they ſhall bee ſuddenly ouerwhelmed when they thinke on no ſuch matter: 1. Theſſ. 5. 3.

Verſ. 2. *Hee ſhall goe vp to the Temple, and to Dibon to the high places to weepe: for Nebo and for Medeba ſhall Moab houle: vpon all their heads ſhall be baldneſſe, and euery beard ſhauen.*

AS touching the wordes, ſome leaue out the Hebrew word *Baiith*: but ſeeing it ſignifies Houſe, and Temple, it is very likely they haue vſually taken it to ſignifie a Temple; as in many places we know the Temple is called the houſe of God: Exod. 23. 19. & 24. 26. Deut. 23. 18. Ioſh. 9. 23. Now, in that he brings in the Moabites proſtrate before their idols, he therein taxeth their ſuperſtition, becauſe they worſhipped their falſe god Chamos; as it is eaſilie gathered out of 1. King. 11. 7. Iere. 48. 8. 13. The Moabites, ſaith *Iſaiah*, ſhall *runne to their god*, when things are in this deſperate caſe, but in vaine, for they ſhall finde no help in him. And forthwith mentioning the *high places*, we may eaſily diſcerne thereby, that he ſpeakes of the Temple. Neither is it to bee doubted but the Moabites had a renouned fortreſſe far aboue the reſt, where they had built the places of their deuotion, in honour of their idoll. For inaſmuch as they knew not the true God, neither had their recourſe vnto him in their aduerſities; it was no wonder if they trotted to their idoll, according to their cuſtome. But hereby they increaſed the miſchiefe, and heaped a full meaſure of all euils vpon their own heads; becauſe ſo much the more they prouoked the wrath of God againſt them, as they imagined that ſeruice would pleaſe him beſt. The Prophet meant then to ſet out the comfortleſſe condition of the wicked in their aduerſities, as in a glaſſe; becauſe there is no greater bane vnto them, then thoſe remedies whereby they thinke to heale their diſeaſes. For they kindle the wrath of God againſt them to to the vtmoſt.

Nebo was alſo a Citie of the Moabites. The Prophet hath mentioned two of them already; he now addes the third, and afterwards the fourth: as if he ſhould ſay, This deſtruction ſhall not fall onely vpon the borders of the Country, but ſhall approch euen vnto the midſt; ſo as there ſhall be no place exempt. *Vpon euery head*. There is no Nation which hath not his ceremonies to manifeſt either their ioy or ſorrow. The Italians and Weſterne people, ſuffer their haire & beards to grow when they mourne; and this they call, The growing of the beard. Contrariwiſe thoſe of the Eaſt haue their heads & beards, which before they held for an ornament: ſo that when they change their ordinary guiſe, it is among them a ſigne of great ſorrow. He meanes nothing elſe then, but to ſhew that there ſhall be ſuch cauſe to bewaile the eſtate of the Kingdome, that euery one laying aſide all ſignes of ioy, ſhall put vpon him as it were the ſignes of ſorrow and lamentation.

Euery Nation hath ſtuerall ceremonies to expreſſe either their ioy or ſorrow.

Verſ. 3. *In their ſtreete ſhall they be girded with ſackcloth: on the tops of their houſes, and in their ſtreetes euery one ſhall houle, and come downe with weeping.*

HE goes on ſtill with his former ſpeech, deſcribing yet more fully the ſignes of mourning. Now thoſe of the Eaſt are wonderfull exceſſiue in theſe kindes of ceremonies: for as they are more vehement and quicke witted, ſo alſo doe they manifeſt their inward affections by outward ſignes, more then thoſe who are of dull capacities, and conſequently, ſo much the more vnweildie in their mouings and behauiours. Yet was it a vice in them to exceede thus in ſo many ceremonies and geſtures: but the Prophet ſpeakes thereof as of a thing common, and ſufficiently knowne, onely to ſet forth the ſorrow which ſhould happen vpon the laying waſte of that Country. Neither is it in vaine that he addes this deſcription; becauſe the propheties neuer touch vs to the quicke, vnleſſe God cauſe them to bee ſet before our eyes, as a thing acted and done indeed. To the end the Iewes ſhould not thinke then, that all theſe things were but words, in deſcribing this deſtruction: hee alſo ſets forth the manner of their griefe, as *weeping* and *houling*; to the end they might behold and ſee that accompliſhed (as you would ſay), which to them was ſo incredible. For the Moabites were then in a quiet eſtate; in regard whereof, the faithfull had the more neede of confirmation, that they might not call the truth of this propheeie into queſtion. And herewithall he notes the deſpaire whereinto the vnbeleeuers fall in their aduerſities, becauſe the rocke whereon they build, is of no force to vphold them.

Verſ. 4. *And Heſhbon and Elealeh ſhall cry; their voice ſhall be heard vnto Iahaz: therefore the *warriours of Moab ſhall *ſhout; the ſoule of euery one ſhall lament in himſelfe.*

*Or, barneſſed.
*Or, houſe.

5 *Mine heart ſhall cry for Moab: his fugitiues*

fugitiues shall flee *vnto Zoar, an heifer of three yeeres old: for they shall goe vp with weeping by the mounting vp of Luhith: and by the way of Horonaim they shall raise vp a crie of destruction.*

HE heere names other Cities; for his meaning is to bundle vp all the Cities of this Countrie (as it were) in one fardle, that they may be throwne into the same destruction with the rest; as if he should say, Not one shall escape. Whereas he addes a little after, *Therefore the harnessed of Moab*: although the Hebrue particle be a shewing of the cause, yet others expound it otherwise; but it is a matter of no great moment. The Prophets meaning is to shew that none shall be exempted frō *howling*, seeing the strongest and most valiant amongst them shall do it. Afterwards he shewes that euery one shall be so affected with his owne griefe, that he shall not minde his neighbour. In the 5. verse he takes to himselfe the person of a mourner, or a sorrowfull person: but it may seeme strange, yea very vnfitting, that the Prophet should bewaile the destruction of the Moabites, for he should rather haue sorrowed at the calamitie of the Church, and reioiced at the ouerthrow of the enemies. But the Prophets are wont to take vpon them the person of those against whom they prophesie afflictions, to the end they may represent their estate as it were vpon a stage or scaffold. And thus they moued affections more, then if they had propounded the doctrine simplie without this art. And yet no doubt the Prophets trembled themselues at the iudgements of God, yea euen at those which they threatned the wicked withall: but that which I haue said is lesse cōstreined, and agrees best, as we may easilie discerne by common experience. He calles them *fugitiues* which fled thence: for his meaning is that those which shall escape frō Moab shall come vnto Zoar, whom he compares to *a heifer of three yeere old*, which is in her full force and strength, and hath not yet brought forth, nor felt labor, nor the yoke; but fetches her frisks, and playes the wanton.

Now when the forces of the enemie presseth neere vpon a place, then they flee to other Cities which haue not yet been assailed, and which seeme to be furthest out of danger. *Zoar* was such a one, because the enemies had not yet ouerrun it: but if any had rather expound this of the whole region, I gainsay him not, because it seemes *Ieremiah* speakes in generall, who notwithstanding borrowes many sentences from our Prophet: vnlesse some had rather affirme that he there expresseth as well *Zoar*, as *Horonaim*, or rather the whole region which lieth between them. If it be referred to the whole nation, the sense will be, that the Moabites who were nourished vp in pleasures and abundance of all good things, felt no euill till it came vpon them, from whence they grew proude. And therefore to tame them, it was requisit they should be driuen to *Zoar*, which was farre remote from the Moabites, thereby shewing that they could not saue themselues but by flying very farre off. Ier. 48. 34.

Those whom the Lord thus tenderlie fosters, are heere admonished to be humble, and not to prouoke the wrath of God against them by their pride and dissolutions: but to be sober; yea euen thē when all things prosper with them in the best maner that can be wished: as also to prepare for all changes when God shall be pleased to visit them. How such ought to behaue themselues vpon whom God bestowes most of his benefits.

By the mount of *Luhith* he describes other places of the countrie of Moab, and sets forth the flight of this people, and the sorrow that shall be thorowout the whole kingdome. Whereas we haue turned, *They shall raise vp the crie*; others haue translated, They shall breake, or cleaue asunder with loud cries, affirming that there is a transposition of letters, and that the letter *Gnain* is doubled. In this sense this verb should be deriued from *Raah*, which signifies to breake or bruse: but because this serues not much touching the principall, I haue let that stand which is most approued, so as the verb descends from an other, which signifies to waken or raise vp. If any had rather retaine the word, To breake, the sense is, that there shall be a breaking, and (as it were) a bruising of the members with sorrow and crying when one smites one arme against an other.

Vers. 6. *For the waters of Nimrim shall be dried vp: therefore the grasse is withered, the herbs consumed*, and *there was no greene herb.*

THe Prophet amplifies this desolation by a kind of excessiue speech. He saith, *The grasse shall wither*, which falles out when God depriues a land of all helps. Also that the *waters shall be dried vp*: for it is very likely they were exceedinglie necessarie for this quarter which was drie: for such countries as those bring forth nothing vnlesse they be watered. But howsoeuer this be an excessiue speech, yet it conteines nothing but that which is most true: for he passed not his bounds, but was faine to lay forth these things in the more words, because of the peoples dulnesse, to the end they might know that this land beeing depriued of Gods blessing, should become a desert deformed, and void of all beautie. 1 2

Vers. 7. *Therefore what* euery man *hath left, and their substance shall they beare to the brooke of the Willowes.*

THat which *euery one hath reserued*, signifies the same which we vsually say, that which *is left*, or spared. For his meaning is to speake of riches reserued; thereby shewing what happens ordinarily in those countries which the enemies inuade, to wit, euery one labors to transport his goods to an other place, and to lay them vp safe there, that so they may fetch them home afterwards. Now he saith that

that theſe ſhall haue no fortreſſe nor refuge to put their goods in ſafetie: ſo as they ſhall bee conſtrained to hide them amongſt the *willowes*. See here an extreme miſerie, when wee can finde no place of refuge, to ſafegard and keepe that which woe haue gotten with great labour, from being a ſpoile to the enemies. It is very likely that theſe *willowes* ſtood in ſome ſecret and cloſe place remote from others. Some expound this of the enemies, which bring the riches which they haue pilled, to the riuer, to part the pray among themſelues.

Verſ. 8. *For the cry went round about the borders of Moab, and the houling thereof vnto Eglaim, and the skriking thereof vnto Beer-Elim.*

THe Hebrew particle *Ci*, was added for ornament. His meaning is, that all the quarters of this Country ſhall be filled with cries and lamentations in euery corner; becauſe this deſtruction ſhall reach from one end to another. To the *cry*, he addes a *skriking* or double houling, to expreſſe the exceſſe of dolour; it being the maner of deſperate perſons to become vtterly deſolate, and to bee reſolued into teares.

Verſ. 9. *Becauſe the waters of Dimon ſhall be full of blood: and I will* *bring more vpon Dimon, euen lions vpon him that eſcapeth Moab, and to the remnant of the land.*

*Or, increaſings.

HEe not onely deſcribes here the dolour, houling, flight, and trembling, or the couetouſneſſe of the enemies in raking together of riches; but the ſlaughter of men, which muſt needes be fearefull, when the great and renowned riuers (as Dimon was) were *filled with blood*. By *increaſings* hee meanes that the Lord, in whoſe perſon hee ſpeakes, will augment the murthers; ſo as the dead bodies ſhall be piled one vpon another, and there ſhall be no end thereof, till they be all put to the ſword. Now howſoeuer the aduerſaries were cruell in this deſtruction, yet the Lord paſſed not meaſure for all that: becauſe hee iuſtly puniſhed the inhumanitie which the Moabites vniuſtly exerciſed ouer the Iewes; vpon whom they ought to haue had compaſſion. It was iuſt then for them to beare the *ſame* puniſhment which they had laid vpon others.

Which are eſcaped.] Theſe are alſo the increaſings whereof he ſpake; or at leaſt part of them. For behold the higheſt pitch of all theſe calamities; that if any indeuoured to ſaue himſelfe in battel, from out of the hands of his enemies, hee ſhould meete with *lions* and cruell beaſts which ſhould deuoure him. And this is the true meaning of the Prophet, if we narrowly weigh the whole context. He meant to expreſſe this diſcomfiture, and the miſerie thereof in liuely colours, by ſhewing that the ſmall *remnant* which ſhall eſcape the ſlaughter, ſhall fall into the pawes of the *lion*: becauſe the hand of the Lord doth ſo purſue the wicked, that they can no way eſcape: if they paſſe one danger, they by and by fall into another. But withall let vs remember, that the Prophet ſpeakes theſe things for the conſolation of the faithfull, that they might fortifie themſelues by ſome promiſes againſt the cruelty of the enemies, who in the end ſhould be cut off, and ſhould finde no refuge at all in their gods, fortreſſes, or lurking holes; neither ſhould their flight any thing at all auaile them.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Send yee a lamb to the ruler of the world, from the rocke of the wilderneſſe, vnto the mountain of the daughter Zion.*

HEere the Prophet inſults ouer the Moabites, for that they knew not God whileſt they had time; but boldly expected his puniſhing hand, till at length they were deſtroyed by it. In this place then there is a condemning of too late a repentance; when men cannot be brought to amendment by any admonitions whatſoeuer, but harden their faces againſt God. In a word, this kind of exhortation hath place, when the diſeaſe is become incurable. Now wee muſt diligently obſerue the words, becauſe both Hebrewes and Chriſtians interpret this place amiſſe. Saint *Ierome* expounds it of Ieſus Chriſt, becauſe he deſcended from the Moabites, of whom *Ruth* came: Ruth 1.4. Matth. 1. 5. and the moſt part of Chriſtian expoſitours follow him. As if the Prophet ſhould ſay; Lord, although ſo ſeuere a iudgement be prepared for the Moabites, yet thou wilt not vtterly deſtroy them. Why? Becauſe they muſt ſend vs the *Lambe*, which is the ruler of the world. But as this expoſition hath no ground, ſo needes it not to be refuted. As touching the Hebrewes, they thinke this was ſpoken in regard that the Moabites, who ſeeing the Iewes to haue ill ſucceſſe, ceaſſed to pay them the tribute which they ought: and *Iſaiah* hauing propheeied the reſtauration of the Kingdome of Iudah, they thinke that therewithall hee exhorts the Moabites to acknowledge their King. And ſo would haue this a royall edict to correct their diſobedience: as if hee ſhould ſay; Send the tribute which you owe. But wee reade not in any place that the Moabites were ſubiect or tributaries

St. Ierome.

butaries to the Iewes: neither is there ſo much as any probable coniecture of it. Whereas they alleage the hiſtory of the Kings, they are miſtaken: for it is there ſpoken to the king of Iſrael: *Ahab* and *Samaria* are there expreſſly named: 2. King. 3. 5, 6 and we know that the Samaritans bare a deadly hatred againſt the Iewes. I content my ſelfe then in the firſt expoſition which I haue touched, as being the trueſt and moſt naturall: becauſe the Prophets meaning is to condemne the Moabites for not repenting in time, and therefore ſhould now ſeek reconciliation in vaine; which before to their great vtilitie they might eaſily haue obtained.

The true ſenſe of this place.

Thus the word *ſend*, muſt be taken by way of deriding: as if he ſhould ſay; You may now ſend, but looke for no pardon, nor to get any benefit by it. For when the wicked are admoniſhed, they proudly deſpiſe all exhortation: but when the rod is vpon their backe, then they fare like franticke men, running hither and thither, ſeeking helpe euery where, trying all remedies, but without any fruit; for they profit no whit thereby. *Iſaiah* then ſcornes at their obſtinacie and rebellion, and ſhewes there will be no time of repentance when the deſtruction ſhall come vpon them, which they haue iuſtly deſerued.

The wicked deſpiſe admonitions till they feele the ſmart of the rod, and then they ſeeke to God, but for the moſt part in vaine

The Iewes thinke that the Prophet ſpeakes here of *Hezechias*, but contrary to all reaſon: for there is no mention made here of any certaine land, but rather of the whole *world*; whereof the Prophet ſpeakes in generall. This ought then to be referred to God himſelfe. He calles that a *Lambe*, which ſhould be offered in ſacrifice: for the Nations profeſſed to worſhip God when they offered their ſacrifices. By the *ſtone* or rocke *of the wildernesſe*, hee meanes a Citie, which was eſteemed the chiefeſt in Moab; although wee may well affirme, that hee meant to comprehend the whole Country: and ſo a part ſhould be taken for the whole. *To the mountaine:* That is to ſay, to the true Temple of God, where the ſacrifices were offered according as the Law commanded. This place is of excellent vſe againſt the obſtinate, who reiect all wholſome doctrine, proudly deſpiſing God, till his iudgements take them in the necke.

Deut. 12. 5, 6, 7. 2. *Chron.* 7. 12.

Verſ. 2. *For it ſhall bee as a bird that flieth, and a neſt forſaken: the daughter of Moab ſhall be at the fords of Arnon.*

*Or, it ſhall come to paſſe that the daughters of Moab ſhall be at the fords of Arnon, as a bird taking her flight, flies from her neſt.

THe Prophet now ſhewes what he meant to ſay, by his former deriſion; to wit, that the Moabites muſt not thinke of ſending ſacrifices then, becauſe they cannot otherwiſe ſaue themſelues, but by *fleeing* from their Country. By the ſimilitude of *birds*, he expreſſeth the terror wherewith they being once ſtrucken, ſhall *flee* at the noiſe of a leaſe. For hee threatens the fearefull and wearieſome flight of the Moabites, who had abuſed their reſt.

Verſ. 3. *Gather a counſell, execute iudgement: make thy ſhadow as the night in the mid-day: hide them that are chaſed out: bewray not him that is fled.*

HE goes on with his ſpeech. But if we will rightly vnderſtand this place, we muſt ſet the calamitie wherewith the Moabites were extremely afflicted, before our eyes. Now he calles their wickednesſes to remembrance; to the end all might know how iuſtly this calamitie befell them. When they had all things at their deſire, they ouerflowed in diſſolutions, and reiected all reprehenſions: now being forſaken and left deſtitute of helpe, they mourne, ſeeking remedies, but find none. For thus God deales with the reprobates: he ſupplies their neceſſities, and puts all they can wiſh into their hands, to leaue them without excuſe. But after they haue abuſed theſe bleſſings of God through their wicked luſts, and haue turned all things to an ill end, he takes from them all meanes and helpes, and then brings them to nothing. Whileſt the Moabites were in proſperitie, they made no great reckoning of mercy and vprightneſſe, although they might haue ruled, and had a floriſhing Kingdome without doing any man wrong: yet did they abuſe it to eſtabliſh their tyranny. Now then when they are depriued of all authoritie, baniſhed, and fugitiues; *Iſaiah* in ſcorne, admoniſheth them to *gather a counſell*, and to *execute iuſtice*, which before they had ouerturned by fraud & extortions. For *Iſaiah* hath an eye to the time when the Moabites were ſpoiled of all principality and pwer. And it ſeemes this reproch is like to that which the Lord vſed to *Adam*, ſaying; Behold *Adam* is become as one of vs: Gen. 3. 22. For he is there ſcorned by a biting kinde of ſpeech, that not being content with the excellent graces he had receiued, hee would needes be like God himſelfe. So the Moabites being not contented with their ornaments and riches, vexed the poore Iewes and Iſraelites after a barbarous maner; pilled and polled them, and imagining wicked deuices againſt them.

How God deales with the wicked.

Seeing then that they had abuſed the excellent gifts of God, hee iuſtly reprocheth their fact. Which alſo appertaines to all reprobates, who inſolently exalt themſelues when they proſper; and abuſing the ſame, doe offer hard meaſure to the faithfull. For in as much as they pollute the things which God hath conſecrated to a right end, it is good reaſon they ſhould be depriued of them, and ſuffer extreme want. Wee ſee daily examples hereof before our eies. Whence is it that thoſe who are aduanced to great places of honour, fall ſo violently, but becauſe God auengeth himſelfe of their tyrannous gouernment and wicked practiſes? The Lord alſo reprocheth their ſhame, contempt, teares, and complaints: as when they cry out, Oh that I might returne againe to my goods! Oh that I were ſet in my firſt eſtate! But then alas repentance is too late.

Make thy ſhadow.] The Moabites (as I haue touched before) might haue refreſhed the Iewes,

Iewes ſomewhat in their miſerie when the Aſſyrians vexed them. At the leaſt, had there been any ſparke of humanitie in them, they ought to haue receiued the fugitiues: but inſtead of doing this, they perſecuted and wickedlie offered violence to thoſe which were oppreſſed too much alreadie by the hands of others. Good reaſon it was then that the Moabites ſhould haue experience in their owne perſons of that crueltie which they had exerciſed towards others, that being chaſed from their dwellings, baniſhed and wandring to and fro, they might finde no ſuccor nor *ſhadow* to hide and defend themſelues from the heate. For why ſhould they enioy that comfort which they had vnkindlie refuſed to giue vnto others?

He takes the *mid-day* heere for extreme heate: and this ſimilitude is often found in the ſcriptures, to wit, that the Lord was as a cloud at hie noone, and as a pillar of fire by night, Exod.13.21.22. Numb.14.14. Deut.1.13. becauſe he did it once in the wildernes. The Prophets retained theſe phraſes of ſpeech becauſe they were then in vſe, although they recited not the hiſtorie. Beſides, when he ſaith, *hide them that are chaſed out*, he ſpeakes of the Iewes, who being purſued and vexed by the Aſſyrians, were notwithſtanding vncourteouſlie intreated by ỹ Moabites, whoſe dutie it was to haue entertained and comforted poore fugitiues, eſpeciallie thoſe who fled to thẽ for ſuccor. But ſince they chaſed them away, it was requiſit that themſelues *ſhould be chaſed* and depriued of all help and ſuccor. For juſt and equall is that ſentence of the Lord, who commands that euery one receiue that meaſure which himſelfe hath meaſured, Deut.19.19.21. Matth.7.2. Now the Prophet would haue the Moabites to acknowledge their ſinnes, to the end they might confeſſe the puniſhment of their cruelties to be iuſtlie inflicted vpon them. Although he rather reſpects the Iewes, to teach thẽ that God neglected not their miſeries; but would afterwards let them ſee that he reuenged all their wrongs.

Verſ.4. *Let my baniſhed dwell with thee: Moab be thou their couert from the face of the deſtroyer: for the extortioner ſhall end, the deſtroyer ſhall be conſumed, and the oppreſſor ſhall ceaſe out of the land.*

THe Prophet ſpeakes to the Moabites as if he humblie ſued vnto them in the name of the common people; as if he ſhould ſay, You are neighbours and of the ſame blood, I pray you receiue and *ſuccor the oppreſſed*. If you will not help vs, yet at the leaſt harme vs not. He brings in God ſpeaking, who is wont to put himſelfe in the place of his people, as if he ſpoke vpon him the perſon of a ſuppliant. It is very certaine that the Moabites ſhewed none of this kindnes to the Iewes: nay they rather ioined with their enemies to hurt them by all the meanes they could. This place is worthie our diligent obſeruation, for God heere ſhewes the great care he hath ouer his choſen, ſeeing he is as greatly moued with the wrongs done to them, as with thoſe which are directly againſt his owne Maieſtie. As in *Zacharie* hee witneſſeth, that as oft as his children are oppreſſed by any, they euen touch the apple of his eye, Zacha.2.8. He ſees the teares and heares the grones of the afflicted which call vpon him, Pſal.12.5. & 38.9. & 102.20. And howſoeuer this alwaies comes not to paſſe in our ſight; yet will he ſhew in due ſeaſon that he hath heard them. Let vs then learne from hence to be kinde, and giuen to ſuccor poore exiles: eſpeciallie the faithful, baniſhed from their countrey for the confeſſion of the truth. For there is no ſeruice which God accepts, or allowes better then this: as on the cõtrarie, nothing is more diſpleaſing or deteſtable in his ſight, then crueltie and inhumanitie. Wherefore if we will feele any refreſhing in our calamities, let vs ſhew our ſelues louing and merciſull, and not withdraw our helpe from thoſe that haue neede. Bleſſed is he, ſaith *Dauid*, which iudgeth wiſely of the poore and needie, the Lord ſhall deliuer him in the time of trouble, Pſal.41.1. Whereas on the cõtrarie there ſhall be iudgement mercileſſe to him that ſheweth no mercie, Iam.2.13. Now in that the Lord calles the Iewes heere *his baniſhed*: although this might well be referred to the chaſtiſement, as if he ſhould ſay, they are indeed driuen out of the land of Canaan according as they were oftentimes threatned before: yet he therewithall meanes, that they remaine vnder his protection and ſafegard, acknowledging them *for his owne*, although they be chaſed and *baniſhed* out of their countrie. For this calamitie which the Iewes endured, ſeemed a kind of reiection, but the Lord takes them ſtill for *his children*, although he thus ſharplie corrected them.

A Conſolation. God is no leſſe moued with the wrongs done to his children, then with thoſe which are done directly againſt his owne Maieſtie.

Be merciſull to poore exiles, baniſhed for the truths ſake.

Deut.28.64.

Hence we may gather a ſingular conſolation, to wit, that we are ſtill of the number of *Gods children*, howſoeuer we may be ſmitten with hard and grieuous plagues. *The extortioner ſhall end.* He now directs his ſpeech to the Iewes, and continues to comfort them as before, ſhewing that when their enemies ſhall be cut off, they ſhall thereby be eaſed of all their miſeries and calamities. Now howſoeuer the Prophet ſpake heretofore expreſly to the Moabites, yet did he therewithall direct his ſpeech to the Iewes alſo. But then he only threatned the Moabites as enemies: here, he more clearely promiſeth comfort to his people; as if he ſhould ſay, O Moab, thou thoughteſt that my people were vtterlie vndone, but I will ſubdue their enemies, and put an end to their afflictions: thou ſhalt periſh, but my people ſhall in the end eſcape from the heauie burthens which oppreſſe them. Vnleſſe any had rather ſay that there is a change of the time here: ſo as the particle Becauſe, ſhould ſignifie vntill, and ſo reading the ſentence all with a breath. But becauſe this may ſeeme conſtreined, I had rather retaine the naturall ſenſe.

A Conſolation.

Verſ.5. *And in mercie ſhall the throne*

be prepared, and he shall sit vpon it in stedfastnesse in the tabernacle of Dauid, iudging, and seeking iudgement, and hasting iustice.

It is ill done of the Hebrewes to expound this whole verse of *Hezekias*. For the Prophet speakes of a greater restauration of the Church: the Moabites were not as yet chastened, whilest the gouernement of *Hezekias* flourished: and at that time the blessing of God began to shine againe vpon the Iewes. It is as much then as if he had said, the enemies of the elect people doe plot the ruine of this kingdome, which God had promised to stand firme; yea, and that for euer. To the end then that the faithfull might not be out of heart in this wofull scattering; *the eternitie* of the kingdome which had been set before their eyes by an excellent prophesie, is here brought to their remembrance. This place therefore can be referred to none other but to Iesus Christ, of whom *Hezekias*, as also *Dauid* and his successors were figures. These then doe rather leade and conduct others to Christ, who is the onely safe keeper and protector of his people: who indeede gathereth together the remnant that is scattered. Thus then hee brings the faithfull backe vnto Christ: as if hee should say, You know what God you serue: he hath promised to be the onely keeper of your saluation; to the end you may remaine safe vnder his protection, Iohn 10.28. And if it so fall out that things goe crosse sometimes; yet hath he promised you a redeemer: vnder whom you shall recouer a new and *stedfast* felicitie. What then if for a time you be sad and heauie? yet will this Sauiour of the Church come in the end: who wil set you in a flourishing liberty. And therefore settle your selues constantly in the expectation of him: yea euen then when you shall see the estate of the Church miserably scattered.

2.Sam.7.13

Dan.7.27.

Iob.10.16. & 11.32.

All consolations whatsoeuer are fading and transitorie, vnlesse they be referred vnto Christ.

We haue need to obserue this diligently, because all consolations whatsoeuer are but earthly and transitorie, if all be not referred vnto Christ. Let vs then fasten our eyes vpon him, if we will enioy any prosperitie or happines: for he hath promised that felicitie shall accompanie vs, euen in the middest of persecutions; Matth.5.10,11. and that all our anguishes and vexations shall open a way vnto vs to eternall life: yea, that all the afflictions which we endure, shall turne to a full measure of happinesse vnto vs, Rom.8.28.

Now *Isaiah* shewes that this shall not come to passe by meanes of men; but by the grace of God, which is the onely builder of *this throne*. Wherefore to him onely must we attribute this *mercie*, and acknowledge that it is of his free goodnesse that he hath *established* this sacred *throne* in the middest of vs. Now the Prophet confirmes it very well in saying, that the cause must be sought no where else, but in the meere *mercie* of God. This is a grounded trueth: for God was not moued thereto by the worthinesse of any merits; alas they were of no value to set vp that throne againe which was fallen downe by the sinne and iniquitie of the people: but seeing those whom he had adopted, had vndone themselues, he meant to shew a token of his infinite bountie in their restauration.

Shall sit vpon it in stedfastnesse.] There is almost no one word here which hath not his weight, so as this verse is worthy to be continually remembred. I grant indeede there is an allusion heere in the word *Tabernacle*, as some doe expound it; to wit, that he was as a common person before he was called to sit in the royall throne. For the Prophet meant to decipher out a liuely image of the Church, which is farre vnlike the thrones of kings and princes; neither shines it with gold, siluer, or precious stones as they doe. Now howsoeuer he proposed the spirituall kingdome of Christ vnder a base and abiect resemblance: yet he therewithall admonisheth, that it shall bee *prepared*, and set vp among men in the earth. For if it had been onely said that the throne of Christ should be set vp; it might haue been demaunded whether his seate should be set vp in heauen or in earth.

1.Sam.16. 11.12. 2.Sam.7.8.

But when he saith in the *Tabernacle of Dauid*, he shewes that he reignes not onely among Angels, but among men also: lest wee should imagine he were not to be found, vnlesse we ascend vp into heauen. The wicked laugh at this: taking all that we say of the kingdome of Iesus Christ but for a fable; as if it were a fancie forged in our owne braine. For they must behold that wee tell them of with their eyes; also it must agree to their senses: as for vs we ought in no wise to conceiue any thing carnally of him; but to content our selues with his power and vertue.

Vnlesse the wicked see it with their eies which is told them, they will beleeue nothing.

In stedfastnesse.] The word *Emeth* signifies all stedfastnesse whatsoeuer, and trueth. Here the Prophet meanes that the kingdome of Christ shall be firme and stable, as *Daniel* also hath witnessed, Dan.2.44. and 7.14. Likewise the Euangelist *Luke*: Of his kingdome (saith he) shall be none end, Luke 1.33. Wherein it differs from the common condition of other kingdomes, which often fall and tumble downe by their owne weight: be it that the foundations of them bee riches and other great commodities, alas their stedfastnesse differs very little from vanishing shadowes. But howsoeuer the kingdome of Christ seeme to totter now and then, yet *Isaiah* tels vs that it shall *stand for euer*, because God vpholds it with his hand. We must therefore arme our selues with these testimonies against the temptations which shal happen when Christs kingdome is assailed with many and mighty enemies, so as a man would imagine it would fall to ruine forthwith. Let the world deuise what it can then, yea, let hell it selfe cast forth flashes of flaming fire: yet must we sticke fast to this promise.

Christs Kingdome differs from the common condition of other Kingdoms.

Christs Kingdome may now and then seeme to totter: but it shall euer stand stedfast, because God vpholds it.

He shall iudge.] I take the word *Shophet* for Gouernour: as if he should say, there shall be one that shall *gouerne*: we often see a magnificent throne, and yet no man sits on it: and it will ordinarily fall out that kings shall be either idols or beasts, who haue neither iudgment, wisedome, nor any discretion in them.

But

But heere he ſaith, that he which ſhall ſit in this throne wil performe the office of a good gouernour: which is added, to the end we may know that Chriſt will be our protector in deed: for the *iudgement* which is attributed to him is nothing elſe but the ſafe cuſtodie vnder which he hath receiued vs, and which none can wring from him: neither will he let the wicked remaine vnpuniſhed when they haue offred vs violence, if ſo be that with a meeke and quiet ſpirit we will put our ſelues vnder his protection.

We muſt ſet Chriſts ſpeedines in comming to our reſcue, againſt our impatiencie.

By the word *haſten*, the Prophet ſheweth that Chriſt will take vengeance quicklie and ſpeedilie of our afflictions: which we ought to oppoſe to our impatiẽcie, becauſe it ſeemes to vs that he is too ſlow in ſuccoring vs. But when we ſhall be ſo ouerſwayed by our paſſions, let vs thinke, ſurely this comes to paſſe becauſe we giue not place to his prouidence.

Although Chriſt ſeeme to tarrie long in our ſenſe, yet he knows what time is fitteſt to help vs.

Although then that he tarrie according to the ſenſe of the fleſh, yet doth he alwaies moderate his iudgements after a moſt excellent order, according as he knowes the ſeaſons beſt for vs. For this cauſe then let vs quietlie wait his good pleaſure.

Verſ. 6. *We haue heard of the pride of Moab (he is very proud)* euen *his pride and his arrogancie, and his * indignation,* but *his lies* * ſhall *not* be *ſo.*

*Or, inſolencie.
*Or, ſhal not be approued, or, ſhall not take effect.

THe Prophet addes this ſentence by way of preuẽtion. For that which he had promiſed touching the reſtauration of the royall throne, ſeemed incredible; neither could they perſwade themſelues that the Moabites could be deſtroyed, ſeeing they floriſhed at that time with abundance of riches, as alſo in ſtrength and power of men: who for this cauſe (being puffed vp with proſperitie) became *exceeding proud*. Adde alſo, that their malapertnes wherewith they inſulted ouer the poore Iewes, was vnto them like a ſore and hard engin to breake and bruiſe their hearts. The Prophet that he might preuent this temptation, tels them that the brags of the Moabites are well enough knowne; but yet their pride ſhall not hinder the Lord from puniſhing of them: becauſe there is neither force, riches, nor multitude that is able to reſiſt him. *Iſaiah* then ſpeakes as of a thing commonlie knowne: to wit, that the Moabites were become ſo extreame proude, that they feared nothing: it being in deed the vſuall faſhion of thoſe that abound in wealth and power, to inſult malapertlie ouer God and men. But how great ſoeuer their arrogancie is the Lord will eaſily pull it downe.

His inſolencie.] The word *Euvah* for the moſt part ſignifies indignation: but the circumſtance of this place ſeemes to require ſomewhat more. This noune comes of the verb to Tranſgreſſe, as if we ſhould ſay in Latine, To exceed, and therefore I haue thought good to tranſlate it inſolencie. *Ieremiah* hauing mentioned their pride & arrogancie, ſpeakes of *hautines of the heart*, Iere. 48. 14. & 29. I make no queſtion but *Iſaiah* and *Ieremiah* both meant that this people were ſo cruell in regard of their ouerweening, loftines & ſtatelines, that they would wax wroth and angrie vpon the leaſt occaſion; and churliſhlie aduance themſelues againſt others. This vice is alwaies ioined with loftines of mind, becauſe the contempt of others is accompanied with pride: and thoſe who aſcribe vnto thẽſelues more then is meete, are eaſily prouoked to anger vpõ the leaſt occaſion: ſuch can beare nothing, and are not only inclined to wrath, but to outrage alſo. For by their good wils they would ſubiect euery man vnder them, neither will they giue place by any meanes to any man whatſoeuer. If euery one be not readie at their beck they take it in foule ſcorne. Proude men doe eaſily bewray this their high ſtomack: whereas the humble on the contrarie are of a louing diſpoſition, ioyned with modeſtie anſwerable thereunto, and are ſoone intreated to pardon any that haue done them wrong.

Riches begets pride, pride brings forth wrath, and wrath is for the moſt part accompanied with outrage.

His lies.] The Hebrues call the members of man, or the branches of a tree *Baddim*: and they alſo take this word for Diuination, which is vſed in this ſignification in ſome other places. Some thinke it is put heere by a figure, for childrẽ: others referre it to words, or thoughts: others expound it of ſtrength or ſinewes. But in mine opinion it is taken rather for a fooliſh boaſting, becauſe this noune is often taken for a lie: and we ſhall ſee hereafter how this ſignification agrees beſt to this place. The expoſitors alſo differ in the word *Ken*. The moſt tranſlate, That lies, or words are not vpright: others, that lies are not true. For the ſubſtance, I am almoſt of their opinion: neither doubt I but the Prophet meant to ſay that Moab vtters his vaine brags, becauſe he can not attaine to his chiefe enterpriſe.

Moab vtters his vaine brags, when he can not attaine his chiefe enterpriſe.

For the ſenſe of the words we ſhall beſt gather it out of the foure and fortith Chapt. of Ieremiah verſ. 30. for hauing there repeated the very words of our Prophet, he preſentlie addes by way of expoſition, *They ſhall not do ſo*, as if he ſhould ſay, That which they haue reſolued in themſelues to do, ſhall neuer come to paſſe. Yet notwithſtanding I am not of opinion that there ſhould be a particle of ſimilitude in the firſt member, but rather of confirmation, as it were by a negatiue, becauſe he declares that there ſhall be no ſtedfaſtnes in Moabs counſels: neither ſhould his diuinations or *lies* come to effect. Thus the proude often determine of all things no otherwiſe then as if the diſpoſing of them were in their owne hands, and themſelues exempt from being ruled by the prouidence of God. Such *pride* ſaith *Iſaiah* ſhall *fall*, and whatſoeuer they promiſe vnto themſelues concerning their power, ſhall vaniſh like ſmoke.

Heereby wee are admoniſhed, that pride is greatly diſpleaſing vnto God: and by how much the more men bee puffed vp in regard of their riches, ſo much the neerer are they to their owne deſtruction.

Pride diſpleaſing to God.

Verſ. 7. *Therefore ſhall Moab houle*

vnto Moab; euery one ſhall houle: for the foundations of Kir-hareſeth ſhall yee mourne: yet they ſhall be ſtricken.

HE ſets forth that more plainely which he touched before: to wit, that this pride and crueltie which proceedes thereof, ſhall be the cauſe of Moabs ruine. For ſeeing the Lord reſiſts the proud, hee muſt needes take downe this haughtineſſe, vnder which the Church was miſerably and ſhamefully trodden vnder foote. According to which example, the end of all proud perſons muſt of neceſſitie bee lamentable. Where it is added, *Moab vnto Moab*; his meaning is, that there ſhall bee a *dolorous ſong* as it were, when they ſhall make their *mone one to another* touching their calamities, and ſhall weepe for one anothers griefes. *Iam.4.6. 1.Pet.5.5.*

Some tranſlate, Becauſe of Moab; but vnfitly. For it is by and by ſaid, that the houling ſhall bee *generall*, or amongſt the people.

For the foundations.] It ſufficiently appeares that Kir-hareſeth was the head Citie, and the Kings regall ſeate: but ſome thinke it to be a proper name; others ſay it is appellatiue: no doubt but the etymologie of the word was taken hence; namely, becauſe it was built of chalke. It may be alſo that it was called thus, in regard of the height of the walles which were made of bricke. Now this was a citie greatly renowned in that Country: yet he rather names the *foundations* then the Citie it ſelfe, becauſe it ſhould be raced to the groũd. As if he ſhould ſay; You ſhall not lament the ruine of the Citie or buildings, but the vtter ſubuerſion of it, becauſe there ſhall nothing remaine of it.

They expound the word *Neeſam*, Lame: I had rather tranſlate it, Hurt. The particle which is ſet before it, ſignifies as much as, Certainely, or, Surely: ſometimes it is taken for But, or, Notwithſtanding. Thoſe which take it in the affirmatiue, expound it thus: You ſhall ſurely mourne, when you ſhall bee hurt or ſtricken: that is to ſay, you ſhall not neede to hire thoſe that ſhall faine a mourning for you, as they vſually doe at the buriall of ſome; but you ſhall mourne in good earneſt. But I expound it Onely; as if he ſhould ſay; All that ſhall remaine, ſhall be *ſtricken*; not one ſhall eſcape in ſafetie. And by this maner of ſpeech he expreſſeth the extreme ruine of that Citie, ſhewing that thoſe which liue, ſhall not onely bewaile the calamities of others, but their owne alſo: becauſe they themſelues ſhall be ſtricken. If the proud be thus ſharply corrected, let vs learne to carry our ſelues modeſtly and peaceably; and freely to humble our ſelues vnder the mightie hand of God.

Verſ. 8. *For the vineyards of Heſhbon are cut downe,* and *the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen haue broken the principall vines thereof: they are come to Iaazer: they wandred in the wildernesse: her goodly branches ſtretched out themſelues,* and *went ouer the ſea.*

THe Prophet deſcribes the deſtruction of the whole Country here vnder an allegorie. It is very credible that it abounded with good vineyards: which wee may eaſily collect frõ this place, and another like vnto it in the 48. of Ieremy, verſ. 32. Now when the Prophets threaten any Countries with deſtruction, they are wont to recite the chiefeſt things in them. For example, if wee were to ſpeake of Picardie, truely we would not mention vines: as if we ſpake of Orleance, or Burgondie. The Cities which the Prophet deſcribes in this verſe, are the head Cities in the Country of Moab.

He ſaith, that *the principall vines of the vineyards were plucked vp by the Lords of the nations*: that is to ſay, by the conquerours which bare ſway as they liſted ouer the people whõ they had ſubdued. Where he ſaith, that theſe *branches came to Iaazer*, it is for amplifications ſake; becauſe this citie was ſituated vpon ỹ bounds of the land of Moab. As if he ſhould ſay, They ſhall not onely cut downe ſome part of your vines, but the whole Country ſhall bee laid waſte from one end to the other. Some referre this to the enemies: but I had rather referre it to the vines which ſtretched ſo far, that they came to Iaazer: ſo as the ſenſe ſhall be; Although theſe vines ſhould ſpread euen vnto Iaazer, and ſhould couer much land from thence vnto the *wildernesse*, yet ſhall the *lords of the nations* tread them vnder foote. So that the text runnes well, becauſe it is ſaid afterwards, that the vines ſpread themſelues vnto the wilderneſſe; yea, vnto the *ſea*: thereby ſignifying, that it was a fruitfull ſoile, but eſpecially for *vines*; he addes, *ouer the ſea*; becauſe in fertile groundes they are wont to keepe backe the ſea with rampires for gaining of ground: and they preuent the violence of the water with boords and timber, to inlarge the land.

Verſ. 9. *Therefore wil I weep with the weeping of Iaazer, and of the vine of Sibmah: O Heſhbon and Elealeh I will make thee drunke with my teares, becauſe vpon thy ſummer fruites, and vpon thy haruest a ſhouting is fallen.*

HEere the Prophet takes another perſon vpon him, as we haue noted before: for he ſorrowes and complaines in the perſon of the Moabites. I deny not but the faithfull haue alwaies trembled at Gods iudgements, neither could they euer ſo put off the bowels of pitie, but they had ſtill compaſſion vpon the wicked; yet doth he not deſcribe his priuate affections here: but his meaning is, to get authoritie to his doctrine, that none might doubt of the accompliſhment of it. And therefore he repreſents the ſorrow and heauineſſe which they ſhould all feele after the

the diſcomfiture (as it were vpon a ſcaffold) in the perſon of a Moabite; and all to the end he might the better confirme the Iewes in the truth of this promiſe, which might otherwiſe haue ſeemed incredible vnto them.

Becauſe vpon thy ſummer fruits.] The expoſitours interpret this latter part diuerſly. The verbe *Naphal*, ſignifies to Fall, and to run vpon. Thoſe which take it in the laſt ſignification, referre the word *Hedad*, to the enemies themſelues: as if he ſhould ſay, The cry of the enemies ſhall runne vpon thy harueſt: ſo as there ſhould be a cloſe oppoſition here betweene this cry, and the ſinging whereof he will ſpeake in the next verſe. Others expound it, It ſhall come to paſſe that they ſhall caſt forth cries: as if ſinging ſhould ceaſe, and as if the pleaſant ſongs and mirth of the reapers, who are wont to reioyce after harueſt, ſhould be no more heard. But I had rather referre it to the cry of the enemies: wherein I follow *Ieremiah*, the faithfull expoſitour of this place, who ſaith, That the deſtroyer ſhall runne vpon thy ſummer fruites. Which *Iſaiah* calles here the cry of the enemies: as if hee ſhould ſay; When thou ſhalt prepare thy ſelfe to gather in thy harueſt, the enemies ſhall run vpon thee, from whom thou ſhalt heare this hideous *cry* in ſtead of thy cheerful ſongs, and ſhall chaſe thee thence.

Ier.48.32.

Verſ. 10. *And gladneſſe is taken away, and ioy out of the plentifull field: and in the vineyards ſhall be no ſinging nor ſhouting for ioy; the treader ſhall not treade wine in the wine-preſſes: I haue cauſed the reioycing to ceaſe.*

HEe confirmes his threatning by more words, ſhewing that the whole region ſhall be deſtroyed and laid waſte, ſo as there ſhall be no more *vintage* nor *harueſt*. When he ſaith, that God will take away the *ſongs* of the vine-dreſſers, hee reſpects the ancient cuſtome. For they were wont to dance and manifeſt their ioy after the grapes were gathered in. For which cauſe, *Virgil* ſaith, that the vine-dreſſer ſings when his laſt labours about his vines are finiſhed, euen as the Mariners ſhout for ioy when they be arriued in the hauen. For then hauing ſuffered much, and eſcaped many dangers, they hope to haue reſt, and to obtaine ſome refreſhing. This is as much then as if the Prophet had ſaid, Being deprined of the reuenue of their fruits, nothing ſhall remaine vnto them, but the bewailing of their pouerty.

Virgil.

Verſ. 11. *Wherefore my bowels ſhall ſound like an harpe for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-hareſeth.*

THe Prophet vnder the perſon of a Moabite doth againe deſcribe a great lamentation proceeding from ſuch grieuous ſorrow, that their bowels ſhould breake, or make an horrible noyſe. For hee would ſhew the thing it ſelfe by the ſigne of it. Now we haue alreadie ſhewed whereunto theſe liuely deſcriptions tend; to wit, that hauing the thing demonſtrated as it were in their ſight, wee might the more confidently expect the obtaining of that which far ſurmounts all our thoughts. In that he names the chiefe Citie againe, he notes out the ruine of the whole Country, taking a part for the whole.

Verſ. 12. *And it ſhall appeare that Moab ſhall be weary of his high places: then ſhall he come to his *Temple to pray, but he ſhall not preuaile.*

*Or, Sanctuary.

HE now returnes to the ſentence which he touched in the ſecond verſe: to wit, that the idolaters ſeeing their affaires to ſucceede ill, doe runne to idols, thinking to find ſome comfort in them. Although he here expreſſeth ſome thing more: for in as much as Idolaters haue their temples and ordinarie chapels, they trot to that temple which they take for the moſt holy (when any great calamitie befals them) as to the place where they hope to finde God moſt fauourable vnto them. For if the Papiſts at this day fall into any great and extreame danger, they perſwade themſelues they ſhall ſooner obtaine their requeſts (and this hath been a common and ancient ſuperſtitious conceit) if they trot to Saint *Claude*, or to our Lady of *Laureſte*, or to ſome other Idoll more famous than the reſt: than if they ſhould reſort to the Church that is neereſt hand. They make their extraordinarie prayers in places furtheſt off. Thus the Prophet calles the moſt renoumed and frequented temple among the Moabites, a *Sanctuarie*; and ſaith, they ſhall goe thither: but to no purpoſe. Now it appeares by the holy hiſtorie, that the famouſeſt temple of the Moabites was dedicated vnto *Chemoſh*: 1.King.11.7.

Some expound the particle, *They ſhall not preuaile*: that they ſhould be ſo wearie, that they ſhould not haue ſo much ſtrength as to goe to the temple. But the firſt ſenſe is the fitteſt as I thinke: for he takes away all hope from the Moabites, ſo as they ſhould finde no ſuccour, no not in the gods themſelues. This member, *and when it ſhall appeare*, hath great waight: for it ſignifies that the Idolaters are not led with reaſo, but rather by their natural appetites, euen like vnto bruite beaſts. For as beaſts iudge by touching, ſmelling, and ſeeing, ſo alſo the Idolaters haue no better ſchoolemaſter to inſtruct them than their owne carnall ſenſe. If any then conuince them by ſound arguments, that they doe ill; a man ſhall gaine nothing from them. And howſoeuer they ſometimes haue experience that all their labour in vexing themſelues after their maner is but loſt; yet will they not therefore giue ouer, but forge new meanes, and will bring in ſeruices of their owne inuention, which they would faine haue God to approue of. If they haue good ſucceſſe, that they attribute to their ſuperſtitions, and ſo waxe the more obduarate: and if matters

succeed ill they reiect their inuentions, condemne their new deuised worship, and blame their gods. To be short, they depend wholly vpon euents, iudging of nothing neither by reason, nor by the word of God. Therefore they are newfangled euermore, according as experience leades them. But it seemes the Prophet passeth yet further, to wit, that the Moabites shall come to the *Temple of Chamos* when their follie shall be manifestlie discouered vnto all; rather with shame and blushing, then of any mature deliberation.

Idolaters depend altogether vpon euents.

Vers. 13. *This is the word that the Lord hath spoken against Moab since that time.*

THis short sentence is the confirmation of the prophesie: for his meaning is, that he hath euen pronounced the very *decree of God himselfe*, and hath vttered nothing but the Lords message. Thus putting off as it were the person of man, he brings in God speaking in this manner:

Vers. 14. *And now the Lord hath spoken, saying, In three yeeres, as the yeeres of an hireling, and the glorie of Moab shal be contemned in all the great multitude, and the remnant shall be very small and feeble.*

THree yeeres.] The time is not only prefixed for the certaintie, but also to the end the faithfull might not languish in waiting any longer. Now he alludes to the agreements and couenants of men, wherein they haue been wont to set downe *a certaine day* which they must not breake. This is speciallie done in mercenarie businesses; which similitude is often vsed in the scriptures, because the hireling waits with exceeding desire for the appointed day wherein he is to receiue his wages. For they groane as it were vnder the burthen, and beare their ordinarie labors vnwillinglie. Thus God saith, he will assigne a certain day vnto the Moabites which they shall not escape; but all their puissance shall therein be brought to nothing. He speakes expreslie of *the multitude*, because they were a great people; and therefore bragged of it as if they had been inuincible. Where he ads that the *remnant shall be feeble*, he meanes, there shall be such a change, that there shall be great ods betweene their former and latter estate, because nothing shall be seene but a wofull and hidious spectacle in those that remaine.

Iob.7.1.2. & 14.6. Chap.21.16.

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *The burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a Citie, for it shall be a ruinous heape.*

HE propheseth against the kingdome of Syria, and mentions the head *Citie*, which was the regall seate of the Kingdome. Now it was requisite that this destruction should be described as well as ỹ rest, to the end the faithfull might assure themselues that God would assist them in time conuenient, and would not alwaies suffer the wicked to molest them without ceassing. For the king of Syria was confederate with the king of Israel against the king of Iudah; as we haue seene before in the seuenth Chapter: and because the Iewes were not strong enough to resist them, being destitute of sufficient meanes, they might also haue doubted of succor from God, as if he had left them at fixe and seauen. That he might therefore free them from this perplexitie, he threatens destruction to this kingdome of Syria, from whence they might well conclude, that God fought for the defence of his people.

The reason why this burden is pronounced against Damascus.

It is not knowen in what time *Esaiah* prophesied this, neither (as I haue touched heretofore) doth he obserue the precise order of times when he threatens any nation with the chastisements which it deserued: but as I coniecture he foretold this, when the two kings of Israel and Syria had inuaded Iudah: hauing therewithall conspired the destruction of the Church. For in as much as he ioines the Israelites and Syrians together, he calles them both to the same iudgement; to let them vnderstand that they had so profited by this wicked and cursed league, that both of them should be inwrapped in one and the same destruction. The Prophets meaning then is to comfort the faithfull of the tribe of Iudah, because he especiallie had regard to them (and not to the Israelites nor Syrians, whose ruine he now foretels) lest they should be left comfortlesse.

The time when this burden was threatned.

The particle demonstratiue, *Behold*, seales vp as it were the truth of this prophesie. Whereas he only mentions *Damascus* in particular, it followes not therefore that hee meant to exempt the other parts of the kingdome: but this maner of speech is very vsuall in the Prophets, namely, to take a part for the whole, so as vnder the ruin of the principall Citie, he comprehends that which should befall the whole Nation: for what could the lesser Cities expect but confusion, when the fortresse of the kingdome should be taken? There is also another reason why the Prophets threaten the chiefe Cities, directing their speech against them, to wit, because they were the seminaries of all wickednes, from which as out of a fountaine it dispersed it selfe ouer the whole land.

1 Reasons why the Prophets threaten ruin to the chiefe Cities, rather then to the inferior.

2

Vers. 2. *The Cities of Aroer shall be forsaken: they shall be for the flockes; for they*

they ſhall be there, and none ſhall make them afraid.

Num. 32.34 Deut. 2.36. & 3.12. & 4.48.

IT is vncertaine whether by *Aroer* here, he meanes that Citie whereof mentiō is made elſewhere. It ſhould rather be the name of a Region or Country; howſoeuer hee deſcribes the forme of a Country laid waſte: for hee ſaith, that the places where Cities were built, ſhould now be *common paſtures*; ſo as nothing ſhould remaine but the lodges & tents of ſheepheards: for if any inhabitants were left there, they ſhould driue their *flocks* to another place.

Verſ. 3. *The munition alſo ſhall ceaſe from Ephraim, and the Kingdome from Damaſcus: and the remnant of Aram ſhall bee as the glorie of the children of Iſrael, ſaith the Lord of hoſtes.*

HEe now ſhewes the cauſe why the Lord would cut off the Kingdome of Syria. The Prophet *Amos* recites many: Amos 1.3. But that which *Iſaiah* mentions here, was the principall; to wit, that they had drawne the Kingdome of Iſrael to the bent of their bow, to make warre againſt the Iewes. No doubt but the Iſraelites were inticed by the flatteries of the Syrians, to make a league with them to fight againſt their brethren. And the better to deceiue them, the Syrians alledged that they would aide them againſt all their aduerſaries. And therefore the Iſraelites alſo reſted themſelues vpon the ſtrength of their confederates: ſo as they were perſwaded, that none were too hard for them. Vnder the word *Ephraim*, he meanes all Iſrael, as in many other places; for Ephraim was the chiefe Tribe of the people. Beſides, he ſaith, that the *munition and kingdome* ſhall ceaſe from a place, when the ſtrength thereof is broken, and the excellency thereof brought low.

The remnant.] That is to ſay, the peoples both of Syria and Iſrael ſhould bee brought to nought: and the better to authoriſe his prophecie, he addes forthwith, that *God hath ſpoken it.* Now when God puniſhed theſe two kingdomes ſo ſeuerely, no doubt but hereby he prouided for the ſaluation of his Church, redeeming and deliuering it euen by the deſtruction of the enemies. And for the rooting out of them both, he vſed the helpe of the Aſſyrians, whom the Iewes themſelues had called: in which fact of theirs, they ſinned very groſly. Yet could not their offence hinder the Lord from being carefull of his Church, deliuering it, by ſetting his enemies together by the eares. And by this wee may ſee how great care the Lord hath of vs, ſeeing he ſpares *not* to puniſh euen great and mightie kingdomes for our ſafetie. We may alſo obſerue, that although all the wicked ſhould band and ioyne themſelues in league together to deſtroy vs, yet the Lord will eaſily finde a way how to deliuer vs out of their deuouring iawes. Beſides, we may note how needfull it is for vs to be depriued of all humane helpes, wherein wee often put vaine confidence, and that againſt God himſelfe: for being once blinded with proſperitie, we begin ſo to pride our ſelues in it, that we can giue God no audience. Hee muſt be faine therefore to remoue all impediments out of our way, to the end we may come to the true ſight of our powertie: as it happened to the Iſraelites, who were ſtripped of all their ſuccours, after Syria was once deſtroyed.

God ſometimes deliuers his Church, by ſetting her aduerſaries together by the eares. 1 2 3

It is fit we ſhould now and then be left helpeleſſe, to bring vs to the true ſight of our owne weakneſſe.

Verſ. 4. *And in that day the glory of Iacob ſhall be impoueriſhed, and the fatneſſe of his fleſh ſhall be made leane.*

5. *And it ſhall be as when the harueſt man gathereth the corne, and reapeth the eares with his arme: and he ſhall be as he that gathereth the eares in the valley of Rephaim.*

ALthough hee had promiſed to ſpeake of Syria and Damaſcus, yet now he ioynes the *Iſraelites* with the Syrians: and the reaſon is, becauſe they were confederates in one and the ſame quarrell. The Syrians, to whom *Iſaiah* eſpecially directs his ſpeech, were euen as a firebrand to kindle the wrath of the Iſraelites, as hath been ſaid: but the Iſraelites were no leſſe guilty, and therefore iuſtly are they wrapped in the ſame afflictions, as if they had been yoked with them. It is vncertaine whether hee meanes all the elect people, when he ſpeakes of *Iacob*; ſo as he ſhould comprehend the Tribe of Iudah alſo. Yet is it very likely it ſhould bee referred to the ten Tribes onely, who challenged this name vnto themſelues: ſo as he calles them *glorious*, by way of deriſion, becauſe when they waxed proud of their ſtrength, multitude, and confederacies, they deſpiſed their brethren the Iewes. Whereas he threatens them afterward with *leanneſſe*, he doth it to taxe their inſolencie: as on the contrary the Prophets ſcorne and reproch them for being become fat. For their proſperitie made them proud, being puffed vp with the fruitfulnes of their country, euen as fat horſes ouermuch pampered, are wont to kicke with the heele; which is the cauſe why *Amos* cals them fat kine: Amos 4.1. How wanton and luſtie ſoeuer they were then, the Lord proteſts, that hee will take downe their *fat*, which cauſed them to be ſo *glorious*.

The reaſon why the Iſraelites are matched with the Syrians in this iudgement.

Amos 4.1.

And it ſhall be.] By this ſimilitude he ſhewes how fearefull the iudgement ſhall be. Looke, ſaith he, how *reapers* gather the corne into their armes, ſo ſhall this multitude (how great and mightie ſoeuer) be reaped by the enemies. And that he might not omit any thing, he addes, that after the *harueſt ſhall be ended*, ſome looſe eares ſhall be gathered, which lay ſcattered here & there: as if he ſhould ſay, After the multitude ſhall be gathered in, & the land made bare, euē as a field that is reaped, the remainder which ſhall be ſcattered, ſhall not therefore reſt in ſafetie. Moreouer, hee vſeth this ſimilitude of the *harueſt*, becauſe the

Verſ. 5. 1 Simile. 2 3

the people were growne ſecure vpon truſt of their great multitude: But as the reapers are not amazed at all when they ſee the corne very thicke; ſo, ſaith he, the great multitude ſhall not diſable the Lord from rooting them wholly out. We may in like maner referre this to the Aſſyrians; but yet the ſenſe will be ỹ ſame, becauſe they were Gods ſeruants to execute this vengeance. Wee neede not ſtand to debate much about ỹ verb *To gather*, becauſe it ſignifies nothing elſe but that the ſlaughter ſhall be like *an harueſt*, which being once ended, others are permitted to *gleane the eares* which lie ſcattered. For after that the tenne tribes had bin led captiues, the Aſſyrians gleaned vp the remnant alſo, when they vnderſtood of their new deuices, 2. King. 17. 4. 5. He makes eſpeciall mention of *Rephaim*, becauſe the Iſraelites were well acquainted with the fruitfulnes of it.

Verſ. 6. *Yet a gathering of grapes ſhall be left in it, as the ſhaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the vtmoſt bowes,* and *foure or fiue in the high branches of the fruit thereof, ſaith the Lord God of Iſrael.*

Chap. 24. 13.

HE had preciſelie affirmed that nothing ſhould remaine of the diſcomfiture; euen as if the name of the nation ſhould be vtterlie defaced. Now he addes a conſolation to aſſwage the bitternes of the ſlaughter. For he ſhewes ỹ there ſhall ſome remaine, although the enemies determined to conſume and deſtroy thẽ vtterlie. Euen as a man neuer *plucks his vine ſo cleane* but there will ſome *grape* or *cluſter* lie hidden vnder the leaues: Likewiſe as a man neuer *ſhakes his olives* ſo thorowlie but that *ſome one will hang ſtill in the top of the tree*: ſo howſoeuer the enemies be enraged, and the wrath of God kindled, yet as he therin ſhewes himſelfe a ſeuere Iudge, ſo will he ſhew himſelfe gracious and mercifull, in reſeruing a ſmall number; in not ſuffring the ſpoile of the enemies to fall vpon his elect. Whence we may gather, that his mercie will alwaies take place in the midſt of his moſt fierce vengeance. For he ſpeakes here of the children of *Abraham*, who albeit they were reuolted frõ God, and had made themſelues vnworthie of their adoption, yet did the goodnes of God ouercome their malice. True it is they had deſerued no ſuch fauour, but yet muſt the couenant of the Lord remaine ſure and inuiolable, ſo as the teſtimonie therof appeareth in this *remnant*, although the people for their parts had aboliſhed it wholle as much as lay in them. Which we ought diligentlie to obſerue, that when we ſee no face of the Church at all, but that the faithfull ſeeme to be periſhed, wee ſhould not thinke it is therefore raced out, becauſe God is immutable, who hath promiſed that it ſhall ſtand for euer, Gen. 17. 7. There ſhall euer be ſome remaine then, although to outward appearance wee oftentimes behold the contrarie.

A Conſolation.

1

2

In wrath God alwayes remembers mercie.

The Church may ſeeme at ſometime to be vtterlie waſted, but God ſtill reſerues a ſmall remnãt becauſe of his promiſe.

Verſ. 7. *At that day ſhall a man looke to his maker, and his eies ſhall looke to the holie one of Iſrael.*

NOw he ſets forth the fruit of this chaſtiſement: and this is the ſecond conſolation, which ſhould ſuſteine the faithfull in their aduerſities. For howſoeuer they felt nothing but the wrath of God; yet were they to thinke that the Lord (who neuer forgets his owne) would ſtill preſerue his Church for euer: and withall, that the corrections ſhould be profitable to his children. Hauing ſpoken then of the perpetuitie of the Church, he alſo ads, that afterwards men *ſhall looke* vnto God, which is the moſt deſirable good thing of all others. For when we returne vnto God, then the world, which was laid waſt before, begins to be brought into his right frame againe. Therefore when we are eſtranged from him, becauſe none of vs repents willinglie, we can not be brought backe againe into the right way vnleſſe he vſe the ſpurre and corrections to driue vs forward. Hereby then wee are admoniſhed to beare our chaſtiſements cheerefullie, ſeeing God vſeth thẽ as meanes to purge vs from a moſt deadlie apoſtaſie. For *to looke vnto God*, is nothing elſe but (hauing once turned out of the way) to come into his fauor by turning againe vnto him, and to put our ſelues vnder his protection. What is the cauſe why men giue ouer themſelues to all leaudnes? Surely becauſe they forget God. For where the true knowledge of God is, there is alſo reuerence of his Maieſtie ioined with it: and whereſoeuer forgetfulnes beareth ſway, there contempt muſt needs reigne. Although this maner of ſpeech appertaine properlie to faith, as if he ſhould ſay, when the Iſraelites ſhall be once tamed by theſe ſharp chaſtiſements, they ſhall then feele by experience that there is no ſuccour but in God alone: in which ſenſe he preſentlie addes the word *maker*. Trulie it was a deteſtable ſenſleſnes that they reſted not vpon that God only who had indued them with ſo many excellent gifts. The Prophet ſhewes then that they ſhall become wiſer by being humbled vnder calamities and afflictions, and ſhall beginne to hope in him who had bound them vnto him by ſo many benefits.

The ſecond conſolation.

1

2

God vſeth corrections as a ſpeciall remedie to preſerue vs frõ apoſtacie.

What it is to turne vnto God.

Knowledge of God breeds reuerence: forgetfulnes contempt.

He calles God their *maker*, not as in regard that he created all mankind, but in the ſame ſenſe that he calles him the *holy one of Iſrael*. Although then that all mẽ be created according to Gods image, yet Iſrael was properlie the worke of his hands, becauſe they were his holy inheritance and choſen people. And this repetition is vſed to ſignifie the ſame thing according to the common cuſtome of the Hebrue tongue. He calles God *holy*, not only becauſe he is ſo in himſelfe, but alſo in regard of the effect, for he *ſanctifies* and chuſeth to himſelfe the children of *Abraham*: whence it followes, that the *creation* whereof he ſpeakes, ought to be referred to ſpirituall regeneration, for ſo God is ſpeciallie called the *maker* of Iſrael.

Gen. 1. 27. Exod. 19. 6.

1

2

Verſ. 8.

Verſ. 8. *And he ſhall not looke to the Altars, the workes of his owne hands; neither ſhall hee looke to thoſe things which his owne fingers haue made, as groues and images.*

THis expoſition declares more cleerely, that this looking, whereof he ſpake in the former verſe, is to be vnderſtood properly of faith and hope. For hee ſaith, that all falſe truſts ſhall vaniſh, when men begin once to hope in God: for the very truth is, no man *beholds the Lord aright, that forſakes not al his ſuperſtitions.* And therefore we are here taught to take away all impediments if we will haue acceſſe vnto God: thoſe therefore doe foully deceiue themſelues, who will ioyne him with idols; as the Iewes once did, and as the Papiſts now doe: and note we alſo, that this vice hath not reigned for a day or two in the world, but alwaies. Let vs thē vtterly abandō all thoſe obſtacles, that ſo reſting ourſelues vpon the only goodneſſe of our God, we may rightly and cleerely behold him, and put our whole confidence in his mercy.

Now that hee might more plainely ſhew his deteſtation, hee calles the falſe gods *the workes of their hands:* that the Iſraelites being aſhamed of their folly, might put away and rid their hands of ſuch a reprochfull imputation. Now he ſpares no words in deſcribing this ſinne, becauſe they were principally defiled with it: as indeed there is no wickednеſſe more abominable in Gods ſight then it. They had an infinite number of ſuperſtitions among them, and had ſet vp idols and *altars* in innumerable places; ſo as *Iſaiah* had iuſt occaſion to reprooue and preſſe this ſinne home vpon them.

Obiect. But it may bee obiected, that the Altar of Ieruſalem was alſo erected by men; why ſhould they not reiect that, as wel as the reſt, to come vnto God? Anſ. I anſwere, this Altar differed very much from other Altars: for albeit it were compoſed of lime and ſtone, and decked with gold and ſiluer, and *made with mens hands* as others were; yet ought they not to reſpect either the matter or workmanſhip, but God himſelfe which was the author of it, at whoſe commandement this Altar was ſet vp. And therefore the eſſentiall forme (as you would ſay) which it had receiued by the word of God, muſt be conſidered: and none account to be made of the reſt, becauſe God himſelfe was the maſter builder of it. As for other Altars, howſoeuer they ſomewhat reſembled that at Ieruſalem; yet were they deteſtable, becauſe they had receiued no authority from Gods word. And the like reckoning may we make of all the inuentions of mans braine; let them haue what goodly appearance ſoeuer of holineſſe you will: for God cannot allow any thing but that which is conſecrated by his word.

God can allow of nothing, but that which he hath conſecrated by his word.

Verſ. 9. *In that day ſhall the Cities of their ſtrength be as the forſaking of boughes and branches, which they did forſake, becauſe of the children of Iſrael; and there ſhall be deſolation.*

HE goes on ſtill with that which he began to ſpeake of touching the deſtruction of the inhabitants of the land. Now becauſe the Iſraelites thought themſelues ſafe in regard of their bulwarks and ſtrong Cities, he threatens that this ſhall ſtand them in no more ſtead, than if the enemies walked thorow deſert places. Whereas ſome thinke that *Choreſh* and *Azubath* are the proper names of Cities, it is farre fetched: I rather vnderſtand it that he ſpeakes here of thornie or vntilled places: as if he ſhould ſay, Your defence of wals and ditches, ſhall ſerue you to no more purpoſe, then if you dwelt among thornes and buſhes. I make no doubt but the particle *Aſher*, ſtands here for a note of ſimilitude, and therefore I haue tranſlated it, *As:* ſo that the Prophet ſhould ſay all with a breath (as it were) that the people ſhall now be ſcattered by a fearefull flight, euen as God once draue out the Cananites before them. Thoſe which make this particle a relatiue, are conſtrained to ſupply ſomething, and to breake off the courſe of the ſpeech.

But the Prophet puts them in minde of an ancient example, to the end the Iſraelites might perceiue how vaine and deceiueable that defence is, which is oppoſed againſt the hand of God. It is a very grieuous reproch: for the Iſraelites conſidered not that God had giuen them this land to inherit, to the end they ſhould obey him: that he had therefore driuen the enemies out of it, to put them in poſſeſſion: they had therefore made themſelues vnworthy of ſo great bountie by their owne vnthankfulneſſe. Being then depriued of ſuch a mercy, they iuſtly felt the difference betweene the preſent euils, and the former benefits which they once inioyed.

This text will be the eaſier to vnderſtand out of *Moſes*, whom the Prophets often follow: for in the promiſes, he ſaith thus in expreſſe termes; One of you ſhall chaſe a thouſand: and contrariwiſe in the threatings; A thouſād of you ſhal be chaſed by one: Leu. 26. 8. Deut. 32. 30. Ioſh. 13. 10. Euen as he had then ſo aſtoniſhed the Cananites, that they fled by and by before the Iſraelites: ſo alſo did hee puniſh the vnthankfulneſſe of the people, by leauing them without power to reſiſt. Thus the Lord manifeſted his power two waies: firſt, in driuing out the Cananites: ſecondly, in taking vengeance vpon his people. The Prophet then in calling this ancient benefit to mind, doth therewithall vpbraid this vnthankfull and forgetfull people with their diſloyaltie, that ſo they might acknowledge their chaſtiſement to be iuſtly inflicted vpon them: as alſo that it was from Gods own hand that they were thus afflicted by their enemies, to whom in times paſt themſelues were a terrour and aſtoniſhment.

Verſ. 10. *Becauſe thou haſt forgotten*

gotten the God of thy ſaluation, and haſt
*Or, rocke. *not remembred the God of thy ſtrength:*
therefore ſhalt thou ſet pleaſant plants,
and ſhalt graffe ſtrange vine branches.

HE ſhewes the cauſe why God handled the ten Tribes ſo ſeuerely, leſt they ſhould complaine that they ſuffered wrongfully, or were hardly dealt with. To be ſhort, his meaning is to ſay, that all theſe afflictions are come vpon them, becauſe they haue wickedly contemned God. For their vnthankfulnes was too too vile, and altogether vnexcuſable; that hauing receiued ſo many benefits, they ſhold now proſtitute their hopes, by reſting vpon the helpe of idols and profane nations: as if they had neuer taſted the bountie of God in any thing. Indeed none of the vnbeleeuers being called to iudgement, ſhall be able to excuſe themſelues for not offering wrong to God in runnning after creatures. But the caſe was far otherwiſe with the Iſraelites, to whom God had manifeſted himſelfe in ſuch wiſe, that they ought to haue reſted in his fauour alone, and to haue reiected al the corruptions that reigned in the world. Iuſtly then are they condemned of *ingratitude*, in that they buried the matter of true confidence in forgetfulneſſe. And to ſpeake the truth, after God hath once cauſed vs to taſte the ſweetneſſe of his fatherly goodneſſe, if it take deepe roote in our hearts indeed, in cannot poſſibly come to paſſe, that we ſhould finally ſet our hearts vpon the inordinate loue of creatures. Whence it followes, that thoſe are very ingratefull, which trot hither and thither, not contenting themſelues with God alone. for by this means they ſet nought by his ineſtimable bounty. Therefore it is that the Prophet expreſly calles him *the God of ſaluation, and the rocke of ſtrength*. The word *Tſur* ſignifies both the one and the other: for it was a moſt prodigious thing not to hold themſelues faithfull vnto God, who had ſo oftentimes deliuered them, and that as it were by an outſtretched arme.

The ſinne. Whereas hee addes, *And haſt not remembred*: it ſerues for amplification; becauſe he cloſely taxeth them of wicked forgetfulneſſe, in not conſidering how many fauours God
The puniſhment. had ſhewed them before. *Thou ſhalt plant.* Now followes the puniſhment; leſt they ſhould imagine this their vnthankefulneſſe ſhould ſcape ſcot-free; to wit, becauſe they had forſaken the fountaine of all good things. For albeit they ſhould take care how to liue, yet ſhould they be conſumed by penurie and famine: becauſe the enemie ſhall ſpoile and waſte whatſoeuer they haue gotten by their induſtrie. This place is taken out of *Moſes*: for this curſe among others is there pronounced Deut. 28.30.39. Whence we may
The Prophets are the true expoſitours of the Law. ſee, that the Prophets borrowed many things out of *Moſes*, and are the true expoſitours of the Law; as I haue often ſhewed. He ſpeakes of *pleaſant vines*, and of *branches brought from farre*, becauſe the greatnes of the loſſe ſhould augment their ſorrow.

Verſ. 11. *In the day ſhalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning ſhalt thou make thy ſeede to floriſh: but the harueſt ſhall be gone in the day of poſſeſſion, and* there ſhall bee *deſperate ſorrow.*

Thou ſhalt make to grow.] He ſignifies a continuall husbandry imployed about planting and ſowing. Yet may we vnderſtand it of the ſucceſſe that comes of it: as if a vine newly planted, ſhould immediately bring forth wine. This agrees with that which is preſently added; where the *morning* is taken for the day: and thus it ſeemes he ſhould ſpeake of a ſudden ripening; vnleſſe any had rather refer it to diligence, becauſe they were buſie at worke by breake of day. There is ſome ambiguitie in the words: for ſome turne it, The branch ſhall be gone in the day of affliction. But ſeeing the word *Chalal*, ſignifies Heritage, it ſhould ſignifie properly (as I thinke) in this place, a gathering together: neither doe I ſee how the word Branch ſhould agree. I confeſſe indeede that when they ſpeake of vines, the word *Harueſt* is vſed; but abuſiuely. It might alſo be tranſlated, Collecting: yet would I not obſtinately ſtand to contend about theſe two words, becauſe the ſenſe will alwaies be one; prouided that the foreſaid word be taken for the gathering of fruits. Thus then the text will runne well; Although thou ceaſeſt not from labour, holding thy ſelfe hard at it from morning to night: yet ſhalt thou gaine nothing by it, becauſe the fruit ſhall wither of it ſelfe, by the ſhaking of the bowes; or, thy vines ſhall be ſpoiled.

Thus then by the figure Synecdoche, vnder the verbe To plant, hee comprehends a daily labour which husbandmen and vinedreſſers take in the fields and vineyards. Such a labour muſt needes bee very irkeſome, and proceeds from the very curſe of God. For if he that is deſtitute of poſſeſſions, be oftentimes baniſhed out of his Country, hee will not be ſo much grieued as hee that inioyeth fruitfull lands, eſpecially if he haue beſtowed any long time in husbanding of them: the Lord then meant to execute his vengeance vpon the Iſraelites, becauſe they had abuſed the abundance of the land, and let looſe the raines vnto all exceſſe. The like puniſhment is alſo threated generally to all the wicked; to wit, that they ſhall riſe early, and labour extremely; becauſe it ſhall be without any fruit: whereas on the contrarie, thoſe which reſt vpon the Lord, are well aſſured to reape the certaine fruit of their labours, becauſe the bleſſing of God accompanies the worke of their hands. Reade Pſalme 127. 2. and 128. 2.

Verſ. 12. *Ah, the multitude of many people, they ſhall make a ſound like the noiſe of the ſea: for the noiſe of the people*

yte ſhall make a ſound like the noiſe of mightie waters.

OThers expound *Ah*, Woe, as if it were a curſe: ſometimes it is vſed as a word of calling, as we haue ſeene heretofore. But as I thinke, it ſhould rather ſignifie Alas in this place: for he mournes for the calamitie which he foreſaw would befall Iſrael: be it that he doth it of a brotherlie affection, or that he thereby would pierce the deeper into the hearts of this ſenſeleſſe and blockiſh people. No queſtion but the Prophets feared the vengeance of God whereof they were the Heraulds, more then any other: and howſoeuer they ſharplie threatned the people as in regard of the perſon they ſusteined, yet did they neuer ſo caſt off the affection of loue, but they alwayes had compaſſion of thoſe that ſhould periſh. Notwithſtanding the conſideration of the couenant which God had contracted with the ſeed of *Abraham*, was the cauſe of this: and we ſee that this affection was in S. *Paul*, who deſires to be accurſed for his brethren the Iewes, Rom. 9. 3. When *Iſaiah* then ſets the matter thus before his eyes, it could not be but that he was touched with extreme griefe. Now in that he ſets this deſtruction before the view of the Iſraelites as if he himſelfe beheld it, it is to confirme his threatning, as wee haue ſhewed elſewhere. The word *multitude* is ſet downe, becauſe the armie was gathered of many and diuers nations, whereof the Monarchy of the Aſſyrians was compoſed. By the ſimilitudes which he addeth afterwards, his meaning is only to amplifie his ſpeech: for he compares the enemies to a *Sea* or deluge which drownes the whole countrie.

Verſ. 13. *The people ſhall make a ſound like the noiſe of many waters: but God ſhall rebuke them, and they ſhall flee farre off, and ſhall be chaſed as the chaffe of the mountaines before the wind, and as a rolling thing before the whirlewinde.*

ALthough he ſeemes to continue on the threatning which he began before, yet doth he now begin to comfort the faithfull, by repeating again the very ſame words with the former: as if he ſhould ſay, It muſt needs be that thoſe who haue forgotten God ſhould be chaſtiſed, and as good as ouerwhelmed for their wicked reuolt: but the Lord according to his wonted goodnes will repreſſe the ouermuch cruelrie of the enemies; for hauing once ſerued himſelf of their rough dealing, he will finde a meanes well enough to beate them backe and *chaſe* them away. See heere a ſingular conſolation, by which he meant to put the faithfull which remained in good hope. Now he ſpeakes not of the Iewes onlie, as the moſt haue imagined, for hitherunto he hath directed his ſpeech vnto the ten Tribes: amongſt whom no doubt there were ſome that truly feared God; who had been left in a deſperate caſe if they had had no promiſe whereon to reſt.

By theſe ſimilitudes he deſcribes horrible ſtormes & tempeſts: for when the holy Ghoſt would comfort the faithfull, he ſets thoſe things before them which are wont moſt of all to terrifie and caſt downe their ſpirits: to the end we might learne that it is eaſie for the Lord to *ſtill all the violence of tempeſts*, be they neuer ſo furious. And looke how he hath the ſea, the winds, and tempeſts at his command, ſo eaſilie can he curb the rage and violence of their enemies. Therefore he by and by after compares the Aſſyrians to *ſtraw*, or ſtubble: for howſoeuer their furie was terrible to the Iſraelites, yet the Prophet ſhewes notwithſtanding that they are no more in Gods account then *ſtraws* or ruſhes: becauſe without any paines whatſoeuer he will ſcatter all their preparations. They were not then to iudge of their forces and power according to ſenſe. As oft therefore as wee ſee that the wicked haue gotten the bridle in their necks to runne vpon vs for our deſtruction, let vs arme our ſelues (as much as is poſſible) with this meditation: True it is that we ſee no matter of hope left, but God ſeeth a meanes readie to bring all powers that are raiſed vp againſt vs to nought. The word *Galgal*, ſignifies a round thing which the wind driues eaſilie away. A meditation of great vſe.

Verſ. 14. *And loe, in the euening there is trouble: but afore the morning it is gone. This is the portion of them that ſpoile vs, and the lot of them that rob vs.*

THe ſenſe is this, looke how a tempeſt raiſed vp in the *euening* appeares not in the *morning* if it be by and by appeaſed: ſo alſo ſhall it come to paſſe that immediatlie after the enemies ſhall be driuen away, you ſhall ſuddenlie eſpie (beyond all hope) a ſweet and quiet calme. The Prophet meant to ſet down two things: firſt, that the rage of the enemies ſhall ſuddenlie fall vpon them: ſecondly, that the ſpoile which they ſhall make ſhall not laſt very long. For as the Aſſyrians roſe ſuddenlie againſt the Iſraelites, ſo alſo they were ſoone brought to nought. All the faithfull ought to gather great conſolation from this place as oft as they ſee things troubled and confuſed, and fearefull changes to approch: for is all this ought elſe then a tempeſt which the Lord will eaſilie ſtill? Tyrants come vpon vs as waues and billowes, but the Lord will quicklie diſperſe their rage: let vs therefore patientlie wait for his help. For albeit he now and then ſuffers vs to be toſſed to and fro, yet will the Lord in the end bring vs to the hauen, and that euen thorow the midſt of all ſtormes. 1 2 A Conſolation.

Now if the Prophet thus comforted a ſmall handfull of the remnant, we need not doubt but this promiſe alſo belongs vnto vs. For we in deed are but an handfull, and the poore Church is ſhut vp within very narrow bounds. But if we conſider the eſtate of this kingdome of Iſrael, how ſmall a number of Gods ſeruants was to be found there? Alas there was none almoſt that durſt open his mouth, ſo much

much was religion and godlineſſe hated of all ſorts. Although then that the Lord deſtroies the multitude of the wicked, yet will hee alwaies leaue ſome planke for his Church to ſaue her ſelfe from ſhipwracke, and to bring the ſmall remnant of the poore faithfull, who are toſſed with others as in the ſame ſhip, to a ſafe hauen.

This is the portion.] He ſpeakes of the faithfull which were hid in the kingdome of Iſrael, and ioynes them to the body of the Church, although the members were ſcattered here and there; as it often comes to paſſe to the children of God. And here we may behold the end of the wicked, which haue perſecuted vs. For howſoeuer we be expoſed to their rage and furie, although they ſpoile, rob, and tread vs vnder foote, offering vs all the outrages in ỹ world; yet ſhall they be but like vnto *waues*, which diſperſe themſelues by their owne violence, and ſo vaniſh ſuddenly away. We ought to wait till the like befalles all ſuch tyrants at this day, who miſerably vexe and afflict the Church, and handle the children of God vnkindly. Let this conſolation then bee ingrauen in the table of our hearts, being fully aſſured that the like iudgment will ouertake them. The end of perſecuters.

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Oh the land ſhadowing with wings, which is beyond the riuer of Ethiopia.*

I Cannot affirme of what people *Iſaiah* ſpeakes; although it be apparent enough that it was ſome coũtry bordering vpon Ethiopia. Some refer it to the whole land of Egypt; but without any good probabilitie, ſeeing he makes a particular treatiſe thereof in the Chapter following: and therefore wee muſt vnderſtand this as ſpoken to a people ſeparate from the Egyptians. Many ſuppoſe that it ſhould be the Troglodites; which yet ſeemes not very likely, becauſe they had no familiaritie with other nations: for their ſpeech (as the Coſmographers teſtifie, was rather a whiſtling or hiſſing, then any diſtinct ſound of words. But as touching theſe here mentioned, it is plaine that they had both ſociety and league with other nations. Yet is it vncertaine whether they conſpired againſt the Iewes or no, or whether they ioyned with the Egyptiãs to make war vpon the Aſſyrians. If they were the open aduerſaries of the Iewes, then *Iſaiah* denounceth their puniſhment. But contrariwiſe, if they did feede the Iewes with deceitfull promiſes, he ſhewes that they were to expect no ſuccour from them; becauſe they did nothing but entertaine time with their friuolous meſſages. How euer it be, we may gather by that which he ſpeakes of the nations neere adioyning, which he will name in this Chapter, in what place this people was ſeated; to wit, very neere vnto Egypt and Ethiopia. Vnleſſe any had rather affirme, that it is meant of part of the ſea coaſt of Ethiopia; becauſe it will appeare by the 37. Chapter of this booke, that the Aſſyrians had warre with the King of Ethiopia. Now when it is ſaid, that this land makes a *ſhadow with wings*, it appeares that the ſea was nigh vnto it; ſo as it became rich in regard of much nauigation. For ſmall and poore regions cannot frequent nor occupie in ſtrange Countries. His meaning is then, that this people vſed to traffique much by ſea. Chap. 37. 9.

Verſ. 2. *Sending Ambaſſadours by the ſea, euen in veſſels of *reedes vpon the waters, ſaying; Goe yee ſwift meſſengers, to a nation that is ſcattered abroad and ſpoiled, to a terrible people from their beginning euen hitherto; a nation by little and little, euen trodden vnder foot, whoſe land the floods haue ſpoiled.* *Or, rushes. On euerie ſide.

THis is properly to bee referred to the ſtate of thoſe times. It ſeemes that this people had ſolicited the Egyptians, or Syrians, to vexe the Iewes: or elſe that the Aſſyrians vſed them to moleſt the Country of Iudea; or, that they were companions of the Egyptians, ioyning hand in hand to beate backe the Aſſyrians, leſt they ſhould wax too ſtrong and mightie. We can affirme nothing but by way of coniecture, becauſe all hiſtories are ſilent in this behalfe. Seeing then that we want witneſſes in this caſe, we muſt vſe probable coniectures. It is very likely that theſe iournies were not taken in hand to goe to ſome place neere vnto them, but farre off. Whereas hee calles them ſhips of *rushes*, wee are not to thinke it ſtrange; becauſe it appeares by ancient hiſtories, that the Egyptians commonly vſed ſuch veſſels by ſea, in regard that Nilus is ſo ſteepe and dangerous to thoſe that ſaile in it in ſome places, by reaſon of the height from whence the waters doe violently fall; (which they call Catadupes) that it is impoſſible to bring ſhips of wood that way, without breaking & renting them vpon the rockes. And therefore they are conſtrained to vſe little pliable veſſels. And leſt the water ſhould enter in and drowne them, the hiſtories ſay, that theſe ſhips were lined with pitch in the inſides of them.

Goe yee ſwift poſtes.] This place is obſcure; yet will I follow that interpretation which I take to be moſt probable. The Prophet ſhews the end of his prophecie; that is to ſay, why he foretold the deſtruction of this people; to wit, (if we take them for the ſworne enemies

of

of the Iewes) to bring ſome conſolation to the faithfull, which were miſerablie ſcattered and diſperſed, that by receiuing this good tidings, they might reioyce and giue thanks vnto God. But if any had rather ſay that the Iewes were drawne by this nation to an vnlawfull league, then this exhortation is by way of deriding them, ſo as he rebukes the follie of the elect people, who forſooke God to depend vpon vaine and friuolous ſuccors. For whereas ſome attribute theſe words vnto God, as if he ſhould command theſe nations inhabiting neere the ſea to haſten to the deſtruction of the Iewes: I ſee not how it ſhould agree to the ſenſe of the text. Neither is there any more appearance in that which others thinke, to wit, that by the words following the Prophet ſets forth the deſtruction of this obſcure and vnknowne people, becauſe that by the *ſpoiled people* hee meanes the Iewes, which ſhould be vexed and ſcattered after a ſtrange maner, ſo as no part amongſt them whatſoeuer ſhould remaine ſafe.

He calles them a *terrible nation*, becauſe they ſhould be an aſtoniſhment to all thoſe that ſhould behold them, being disfigured with ſuch horrible calamities. For I cannot approue of their iudgement who expound this of ſignes and wonders which the Lord ſhewed amongſt the Iewes to make them feared of all: he hath regard rather to that place of *Moſes* where it is ſaid, The Lord ſhall make thee an aſtoniſhment and a wonder, Deut. 28. 28,37: alſo, the nodding of the head, and a prouerb and deriſion is vſed in other places, Iere. 18.16, & 19.8. & 25.18. He ſignifies a people then whoſe ſight ſhall be ſo *fearefull*, that they ſhall be an aſtoniſhment vnto all: and we know that as this was foretold, ſo alſo did it come to paſſe to the Iewes.

When it is ſaid *on euery ſide*, it is as much as if one ſhould draw lines, and that they ſhould be ſo well knit together, as there ſhould no place be left emptie betweene them: or as if an husbandman made ſuch furrowes in his field, that he leaues not one clot of earth vnturned vp, or broken. Thus was this people *beaten downe* and broken.

By the *floods*, he meanes a great armie of enemies, to wit, of the Aſſyrians. Now he alludes to that which he ſaid before in the 8. Chapter, verſ. 6. to wit, that the people being diſcontented with their *little riuer Shilo*, deſired rather *roaring and violent waters*. After then that they had called thé forth for their ſuccor, they were ouerwhelmed by them as with a *deluge*. So that the cauſe of all this ill ſucceſſe was for that they cõtented not themſelues with Gods promiſes, but ſought out ſtrange helps. If now then this commandement giuen to the *ſwift poſts* be taken as frõ the perſon of God; thence we gather that he doth not alwaies aſſiſt his elect at the firſt brunt, but withholds his help till things be growne to a deſperate eſtate. For he ſends not a ioyfull and happie meſſage to thoſe that were in ſafetie, or to thoſe that were onlie lightlie touched with the rod, but to a *nation ſpoyled and troddẽ vnder foote*: yet in that he commands them to *haſten*, his meaning is, that the iudgement ſhall be ſudden and vnlooked for; ſo as light ſhall ſhine out of darknes (as it were) euen in a moment.

Verſ. 3. *All yee the inhabitants of the world and dwellers in the earth ſhall ſee when he ſetteth vp a ſigne in the mountaines, and when he bloweth the trump, ye ſhall heare.*

HE ſhewes that this worke of God ſhall be ſo excellent, that the Iewes ſhall not only perceiue it, but all *the inhabitants of the world* alſo. Theſe words which are put in the future tence, are by ſome tranſlated in the Imperatiue, according to the ſcripture phraſe: but it agrees beſt to take it in the time to come. As if he ſhould ſay, euen the people farre off ſhal be witneſſes of this calamitie: becauſe all ſhall *behold the ſtandard*, and ſhall *heare trumpets* ſounding thorowout the world. And hence it ſhall appeare, that this warre was not raiſed vp by men; but that God himſelfe will ſhew that he is the only author of it, and that by excellent witneſſes. When warres are made euery man diſcernes what is done openlie: but the greater part of men attribute both the beginnings and iſſues thereof vnto fortune. *Iſaiah* contrariwiſe ſhewes, that all theſe things ought to be attributed vnto God, becauſe he will plainely manifeſt his power by a new and extraordinarie meanes: for he works ſo ſometime, that his hand is hidden, and his worke vnknowne vnto men. And ſometimes againe he ſhewes his power in ſuch wiſe that euery one is conſtrained to acknowledge it, and that is it which the Prophet meant to ſay in this place.

Verſ. 4. *For ſo the Lord ſaid vnto me, I will reſt and behold in my tabernacle as the heate drying vp the raine, and as a cloud of dew in the heate of harueſt.*

AFter he hath threatned the deſtruction of the Ethiopians or of their neighbours, and hauing therewithall ſhewed that great conſolation ſhould thereby redound to the Iewes; or elſe by way of a ſtout hauing derided the fooliſh confidence which deceiued them: now he addes that God will ſo moderate theſe confuſions, that he will in the end gather his choſen people vnto himſelfe. The particle *Ci*, which I haue tranſlated Furthermore, is ſometime put for ſhewing the cauſe; ſometimes aduerſatiuelie. But the latter ſenſe in this place ſeemes to agree beſt: the reaſon is, becauſe the Prophet preuents a doubt which might otherwiſe haue greatly troubled the conſciences of the weake. For when wee ſee things in an vproare, there is a vaile forthwith ſpread as it were ouer our eyes, which takes away from vs the ſight of Gods prouidence: for the eſtate of this people whoſe deſtruction he threatens was ſuch, that this propheſie might ſeeme a fable or matter of ſcorne: for (as we may collect) there was no danger nor change to be expected.

Some referre this to the perſon of *Iſaiah*, as if he ſatisfied himſelfe, by depending vpō that which God had reuealed vnto him: that is to ſay, as if hee had now quieted and ſetled his minde; which indeed wee ought to doe after we haue heard the voyce af God, waiting aſſuredly for the accompliſhment of that which is foretold vs. As *Abacuk* ſaith; I will ſtand in my watch-tower: Abac. 2. 1. But I rather think, that the Prophet recites that which the Lord had reuealed vnto him, and that the Lord himſelfe pronounceth this ſentence with his own mouth: as if he ſhould ſay, *I will reſt*; that is, I will hold me ſtill and do nothing: for the word alſo ſignifies to See. Now hee which *looks* earneſtly, acts nothing; but onely contents himſelfe with beholding that hee ſees with pleaſure and delight.

Hereunto ſerues alſo the word *Tabernacle*, as if the Lord ſhould reſt himſelfe on the roofe of an houſe: *but on the* contrary, hee is ſaid to aſcend into his iudgement ſeate, when he auengeth himſelfe vpon the wicked behauiours of the vnbeleeuers: for theſe phraſes of ſpeech are fitted to our capacitie. Vnleſſe any had rather affirme, that the Prophet alludes to the *Sanctuarie*: ſo as howſoeuer the maieſtie of the Lord may ſeeme to be hidden for a time from this afflicted people, yet ſhould not his reſt be vtterly without fruit. The ſumme of all is this; that howſoeuer all things ſhould be cōfounded, ſo as one might imagine that God would meddle no more with the gouernement of the world; yet doth he take his eaſe on this wiſe, as you would ſay of ſet purpoſe, euen as if hee were ſhut vp, and fallen aſleepe in a chamber, minding to manifeſt the fruite of this his *reſt* in due ſeaſon.

As the heate drying vp.] *Iſaiah* doth yet better expreſſe that which hee hath ſaid before, by this ſimilitude. Wee may apply it to the Prophets meaning two waies. Firſt, as if God being awaked out of his ſleep, would ſhew ſuch a gracious coūtenance as ſhould reioyce the harts of the faithfull: or, as if he would reuiue and quicken them by watering them with ſweet ſhowers: and thus the Prophet ſhould ſhew a diuers ſucceſſe. There may be alſo a cloſe oppoſition, whereby he admoniſheth, that when God ſhall be thought to take his eaſe, and behold things heere below as it were careleſly; that euen then hee may as it were ſport himſelfe in executing his iudgements. Truely becauſe the two verſes following are conioyned with this, it ſeemes that *Iſaiah* would ſay; Howſoeuer God ſhewes not himſelfe carefull after the maner of men, neither runnes with violent heat to take vengeance; yet hath he ſecret meanes in his hands to execute his iudgements, and yet in the meane while neuer ſtir his leaſt finger. It may be alſo, that hee meant to ſhew that God would vſe an extraordinarie meanes in rooting out this people. But that which I touched erewhile may ſuffice; to wit, that whileſt men are beſotted with proſperitie, and drunken in their delights, thinking that God hath no more to doe with them; euen then their deſtruction is at hand. The reaſon is, becauſe God is able with his onely looke to caſt downe all the forces and preparations of the whole world. And therefore he ſaith, he will be like to a faire bright day, and to the *heate, drying vp the raine*: ſecondly, to a *watriſh cloud*, in the hotteſt day of ſummer. Now wee know that ſuch a *raine* is very fit to ripen fruits; and that the *heate* comming after the raine, brings them forward and makes them ſwell; becauſe it diſperſeth all the moiſture that is in them, by the force of his heate.

This it it then which the Prophet meant to ſay, that howſoeuer many miſeries and calamities be prepared for the reprobates, yet all things notwithſtanding falles out for a while as they would wiſh; ſo as they ſeeme the onely happy men in the world; no otherwiſe then if God meant to ſatisfie them to the full with the beſt of his benefits. But in concluſion, they ſhall finde that they were onely fatted vp, as Oxen for the ſlaughter: for they ſhall periſh in an inſtant, and that euen then, when they ſeemed to bee come to the very top of their happineſſe. Whence wee may learn, that we are not to iudge of Gods iudgements according to outward appearance: for when the wicked thinke themſelues moſt ſecure, then their ruine & ouerthrow is at the doores. Thus doth he comfort the faithfull in very fit ſeaſon, leſt they ſhould thinke the vnbeleeuers more happy then themſelues, becauſe God winked at their faults: for albeit hee ſeemes to cocker them whom hee ſo forbeares, yet will he quickely bring them to deſtruction.

The wicked are neere to their ruine then, when they thinke themſelues moſt ſecure.

Now we are to apply theſe things to theſe miſerable and troubleſome times wherein the perſecuting tyrants of the Church haue their full ſwinge, abounding in all wealth; bringing their enterpriſes to paſſe no leſſe then if all things were in their owne power: why ſo? becauſe they ſurpaſſe all others in ſtrength, counſel, and policie. But let vs know for certaine, that all theſe things are brought to paſſe by the determinate counſell of God, who is contented to let them goe on forward with their deliberations, and lets them proſper: that ſo he may at the laſt deſtroy and vtterly cut them off. I am not ignorant that ſome others draw the words of the Prophet to another ſenſe: but I hope, that whoſoeuer ſhall wiſely conſider the whole context, will eaſily ſubſcribe to mine expoſition.

A conſolation for the Church.

Verſ. 5. *For afore the harueſt, when the flower is finiſhed, and the fruit is ripening in the flower, then he ſhal cut downe the branches with hookes; and ſhall take away, and cut off the boughes.*

WOrd for word it is, For the preſence of the harueſt: but we muſt alittle mitigate the ſharpneſſe of the words. The Prophets meaning is not obſcure: for when *harueſt* drawes neere, and that grapes be ripe, the wicked ſhall finde themſelues diſappointed, and that ſuddenly of their whole reuenue; in hope whereof they meant to glad themſelues. Thus hee goes on ſtill with the ſame

ſame matter, and confirmes that which hee ſpake before by the former ſimilitudes; to wit, that the wicked are not ouerthrowne at the firſt, but floriſh for a time, and the Lord ſeemes to ſpare them: but when the *harueſt is come*, and that the vines haue once budded and bloſſomed ſo as the iuice begins to vtter it ſelfe, then are the very *branches* cut vp by the rootes. So, when the wicked are neere vnto their ripenes, they ſhall not only be depriued of the fruit they expected, but ſhall be cut vp roote and rinde.

The Lord will giue this iſſue to wicked men, after he hath ſuffred them to inioy their delites for a time: for they ſhall be ſo rooted vp, that they ſhall neuer be able to reuiue, nor yet to be plãted in any ſort. From hence then wee gather a ſingular conſolation, to wit, that when the Lord ſeemes to winke at the practiſes of the aduerſaries, he thereby tries our faith, but yet ſuffers not things to be guided by the vnbridled hand of blind fortune, as prophane men thinke. For he is in heauen as in his Tabernacle, and is reſident in his Church as in a poore tent or cottage, yet ſo, as he will come forth when it ſhall be fit and conuenient time. Let vs thus enter into our conſciences, and lay all theſe things to our heart in priuat, that by this meanes wee may fortifie our ſelues with ſo excellent a promiſe, by which only we may be enabled to ouercome and ſurmount all temptations.

A ſingular conſolation.

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Let vs alſo thinke with our ſelues how the Lord ſhewes vs that he ſets forward and lifts vp the felicitie of the wicked, to the end his mercie toward his Church may be ſo much the more admired. For if he ſhould cut them off as corne before it be ripe, we ſhould neither ſo certainly nor clearely know his power nor his goodnes, as when he ſuffers them to grow vp to their full height, ſuffring them to be full eared and to floriſh, to the end that their owne weight may the ſooner ouerthrow them, or that he himſelfe may cut them vp with his ſickle as fat and full eares.

The reaſon why God ſuffreth the wicked to floriſh for a while.

Verſ. 6. *They ſhall be left together vnto the fowles of the mountaines, and to the beaſts of the earth: for the fowle ſhall ſommer vpon it, and euery beaſt ſhall winter vpon it.*

Matt. 3. 12. *Luk.* 3. 17.

HE ſhewes that the wicked ſhal be reiected as a thing of nought: *Iohn Baptiſt* in like maner compares them to chaffe which is caſt out vpon the dunghill. And *Iſaiah* ſhewes, that they ſhall be left to the *beaſts* and *birds*, ſo as the birds ſhall make their neſts in the mids of them in *ſommer*, and the beaſts ſhall make their lodgings in them in the *winter*: as if he ſhould ſay, they ſhall not only be a reproch vnto men, but euen to *beaſts* alſo. Such then is the condition of the wicked, who thinke themſelues cockſure euen then when they lift vp themſelues moſt againſt the poore Church. But the *birds* ſhall make their neſts vpon them on the one ſide, and they ſhall ſerue for houſes and food for the *wilde beaſts* on the other ſide: ſo as they ſhall not only be in worſe caſe then the meaneſt man in the world, but their condition ſhall be far inferior to that of the brute beaſts: for being expoſed to all ſhame and contempt, they ſhall manifeſt to the whole world that Gods prouidence is wonderfull.

Verſ. 7. *At that time ſhall a preſent be brought vnto the Lord of hoſtes (a people that is* * *ſcattered abroad, and ſpoiled, and of a terrible people from their beginning hitherunto, a nation by little and little euen trodden vnder foote, whoſe land the riuers haue ſpoyled to the place of the name of the Lord of hoſtes*, euen *the mount Zion.*

* Or, rent, or torne.

THe Prophet ſhewes againe wherefore he threatned the ruine of this prophane people. For in as much as all nations in a maner had conſpired the deſtruction of the Church, it ſhould ſeeme that her vtter ſubuerſion was now come. The Lord ſhewes then that he will aſſiſt her in due ſeaſon; for had he not reſiſted ſuch enterpriſes, and repreſſed the plots of the enemies betimes, the Iewes might haue deſpaired: therefore hee lets it be knowne that he hath a care of his Church, ſo as howſoeuer it pleaſeth him to chaſtiſe her, yet ſhall ſhe feele his help in time conuenient. Yea, hee will oppoſe his ſtrength againſt the power of tyrants and of her enemies, leſt they ſhould ouerthrow her, and ſo attaine their long expected hopes. That the Iewes then might be imboldned to wait with patience, he not only ſeparates them from the Ethiopians, but aduertiſeth them in like maner that God will moderate his iudgements for their ſaluation.

Now he alludes to the ſecond verſe of this Chapter, where wee ſaw the people of the Iewes termed by theſe names and titles. He vſeth the verb *To bring*, becauſe before this they ſhould be led away as captiues, ſo as it ſhould be no more lawfull for them to goe vp to the Temple, then for forreine nations. We muſt alſo note this word *Rent*: for his meaning is that the people ſhall be ſcattered, as if hee ſhould ſay, Howſoeuer you muſt bee brought to a ſmall number, and ſhall be but a poore remnant, yet ſhall this little portion that remaines be offred vnto God for a ſacrifice.

From hence we are to gather a moſt fruitfull doctrine, and exceeding fit for our time. We ſee the Church at this day to be almoſt paſt recouerie; for ſhe is ſcattered, oppreſſed, ouerwhelmed, and trodden downe on euery ſide. What ought we to do in the mids of ſo great diſtreſſes? We muſt lay faſt hold vpon theſe and the like promiſes; and aſſure our ſelues that howſoeuer the world goe, yet God will defend and maintaine his Church. And albeit ſhe be as a bodie torne in pieces, and ſcattered here and there, yet will he eaſily gather her ſcattered members together againe, by the worke of his ſpirit: for he will neuer ſuffer the remembrance of his name,

A doctrine of ſingular vſe.

nor the inuocation thereof to perish. The Lord will so worke, that of these *peeces* which lie now scattered here and there, there shall be a people made and gathered together. For it is easie with him to gather into one, those whom he knits together by the vnitie of his Spirit, although they be diuided farre asunder one from another. Although then that we see the Church diminished, and some of her members cut off; yet shall some gift bee reserued out of her, to be *presented* and offered vnto the Lord.

To the place of the name] The Prophets are accustomed to vse this manner of speech often. For when they mention the seruice of God, they set it forth by externall exercises: as by altars, sacrifices, washings, and such like. Now the very truth is, that in regard the seruice of God is internall, it cannot be represented but by outward signes; whereby men testifie that they serue and worshippe God. Now he names the *mount of Zion* here chiefly, because this place was consecrated vnto God, as the place wherein he would haue sacrifices offered vnto him. For the Lord honoured this place aboue al others in causing the doctrine of his word to come out thence, as we haue seene Chap. 2. 3. so that vnder this name wee may rightly vnderstand the pure and sincere worship of God. To conclude, the Prophets describe not this seruice in such wise as it should be after Christ his comming; but such as it was in their own times: the reason is: because it was needfull for them to apply themselues to the capacitie of the people whom they taught. Hence wee may gather, that we appertaine not vnto the Church, vnlesse we be *offered vnto* God in sacrifice: Rom. 12. 1. & 15. 6. 2. Cor. 5. 15. Whosoeuer hee be the that challengeth any interest in God, let him offer himselfe vp such a sacrifice vnto him, and let him no longer liue vnto himselfe, but giue and consecrate himselfe vnto God. The meanes whereby this is done, is by the sword of Gods word, (to wit, the Gospell) whereby *Paul* glorifieth that he sacrificed and offered vp men vnto God: as Rom. 15. 6. before alleaged.

We can haue no assurance that we belong to the Church of God, vnlesse we offer vp our bodies and soules a sacrifice vnto God.

By the place of the name of the Lord, he means not that the essence of God (of which wee must not thinke in any wise as of a carnall or earthly substance) should be inclosed therein, as if he were tied to any one place: but because it was the place wherein the Lord was pleased to manifest testimonies of his power, and to be honoured and called vpon: where he also shewed his presence by his goodnesse and power; especially in regard of the weaknesse of the people, who otherwise could not comprehend his maiestie. And yet we are to note, that wee cannot be acceptable vnto God, vnlesse wee be vnited vnto him in the same faith: that is to say, vnlesse wee be knit together as the members of his Church. It is not needfull indeed that we should runne to Ierusalem or to mount Zion: for Zion is now spread ouer all the world, and is consecrated vnto God in generall. It remaines then that we haue the same faith amongst vs, and that wee be ioyned and linked together by the band of loue. For if these be wanting in vs, then is there nothing in the midst of vs but pollution; neither haue we any thing that is holy and consecrated vnto vs.

Where faith and loue is wanting, there all things are vncleane vnto vs.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *The burden of Egypt. Behold the Lord rideth vpon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be moued at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the middest of her.*

The reason why this burden is pronounced against Egypt.

THE *burden of Egypt.*] Heere the Prophet prophecieth against *Egypt*, because she was ỳ refuge vnto which the Iewes fled as soon as they saw any danger neere. For hauing forsaken the Lord, in whom they should haue reposed all their helpe, they looked for no succour at all, vnlesse they had it from the Egyptians. And therefore it behoued that this Nation also should be brought low: so as there should no riches nor strength remaine any longer in it to deceiue the Iewes withall: who (as long as Egypt flourished, because it was well peopled, and furnished with all prouisions) contemned the Lord; or at the least made verie slight reckoning of his promises. There was a twofold euill then in this matter: first, that whereas they should haue rested vpon God onely, they were puffed vp with this vaine confidence in Egypt: secondly, in that the Lord no sooner visited them with his rods, but they by and by fortified themselues with the power of the Egyptians against the same: as if they had beene able to ouercome his iudgements, by setting the arme of flesh against them: whereas they ought rather to haue taken occasion by them, to haue turned wholly vnto God. But the Prophet wil handle this matter more largely hereafter in the 30. and 31. Chapters. 1 2

Behold the Lord rideth] This maner of speech is found in other places of the Scripture, as in the 104. Psalme, verse 3. but onely in generall. But *Isaiah* applies it heere vnto this prophecie; because the Egyptians thought themselues so well fenced on euery side, that God could no way finde a gap open to enter into their Country. Hee derideth this their foolish ouerweening then, and against that, sets the high and mighty power of God, who is borne or *carried* vpon *a swift cloud*: by means whereof, he will easily enter in vpon them, neither

neither ſhall any of their fortreſſes or bulwarks be able to keepe them out. Now becauſe the riches of Egypt had not onely bewitched the Iewes, but their falſe religion alſo, therefore the Prophet doth in like manner taxe their ſottiſhneſſe in this behalfe; becauſe God would make all their helpe which they looked for from idols, to vaniſh and come to nought alſo. I forbeare to ſpend time in ſhewing the vanitie of their childiſh conceits, which ſome haue dreamed of touching the idols of Egypt; to wit, that Chriſt made them fall downe when he fled thither in his infancie: for it deſerues no refutation at all. Yet haue they abuſed this place to proue this goodly fiction, as alſo many places more like vnto it; and yet the Prophet meant no ſuch matter. For hee ſpeakes of that diſcomfiture which the Aſſyrians gaue the Egyptians; ſhewing how it ought to be attributed vnto God, and not vnto fortune; as profane men are wont to doe. Hee ſhewes then that this is a iudgement of God: by whoſe hand all things that fall out in heauen and in earth, are guided and gouerned.

Now he telles them that *their idols ſhall fail*: that is to ſay, that they ſhall profit the Egyptians nothing at all, although they put their confidence in them, & thought to be in ſafetie vnder their protection. For it is not to be imagined how much this people was addicted vnto ſuperſtition; inſomuch as they worſhipped cats, oxen, crocodiles; yea onions and all kindes of plants. So as there was nothing to which they attributed not ſome diuinitie. His meaning is to ſay then, that the power of all theſe falſe gods which the Egyptians had taken for their patrons, ſhall fall to the ground. Hauing therefore ſhewed that the Egyptians doe reſt in vaine vpon their ſuperſtitions; hee therewithall alſo beates downe the proud imaginations which they had conceiued in regard of their earthly powers. By the word *heart*, he means the magnanimitie which ſhould quaile at the length, euen in the moſt valiant amongſt them: ſo as as they ſhould not dare to enterpriſe any thing, although they had all the furniture they could deſire. Thus he ſhewes that they ſhall make warre againſt God, who will ſo *weaken their hearts within them*, that they ſhall wax cowards, when the time comes that they muſt enter battel with ther enemies. Neither doth he ſay, that they ſhall be terrified onely; but he addes, that it ſhall be in the *midſt* of all the Kingdome; where was the ſafeſt & quieteſt abiding; becauſe they were there far enough off from all aſſaults of the enemies. The faithfull had good occaſion to conſider well of this, when the Egyptians were at warr: and wee alſo ought to behold the ſame in all mutations of Kingdomes, which proceedes from no other cauſe then the hand of God. If the hearts of thoſe, who are otherwiſe warlike perſons, and haue made great proofe of their valour, doe faile them, if their forces bee alſo feebled; all muſt bee attributed to the iuſt vengeance of God.

The Egyptians groſſe idolaters.

Verſ. 2. *And I will ſet the Egyptians againſt the Egyptians: ſo euerie one ſhall fight againſt his brother, and euery one againſt his neighbour; Citie againſt Citie, and Kingdome againſt Kingdome.*

HE here deſcribes in a more ſpeciall manner, with what calamitie God was determined to ſmite the Egyptians. In ſaying, *that he will ſet* the Egyptians together by the eares; he meanes ſuch ciuil diſſenſions which cauſe thoſe to bee rent in ſunder, which ought to defend one another: which is the moſt hurtfull miſchiefe that can befall any Citie or people. Now it was needfull the Iewes ſhould be perſwaded that God (in whoſe hands the hearts of all men are) could make the Egyptians to bee inflamed with hatred one againſt another, by a ſecret inſtinct; whereby they might bee brought to deſtroy themſelues, although they were more mightie then their enemies abroad. Hence wee learne, that the people neuer fall to be mutinous, but the Lord ſets them on to fight and make warre one with another: as if a man ſhould gather a companie of Fencers together into the market place. For hee ſets them agog to fight, and driues them forward to hurt; yea euen to kill one another. So then euen as wee are to attribute it vnto God, when there is friendſhip and loue among Citizens: ſo alſo ought we to attribute it to his vengeance, when one of them riſeth vp againſt another, killing and murdering one another.

Ciuill diſſenſions the worſt calamitie that can befall a Commonwealth.

Ciuill diſſenſions fall not out by chance, but Gods prouidence.

Now by way of amplification he addes that which is yet more horrible and prodigious, to wit, that thoſe who are knit together by *parentage*, ſhall band themſelues to deſtroy each other. If men be worſe then beaſts whē (in forgetting they are created of one and the ſame nature) they fight together: how much more is it a thing abhorring to nature, that brethren or kinſfolks ſhould deuoure one another? By how much the more monſtrous this is, ſo much the more ought wee to acknowledge it to be God his reuenging hand, & his fearefull iudgement vpon them. It ſeemes then that *Iſaiah* proceeds by degrees: for firſt of all he mentioneth the *brother*, ſecondly the *neighbours*, thirdly the *Cities*, and in the fourth place the *Kingdomes*. By *Kingdomes*, hee meanes the Prouinces into which Egypt was diuided, which the Greekes call Lordſhips, which word alſo they haue vſed in this place.

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Verſ. 3. *And the ſpirit of Egypt ſhall faile in the middeſt of her, and will deſtroy their counſell,* and they ſhall ſeeke at the Idoles, and at the ſorcerers, and at them that haue ſpirits of diuination, and at the ſoothſayers.*

*Or, yea, though they ſhould.

EVen as the Prophet in the former verſes tooke *heart* and courage from the Egypti-

ans, ſo takes he from them now minds and *ſpirits*. Theſe two things are exceeding neceſſarie for the defence of kingdomes; becauſe whenſoeuer they be taken away, there is no meanes left for vpholding of a State.

What opiniõ the Egyptiās had of themſelues.

Now the Egyptians thought theſelues farre before all other nations, as touching the conceit they had of their owne wiſedome: and proudly diſdained them as barbarians; thinking themſelues to be the only learned, induſtrious, ciuill, courteous, and honeſt men of the world. For they bragged that they were the inuenters of learning, that Philoſophie and Aſtrologie came from them: in a word, that Egypt was as it were the ſhop of all the liberall ſciences. Therfore they could not imagin that *wiſedome* and *counſell* ſhould thus faile from amongſt them: and doubtleſſe if this propheſie had come to their view they would haue ſcorned it, thinking that the Sea ſhould ſooner lack water, and that the whole order of nature ſhould be ouerturned, then that they which thought themſelues ſo naturallie wiſe, ſhould become fooles. Yet doth *Iſaiah* boldly affirme it: for indeed, he ſpake not of his owne head, but hauing foretold that they ſhould be ſtripped of their pride and arrogancie; the context requires that we vnderſtand now that they ſhould be ſmitten with amazednes, ſeeing both theſe faculties of the ſoule depended vpon the free gift of God.

Let not the wiſe man reioyce in his wiſdome.

The word *Ruaech* in this place is taken for vnderſtanding, or ſharpnes of wit: which we ought diligentlie to note, becauſe many deceiue themſelues touching this word. The former ſentence is yet better expreſſed by the word *counſell*: for thereby he ſhews whēce this abaſement ſhould proceed; truely from this, God would depriue them of *counſell*.

Yea though they ſhould ſeeke.] This is an anticipation or cutting them off: for he preuents the obiections which the Egyptians might make. Haue not wee gods to goe and aske counſell at? Are there not wiſe men, diuiners, and enchanters amongſt vs? and makeſt thou ſo ſlight account of theſe? He affirmes that none of theſe ſhall doe them any good, though they truſt neuer ſo confidentlie in them, being puffed vp alſo with a vaine perſwaſion of their wiſedome. I will not beſtow much time about theſe names, wherein notwithſtanding it ſeemes *Iſaiah* proceeds on by degrees. For he names the *gods*, then the *magicians*, and next the *diuiners* and ſoothſayers.

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Now they had their oracles, wherein they chieflie truſted: the magicians were inferior to them, albeit they had great authoritie amongſt them. In the third place, when there was any queſtion of things of ſmall importance, then they asked counſell of the diuiners and ſoothſayers. And thus you ſee that the ſuperſtitious are ſo toſſed vp and downe with vnquietnes, that nothing can content them. For as they are inconſtant and variable vpon all occaſions, ſo run they firſt to one ſhelter, and then to another: and in the meane while Satan by that meanes doth ſo coſen them, that in the beginning he repreſents vnto them ſome appearance of reſt and quietnes, which they make account ſhall continue: but to no other end (as the ſequell proueth) but to ſhew them ſoone after, that being farre off from their expectation, hee might vex and torment them ſo much the more; and conſtreine them ſtill to be ſeeking of new hopes. From whence we learne, that the only way to haue true contentment of heart, is to reſt vpō God only. And no doubt but the Prophet condemnes theſe arts, as being farre remote from all reaſon. For God hath manifeſted all things which are neceſſarie to be knowne by thoſe arts and ſciences which he hath allowed, and would wee ſhould vſe. If any man will be wiſe beyond theſe, he muſt of neceſſitie haue the Diuell for his ſcholemaſter.

Idolaters ſo toſſed to and fro with reſtles thoughts, that nothing can quiet them.

The only way to attain true contentment.

Hee that walks plainly, walks ſafely.

Verſ. 4. *And I will deliuer the Egyptians into the hand of cruell Lords, and a mightie King ſhall rule ouer them, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.*

NOw he ſhewes what ſhould befall the Egyptians being once depriued of *vnderſtanding*, and their *courages* being quailed, to wit, they were to expect nothing but *bondage and ſlauerie*. For a people being once deſtituted of vnderſtanding and magnanimitie, needs muſt they become their owne ouerthrow, although no enemie elſe ſhould aſſaile them. So that the Lord is wont after this maner to reuenge himſelfe vpon his enemies, depriuing them of all meanes whereby to defend their liberties. I grant that the Prophet threatens a thing more grieuous, to wit, that the dominion whereof the Egyptians proudly bragged, ſhould not only fall to the ground, but that they themſelues alſo ſhould be ſubdued vnder a ſore ſlauerie & bondage. Now howſoeuer the word *cruell* be put in the ſingular number, yet notwithſtanding hee ſaith in the plurall number that they ſhall be in ſubiection to *Lords*, which is much more comberſome to beare, then if they ſhould only obey one.

And a mightie King &c.] Hee meanes that the power of the tyrant vnder whom they ſhalbe ſubdued ſhall be ſo great, that it ſhall be hard for them to recouer their libertie. Hiſtories make mention of diuers changes which haue happened in many Countries, which yet could not be kept long by thoſe which haue conquered them. For oftentimes the keeping of that which a man hath woon is more difficult, then the Conqueſt it ſelfe. But the Prophet tels vs that this eſtate ſhall not eaſily be changed, for the ſeruitude of the Egyptians ſhall be of long continuance: the reaſon is, none ſhall dare to oppoſe nor make warre againſt ſo mightie a Conqueror. We may alſo vnderſtand it thus, that Princes ouer a ſmall people are more courteous and humane towards their ſubiects then thoſe that are more puiſſant: who truſting vnto their greatnes, let looſe the raines to doe whatſoeuer they liſt. For as they thinke, their power is inuincible; ſo do they giue libertie

to

to themſelues to act whatſoeuer their fanſie driues thē to. Whether of the two expoſitions we receiue, the ſumme will be this; That the Egyptians, who eſteemed themſelues in the firſt ranke, and the moſt renowned among men, ſhall fall into the power of another; and ſhall be oppreſſed vnder an hard bondage; to wit, vnder a mighty *King*, againſt whom, none ſhall dare to oppoſe himſelfe. By this we may ſee how great the folly of ſuch men is, who deſire a mighty King, that ruleth ouer many Countries: as alſo how iuſtly they are puniſhed for their ambition, which yet notwithſtanding cannot be reformed, though ſo manie experiences do daily fall out in the world. France and Spaine boaſt at this day, that they are ſubiects to ſo mightie Princes: but they ſhall feele to their ſmart, how profitable ſuch a falſe pretence of honor is to them. But we haue ſpoken of this matter before in another place: Chap. 8. 6, 7.

Verſ. 5. *And the waters of the ſea ſhall faile, and the riuers ſhall be dried vp and waſted.*

6. *And the riuers ſhall goe farre away: the riuers of defence ſhall be emptied and dried vp: the reedes and flags ſhall be cut downe.*

HE goes on with that which he began before; to wit, that the fortreſſes in which the Egyptians kept themſelues ſo ſtrongly, and in ſuch ſecuritie, ſhould auaile them nothing at all. For they ſeemed to be impregnable, becauſe they were inuironed with the ſea, with the riuer Nilus, and with many ſtrong places: and the hiſtories teſtifie, that the paſſages whereby they entred into the Country, were very difficult, becauſe there was no mouth or entrance into Nilus: for which cauſe they could eaſily repulſe the ſhips which came to land there. Thus they gloried much in this goodly ſeate and place that was ſo ſtrong by nature: euen as the Venecians at this day, ſeeing themſelues ſo ſtrongly inuironed with deepe and long riuers, thinke themſelues altogether inuincible. But ſuch fortreſſes and defences are vterly vnprofitable, when God is purpoſed to chaſtiſe vs. Hereunto ſerues that which hee addes touching their munitions. He alludes to the cauſes, which not onely let and hinder the ouerflowings of Nilus, but alſo kept the whole land: as if he ſhould ſay; You ſhall need no ſuch things, becauſe *Nilus is ſelfe ſhall be dried vp.*

Defences ſerue vs to no vſe, when God is minded to correct vs. Nor the ſtrong man in his ſtrength.

But it is very certaine, that this riuer was neuer drawne dry; and yet hath the Prophet foretold nothing which was not fulfilled. We muſt therefore call to minde what wee haue ſaid in another place; to wit, that theſe deſolations are repreſented in liuely colours before vs, as well in regard of our dulneſſe, as alſo to ſet forth the thing performed (as it were) euen in our view. For it is very neceſſarie we ſhould haue ſuch a ſpectacle as might moue our ſpirits, and quicken vs vp to conſider of the iudgements of God: which wee ſhould eaſily contemne, if by this meanes we were not preuented. Obſerue we then this pride of the Egyptians, who had abundance and diuers ſorts of riches; neuer imagining that it was poſſible for them to be humbled by ſo fearefull a ruine. He mentions the *roſh* and *reede*, becauſe there was abundance of them; which ſerued to ſundry purpoſes: vnleſſe any had rather ſay, he meanes that the marſhes and ponds ſhall be drie.

Verſ. 7. *The graſſe in the riuer, and at the head of the riuers, and all that groweth by the riuer ſhall wither, and be driuen away, and be no more.*

* Or, mouth.

AT *the mouth.*] Others tranſlate, Riuers: but he vnderſtands it rather of the ſpring it ſelfe, which is ſeldome or neuer drawne dry; although it may fall out that floods and riuers may waxe dry. He takes the *mouth* then for the head of the riuer, which ſhall ſo dry vp, that no place in the Country ſhall be watered by it. And howſoeuer the head of Nilus was very far off, yet is it not without cauſe, that the Prophet threatens that this riuer, from whoſe ouerflowing the fertilitie almoſt of the whole land proceeded, ſhould be dried vp, euen to the *very head and ſpring it ſelfe*. For it ſeldome rained in this Country; but Nilus performed that office for them euery yeere: and if it ouerflowed but ſparingly, it preſaged want and famine. This is the reaſon why the Prophet threatning the *drinke* of it threatens therein the barrenneſſe of the whole Country. And for this cauſe alſo he ſaith, that there ſhall be ſuch want euen in the *head* it ſelfe, from whence the waters ſhould flow forth, that the *graſſe* ſhall be dried vp.

Verſ. 8. *The Fiſhers alſo ſhall mourne, and all they that caſt angle into the riuer ſhall lament; and they that ſpread their net vpon the waters, ſhall be weakened.*

A note touching the vſuall courſe which the Prophets hold in their writings.

Iſaiah hath reſpect ſtill vnto the eſtate of Egypt. We haue ſhewed in the 16. Chapter, verſ. 8. how the Prophets are wont to vſe theſe liuely deſcriptions: as when they propheſie againſt any Country, they ſpecially mention that with which it moſt aboundeth, as alſo that for which it is moſt renowned. If it be a Country of vineyards, then they mention vines: if it abound with gold, they mention that alſo: if with ſiluer, then they ſpeake of ſiluer. So propheſying here againſt Egypt, he ſpeakes of fiſhing; becauſe this region was wateriſh, and abounded with manie riuers.

I wil not reiect their tranſlation who tranſlate the verb *Anal*, To cut off: but the beſt interpretation is, *They ſhall be weakened*: for this anſwers to the ſorrow and griefe of which he ſpake before. Now we know that there were great numbers of *fiſhers* in this Country, which

which was not the least part of the riches of Egypt. When the Fishers then should be taken away (of which the Country was full) in which trade also consisted a great part of the riches of the Eyptians, it must needes follow that they should be much *weakened*. As for example, if draperie should be taken from a people, which are accustomed to liue vpon it, great pouertie must needes ensue. He therefore notes a wonderfull change of the whole Country.

Vers. 9. *Moreouer, they that worke in flaxe of diuers sorts, shall be confounded; and they that weaue nets.*

AS he spake before of their *sorrow*; so now he speakes of their *shame*: because those who before liued well, and at their ease vpon this trade, should gaine nothing any longer by it. Now these occupations depend one vpon another; to wit, fishing and *net making*. And yet some doubt whether he speakes onely of net makers or no: for if we take the word *Seriqoth*, for all exquisite linen, it is very likely that this is to be referred to those weauings which are the fairest when they are made of small & fine threed. We also know, that there are clothes of very great price made in Egypt. And it shall not be amisse to comprehend the garments of linen vnder the name of net-worke, or white nets: for these garments were of great price, in regard they were wouen with great difficultie. Thus then it should be a metaphoricall maner of speech, vnder which the Prophet closely nips the dissolutenes of the Egyptians, who clothed themselues with linen garments as if they had beene wrapped in *nets*. If we vnderstand it so, then the next verse coheres with it: and for mine owne part, I can not see how so exquisit and artificiall maner of weauing can belong to the trade of fishing. But if any had rather referre it to fishermen, the sense shall be, that all such as exercised the arte of fishing, and gained much thereby, should now be oppressed and ouerwhelmed with griefe. I thinke it is not needfull to translate the Hebrue word *Seker*, which the Prophet vseth, *Nets*, because the Etymologie of it sheweth it rather to signifie a trade by which much is gained.

Vers. 10. *For their nets shall be broken, and all they that make ponds* shalbe *heauie in heart.*

WHere great store of fish is they also haue great Pooles or little fish-ponds to keepe them in: for were it not for them, the fishermen should be constreined to sell their fish for nothing. Besides that, they oftentimes cast their nets into the water and take nothing. He therefore continues the former argument: for if fish can neither be taken, nor kept, the *Ponds* shall serue to no purpose.

Vers. 11. *Surely the Princes of Zoan are fooles: the counsell of the wise counsellers of Pharaoh is become foolish: how say yee vnto Pharaoh, I am the sonne of the wise? I am the sonne of the ancient kings?*

HE heere ioines *wisdome* and *follie* together very fitlie: for it is vnpossible this perswasion should be plucked from men, but they will be wise, yea and so esteemed, although it be in despight of God himselfe. It is all one then as if he were of their opinion: when he calles them *wise*, whom by and by after he taxeth with grose *follie*. The Hebrue particle *Ac*, is sometimes aduersatiue: but because it seemes the Prophet sets himselfe against the Egyptians, I had rather translate it, *surely*, or certainly, or, now at the least: because he derides *Pharaos Counsellers*, who of all others were the greatest fooles, and yet in the meane while tooke themselues, and would be reputed for the wisest men. Thus it is a kinde of exclamation, as if he should say, Where is this wisdome of Egypt become? What is become of these Counsellers which despised euery man? Why defend they not the Kingdome? Now is the time when their wisdome may be manifested. Wee see then how this serues for a confirmation and ratification of this present prophesie, for as much as it appeares that the Prophet speakes not of things vnknowne, but hath the certentie of Egyps destruction apparent as it were before his eyes. Being fullie perswaded then that he was authorized from God, he is bold to proclaime that all these Princes are but *fooles*, how wise soeuer they make themselues. In a word, the Prophet teacheth, that all their glorie who attribute to themselues the least dram of wisdome without God, is but follie, because it will be perceiued to be so in the end, for when they shall come to triall, they will shew themselues no better then children.

All wisdome which is separate from the word, will in the end proue extreame follie.

I deny not but the Lord suffers them to bring many enterprises to passe, that they may get credit and fame among men: but he besots them in the end, so as notwithstanding all their experience and ripenes of wit, they will shew themselues more fond then little babes. Let vs be admonished then to pray for the spirit of counsell and vnderstanding of the Lord, and when we haue obtained it, let vs carefullie vse it in vprightnes with all modestie. For God resists mens wisdome, whē they attribute more to themselues then is meete: and such as too proudly aduance themselues doe well deserue to be punished for their follie. He therefore oft times makes them stand confounded, to the end men may know that their wisdome is nought else but a vanishing smoke. For there is no true wisdome but that which is grounded vpon the feare of God, which is the beginning of wisdome, as *Salomon* teacheth, Prou. 1. 7. & 9. 10.

If any man want wisdom let him aske it of God.

The feare of God, the only foundation of true wisdome.

How say ye &c.] He reproues *Pharaoes* counsellers for flattering of him, as parasites are wont to do now adaies to get ỹ fauor of Princes: for all their flatteries tend to none other end; because they finde that the only readie

way

way to get their ſuites, and to creepe into fauour. And thus among ſo many flatteries and lies, trueth can finde no place at all among them. Now howſoeuer this is an ordinarie fault in the Courts of great Lords, yet bare it the ſway, eſpecially among the Egyptians at that time: for they ſtood vpon their antiquitie, as being the moſt antient of all nations beſides, boaſting, that they found out the arts and liberall ſciences. Now, if the common people had this good conceit of themſelues, how much more were their Kings infected therewith in reſpect of them?

There was a double boaſting then; that is to ſay, of *antiquitie* and *knowledge*; both which *Iſaiah* reproues, and telles them, that neither of them ſhall doe them any good. *Pharaoh* gloried much of the antiquitie and wiſdome of his Natiõ, which was ẏ peoples fault alſo as well as his; but he ſpeakes of the *King* eſpecially, as of the head, in whom this pride was more plainely perceiued, then in the common people. But let vs beware how we brag of our anceſtors, as if we were borne to it by inheritance: no, let vs goe to heauen to finde wiſedome; and let vs aske it of him that is authour of it. As for antiquitie, it is a ſottiſh and vaine brag: and yet Princes are ſo hampered with this vice, that they could finde in their hearts to goe ſeeke their race and beginning beyond the Moone, as they ſay: yea, they can verie hardly be diſſwaded from this vanitie. flatterers alſo helpe to augment this folle, who (as wee ſee) haue found out many pleaſant things touching the genealogies of Kings and Princes. For no muſicke ſounds more delectable in their eares, then when they are ſeparated from the common people; as if they were petty gods. But it often comes to paſſe, that whiles they be ſo buſie in ſeeking too curiouſly their grandfathers, and great grandfathers, that they make themſelues ridiculous by it, becauſe it comes to paſſe, that they finde themſelues deſcended from ſome handicrafts man, or trades man.

Iſa. 1. 5.

A ſtorie touching Maximilian the Emperour.

I haue heard a pleaſant ſtorie from ſome of good credit of the Emperour *Maximilian*, who (becauſe hee was wonderfull curious in ſeeking out his pedegree) a merry fellow perſwaded him that hee had found his genealogie in *Noahs* Arke. This wrought ſo vpon him, that neglecting and forgetting all other affaires, hee onely doted vpon this newes; in ſo much that hee would permit none to ſpeake with him; no not the Ambaſſadours which were come vnto him to deale in matters of importance. Euery one wondered at this folly, and diſliked it in themſelues; yet none ſo hardy that durſt take in hand to counſell him. At the laſt his Cooke being bolder then the reſt (whom the Emperour vſed as a leſter, and tooke pleaſure many times to heare him talke) hauing obtained leaue to ſpeake, ſaid to the Emperour; No man deſires the honour of your imperiall maieſtie more then my ſelfe; but me thinks, if it pleaſe you, this your great induſtrie to find out your pedegree, is neither profitable nor honourable. I now honour and reuerence your Maieſtie (ſaid hee) as a god; but if you will ſtand ſo much vpon your title from *Noahs* Arke, then you and I muſt needes be coſins at the leaſt; for we all came from thence. *Maximilian* was ſo moued with the ſpeech of this knauiſh foole, that he was then aſhamed he had gone ſo farre in the matter, although before, neither friends, counſellers, nor affaires could hold him backe from it. For he knew well that his name, which he meant to make more honourable then his anceſtors, ſhould be made leſſe honourable if they came once to the firſt originall, from whence Princes and ſubiects, noble and baſe, are all deſcended. But is not the folly of theſe men great, when fooles and leſters can perceiue it? Yet this is no new vice, but it is rooted deepe in the ſpirits of the moſt men.

That we may auoid this euill then, let vs learne to depend vpon God onely, and let vs prefer this grace of our adoptiõ before all riches, nobilitie, & parentage. As touching the Kings of Egypt, they were indeed deſcended from moſt ancient Kings, who had raigned a long time; and this made them to ſwell thus with pride, euen as if wiſdome had bin borne in their houſe.

Inſtruction.

Verſ. 12. *Where are now thy wiſe men, that they may tell thee, or may know what the Lord of hoſtes hath determined againſt Egypt?*

ALthough it be word for word; And they ſhall ſhew thee, and ſhall know: yet the clauſe ſhould bee thus reſolued, That they may ſhew thee, yea that they may know at the laſt. Which phraſe of ſpeech is very common among the Hebrewes. Now becauſe the Egyptians had their ſoothſaiers, they thought nothing ſo obſcure or ſecret, but they might haue ſufficient reſolution from them of it: for they went to aske counſell as well in things of ſmall importance, as in great; and held whatſoeuer theſe men ſaid, as oracles. This vanitie the Prophet derides, ſaying; How will they ſhew you that which they know not? Hath God made them of his counſell? It is verie likely alſo that the art which they vſed in diuining, is heere condemned; for the art was not onely vnlawfull of it ſelfe, but inchantments and ſorceries were contained vnder it. There are three waies whereby we may know or foreſee things to come. The firſt and chiefeſt is, by the reuelation of the holy Ghoſt, who onely can reſolue vs: as alſo by the gift of prophecie, which is imparted but to a few: the ſecond, by Aſtronomie: the third, by cõferring of things already paſt, whence they haue been accuſtomed to gather the definition of prudence. As touching the knowledge of the ſtarres, a man may at ſome times come to the diſcerning of certaine things, by their ſituation and coniunction; to wit, famins, fruitfull and vnfruitfull ſeaſons, the peſtilence, and ſuch like: yet this is vncertaine, becauſe it hath its ground vpon coniecture onely. Reſpect therefore muſt alwaies be had herein, what proportion the ſtarres

Three waies by which we may foreſee things to come.
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2
3

Maſter Caluins iudgement touching Aſtrologie.

ſtarres haue with theſe inferior places. For mens actions are not gouerned by them as a ſort of fooliſh and deceitfull Aſtrologians thinke, of whom there are multitudes at this day that inſinuate themſelues into the fauour both of Princes and ſubiects, as if they had the knowledge of all things both preſent and to come in their ſleeue. But ſuch fellows are meere coſeners, who beguile men by their illuſions, and reſemble thoſe of whom the Prophet ſpeakes in this place: and yet Princes giue eare vnto them, reuerencing them as if they were gods. Truly they are well worthie to be ſo abuſed; and it is alſo a iuſt puniſhment vpon them for their curioſitie.

Theſe goodly diuiners forſooth doe likewiſe brag that they vnderſtand the arte Magick, wherein the Egyptians were very skilfull: but thereunto they alſo adde things that are worſe and much more deteſtable, to wit, coniurations and inuocations vpon diuels, which is the moſt hatefull and hurtfull thing that a man can either conceiue or vtter. The Lord curſeth ſuch coniectures and cuſtomes of diuining; neither can it be but the iſſue and euent thereof will be moſt wofull, and full of confuſion.

Coniuring moſt hatefull and hurtfull, as may be ſeene by the wofull euents it brings forth.

If theſe things were condemned in the Egyptians, how much more do they deſerue to be condemned in thoſe who ſhrowd themſelues vnder the name and worſhip of God? It is a wonder me thinks that thoſe who otherwiſe are both wittie and well learned ſhould ſuffer themſelues to be ſo groſely abuſed by ſuch impoſtures, as if they were vtterlie depriued both of wit and iudgement: but it is iuſt with God thus to auenge himſelfe vpon the ingratitude and vnthankfulnes of men. Truly ſo farre forth as we may iudge of things to come by that which is paſt, which alſo wee haue obſerued and knowne by vſe and experience in things, which is beſt of all: this in it ſelfe can not be diſliked: yet I would haue no man imagin that any certentie can be gathered from hence of that which is to come, becauſe the matter alwayes hangs vpō coniecture. Notwithſtanding *Iſaiah* doth profeſſedlie ſet himſelfe againſt this ſubtletie, which men account a great vertue; not that it is euill in it ſelfe: but becauſe ſuch a wittie and ſubtle fellow is hardlie to be found, that with this his knowledge is not alſo confident to haue at his fingers ends whatſoeuer is worthie and neceſſarie to be knowne. And thus they ſet light by the ſecret prouidence of God, as if nothing were hidden from them.

There is yet another vice beſides: that is, they affect rather a kinde of ſubteltie & iugling tricks, then true wiſedome in deed. But *Iſaiah* eſpeciallie taxeth this pride which is in men of great wits, who by their owne reaſon will preſume to meaſure the euents of things, as if (they) and not the Lord had not the gouernment of the whole world in his hand: therefore againſt their diuinations hee oppoſeth the heauenly *decree*. Hence we may gather how fitlie *Iſocrates* ſaid that Gods felicitie is powerfull and mightie in deed, but that our wiſdome is ſo likewiſe. The Apothegme

Iſocrates.

of this elegant Orator ſeemes a goodly one at the firſt bluſh: but ſeeing he takes wiſdome and prudence from God to giue it vnto mortall men, ſuch a parting of ſtakes is no leſſe ſottiſh then wicked. For what blaſphemie is it to attribute a prouidēt counſell vnto men, & only leaue to the Lord an happie fortune? If any now dare leaue thoſe meanes by which the Lord doth inſtruct vs, to haue recourſe to the impoſtures of the diuell, truely ſuch a one is moſt worthie to be deceiued with ſhame and great diſhonour, for he ſeekes the remedies which are not, and deſpiſeth thoſe which God offers him.

Thoſe that ſeeke to coniurers, are moſt worthie to be confounded with ſhame and diſhonor.

Verſ. 13. *The Princes of Zoan are become fooles: the Princes of Noph are deceiued, they haue deceiued Egypt*, euen *the corners of the tribes thereof.*

Zoan was one of the chiefe Cities of Egypt: *Noph* was alſo very much renoumed: but we can not certainly iudge what Cities they were, vnleſſe any ſhall take it to be Alexandria, the antiquitie and wealth whereof may be gathered from many places of the ſcripture. Whereby alſo their error is refuted, who ſay, that *Alexander* the Great built it. For albeit it was often laid waſte before, yet he neuer built it vp againe whollie, but only repaired it. Now it appeeres by the third Chapter of Nahum verſ. 8. that it was once a free Citie, and had league with the Egyptians, being as greatlie renoumed as any Citie in the world. He rightlie affirmes then that the beginning of her deſtruction came becauſe of her *follie*. For the chiefe ſtrength of a common-wealth or of a kingdome conſiſts in counſell, and wiſdome, without which, neither riches, nor multitude of men do profit any thing.

Wherein the chiefe ſtrēgth of a cōmon-wealth conſiſts.

I take this word *Angulum*, which ſignifies a corner, by way of ſimilitude for the principall part of the building whereupon the whole weight reſteth: ſo that I had rather reade it in ỹ nominatiue caſe then in the accuſatiue, becauſe it ſhould be referred, as I take it, to theſe wiſe men, vpon whom the Egyptians relied as ſecurely, as though no miſhap could poſſiblie befall them. But *Iſaiah* tels them that this leaning-ſtock is too weake, becauſe the reſting ouer-confidentlie vpō their counſels was the deſtruction of Egypt. Therefore after a taunting maner he condemnes this deceitfull wiſdome, which indeede rather deſerues the title of vanitie and *follie*, becauſe it is ſeparate from the feare of God. For men not only abuſe this excellent gift of God, but they are alſo puffed vp with vaine ambition and ſubtletie, which pleaſeth them farre better then true wiſedome. Beſides, there is alſo a diueliſh furie in them, for they quite ſuppreſſe the prouidence of God, referring all theſe euents whatſoeuer to the capacitie of their owne braine.

This is the cauſe why the ſcripture cries out ſo often againſt ſuch wiſe men, ſhewing all their wit to be meere madnes. For they take that vpon them which belongs to God, whereby

whereby they commit horrible and intolerable ſacrilege. We neede not meruaile then if the Lord ſhew fearefull examples againſt ſuch wiſards. For howſoeuer they be ingenious and quicke witted, yet they ſtumble and miſſe the marke euen in ſmall matters, caſting themſelues into ſuch great dangers, as a ſimple clowne or artificer could haue eaſilie auoided and foreſeene. Let this be a warning vnto vs leſt we waxe proud in heart, in attributing ſome praiſe of wiſdome to our ſelues. If ſo be wee haue any prudence and dexteritie in vs, let vs wholly refer it to the free liberalitie of God, and keepe our ſelues within the rule of modeſtie and ſobrietie. For if we make the Lord the ſtay of our wiſdome, wee haue a ſure *corner ſtone*, which can neuer bee beaten downe, nor ouerthrowne.

The ſureſt corner ſtone.

Verſ. 14. *The Lord hath mingled among them the ſpirits of errors: and they haue cauſed Egypt to erre in euery worke thereof, as a drunken man erreth in his vomit.*

BEcauſe it was incredible, and vnexpected, that the leaders of ſo wiſe and politike a people ſhould ouerthrow the Country by their folly, therefore the Prophet attributes the cauſe of it to the *iudgements of God*; to the end the Iewes ſhould not be as it were hoodwinked in ſo excellent and memorable an example. For prophane men are wont to attribute Gods iudgements to Fortune, when any thing that is new and vnlooked for falles out. now he ſpeakes by way of ſimilitude: as if hee ſhould ſay, euen as *wine* is powred into a cup or glaſſe; ſo will the Lord make the wiſe men drunke, by powring the *ſpirits of giddineſſe* into them, that being at their wits end, & becõming ſenſeleſſe, they may be made vnable either to ſay or doe any thing rightly. The cauſe why they deceiued Egypt then was, becauſe themſelues were deceiued firſt. And in that the Egyptians ſuffered themſelues to bee ſo abuſed, and were not able to keepe themſelues from it; therein may we ſee the iudgement of God vpon them.

How God is ſaid to deprive men of wiſedome and counſell.

And yet *Iſaiah* makes not God ſo the author of this their ſenſeleſnes; as if the Egyptians might haue laid the blame vpon him. But thus ſtands the caſe; men of themſelues haue neither vnderſtanding nor iudgement: for whence comes wiſdome but from the Spirit of God, which is the onely fountaine of light, vnderſtanding, and trueth? Now if the Lord takes this his Spirit from vs, what haue we to charge him withall? Hee is bound to vs no way at all: and in that he is liberall in giuing to men, it proceedes from his meere fauour. So then when ſoeuer hee ſmites mens hearts with the *ſpirits of giddineſſe and error*, he doth it alwaies vpon iuſt cauſes, howſoeuer (I grant) they may be hidden from vs. But for the moſt part he puniſheth the wicked, who haue lifted vp themſelues againſt him with this blindneſſe: as it happened to the Egyptians, who being ſwollen with an opinion of their owne wiſdome, were ready to burſt with pride, & deſpiſed all in regard of themſelues. It is a ſuperfluous matter then to diſpute of predeſtination in this place, ſeeing the Lord puniſheth them for a notorious vice. Wherefore when hee blindes or giues them vp, hee cannot be accuſed of crueltie; for it is a iuſt chaſtiſement of their rebellion and wickednesſe: neither can he which puniſheth mens iniquities be called the author of euill.

Let vs now ſhew after what manner God inflicts this puniſhment vpon them. He deliuers them vp to Satan, who effects this: for he it is properly who ſowes the ſpirit of error and frowardneſſe in mens hearts: but becauſe hee acts nothing but at Gods commandement, it is ſaid, that *God* doth that, which Satan indeed doth. For where it is commonly ſaid, This or that is done by Gods permiſſion, nothing is more friuolous. The Prophet expreſſeth yet more; to wit, that this puniſhment was ſent of *God*. becauſe hee is a iuſt Iudge. For he works by Satan as a Iudge doth by the executioner, and iuſtly puniſheth thoſe that haue offended him: as we reade in the booke of the Kings; Satan there preſents himſelfe before God, and askes leaue to deceiue the Prophets of *Ahab*. his requeſt being granted, he executes Gods commandement: for of himſelfe hee was able to doe nothing. 1. *King.* 22. 21.

How God works iuſtly by euill inſtruments.

We neede not heape vp many teſtimonies of Scripture; the thing it ſelfe is manifeſt enough.

In that hee addes, they were *deceiued* by their counſellers, he therein ſets forth the iudgement of God in the ſecond manner. For it might well be, that although the Princes had been witleſſe, much like to men *drunke*, that the people neuertheleſſe were ſober and of ſound iudgement: but he alſo ſaith, that the ſeducers ſhould obtaine the efficacie of error to deceiue the people alſo. Thus you ſee a twofold iudgement of God in this place, both againſt the ſeductors, and the ſeduced. By *vomiting*, hee meanes a beaſtly kinde of drunkennеſſe, adding it by way of amplification, ſhewing, that they are not drunken after an ordinarie manner, ſome wit remaining ſtill in them; but that they were drunke like ſwine.

Verſ. 15. *Neither ſhall there be any worke in Egypt which the head may doe, nor the taile, the branch nor the ruſh.*

THis is the concluſion of the former ſentence: for his meaning is, that there ſhall be ſuch a bruttiſh blockiſhneſſe in all the Egyptians, that whatſoeuer they enterpriſe, ſhall vaniſh away and come to nothing. This muſt needes befall them who are deſtitute of counſell, and it is a iuſt puniſhment of our pride and ouerweening. The Prophet then meant to note out the euent and effect; to ſhew that all things ſhould haue wofull ſucceſſes. And in menacing the *head* and *taile*, he ſignifies thereby, that all eſtates, from the higheſt to the loweſt, ſhall bee deſtitute of counſell, ſo as they ſhall be able to doe no-

What is meant by Head and Taile.

thing to the purpose: vnlesse any had rather vnderstand it as touching the maner of the proceeding of their actions. Let vs learne from hence, that the beginning and end of all things depends vpon God only, of whom we must aske counsell, wisedome, and a prosperous successe in all our businesses: vnlesse we meane to haue things succeed with vs, as they did with the Egyptians.

Vers. 16. *In that day shall Egypt be like Women; for it shall bee afraid and feare because of the mouing of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which he shaketh ouer it.*

HE repeates that againe which he had said before, to wit, that the Egyptians should haue no strength at all. Some thinke the Prophet alludes to a womanish behauiour, wherewith the Historiographers haue taxed the Egyptians: which was this, all order being peruerted, women managed the publike affaires, and men kept the house, and performed the offices that belonged to women. It may be *Isaiah* aimed at this. But all being well considered, this coniecture can not be currant, because he threatens a iudgement heere which should bring men into a wonderfull mammering. If he should speake of their accustomed behauiour, it should appertaine nothing at all to ỹ matter in hand: neither doth he reproue the Egyptians for their womanish hearts, but rather tels them they shall be so terrified, that they shall become timerous like women. For they not only esteemed of themselues as of a warlike people, able to wage battaile, but would take it in hand themselues without any prouocation thereunto, and were also helpfull vnto other nations. For wee see that many prophane authors tell sundrie things of the facts of the Egyptians, and stand much vpon their commendation. Howsoeuer then they were more nice and delicate then any other people, yet they were desirous to be esteemed a valarous and warlike people.

But now in so sudden a change we may see an admirable iudgement of God. And therefore he addes that the *shaking of the Lords hand* shall be the cause of this feare: by which words he shewes that the Lord will order and take all this warre in hand, so as the Egyptians shall neuer be able to stand, in regard they shall not haue to doe with men, but with God himselfe. Now this which *Isaiah* pronounceth against Egypt ought also to be applied to other nations: for when troubles arise, and warres are proclaimed, the iudgement of God must be acknowledged therein if men proue cowards and faint-hearted. For wee see the most warlike men sometimes to giue place, shewing themselues more delicate then women: yea, to be ouercome with little or no power, when God once smites their hearts with trembling.

Vers. 17. *And the land of Iudah shall be a feare vnto Egypt, euery one that maketh mention of it shall be afraid thereat, because of the counsell of the Lord of hosts, which he hath determined vpon it.*

SOme expound it simplie, that the land of Iudah shall be a wonderment to the Egyptians as well as other nations; comparing this place with Chap. 18. 2. 7. where it is said, You shal be an astonishment, &c. But I thinke the Prophets meaning is otherwise in this place: for his purpose is to shew the cause why the Lord will shew such an example against the Egyptians, to wit, because they had been the occasion of the destruction of the Iewes. For they had turned them frō the cōfidence which they ought to haue had in God: it being the custome of Princes to solicite their neighbours, and offring them help, to the end they may vse them afterward in the like case. But God had forbidden the Iewes to goe downe into Egypt for any succour, Deut. 17. 16. Yet did this wretched people chuse rather to yeeld to the solicitations of the Infidels which offred themselues vnto them, then to God: they are chastised therefore very iustly. Neither did the Egyptians escape vnpunished, because they had giuen them occasion of incredulitie and distrust: for they were so sharplie chastised that they quaked for feare as oft as they remembred the Iewes.

We may gather a very profitable doctrine from hence, to wit, that all such which shall alienate the Church from the true seruice of God, and from trusting in his help, hauing giuen them offence either by fearing, or counselling them, or by any allurements whatsoeuer, shall be punished and that seuerely. The Prophets words are as much in effect then, as if one should say, That the very looke of a woman will make him to blush which hath entised her to leaudnes, when the filthines of the fact shall come to light; and when God the auenger of the mariage knot shall appeare.

Such as shall be so wickedly minded as to withdraw Gods children from his seruice, or from trusting in him, shall be punished seuerely.

Vers. 18. *And in that day shall fiue Cities in the land of Egypt speake the language of Canaan, and shall sweare by the Lord of hosts: one shall be called the Citie of destruction.*

HAuing threatned the Egyptians, and laid forth the cause of Gods iudgements, he now comforts them, and promiseth them mercie: for he shewes that all of them in a maner shall be restored, and shall recouer a prosperous and florishing estate againe. For of sixe Cities, saith he, *fiue* shall be saued, so as one only shall perish. He had before threatned an horrible iudgement to fall vpon the whole kingdome, so as if any shall consider the former prophesie well, he can comprehend nothing therein but a state vtterlie past recouerie. He promiseth then that they shall be restored by a speciall fauour of God. So that this is to be taken as an increase of the

Churches

Churches reſtauration, or as a full meaſure of Gods grace after the redeemer is ſent.

The manner of ſpeech is ſomewhat obſcure: but if we examine it well, there is little or no difficultie at all in the ſenſe. For his meaning is, that the ſixt part of the Cities ſhall onely periſh, and that the reſt ſhall continue ſafe. The moſt difficultie is in the word *Hacheres*: ſome reade it *Hacheres*, that is to ſay, of the Sunne: but they deceiue themſelues by taking one letter for another. Thoſe who expound it of the Sunne, thinke that the Prophet ſpake of Heliopolis: but it ſutes not well with the ſcope of the text: becauſe hee not onely promiſeth that *fiue Cities* ſhall bee reſtored (for that had been no great matter) but ſaith in generall, that of ſixe townes or cities, fiue ſhall remaine vntouched: and doubtleſſe there were manie Cities in Egypt.

I let paſſe the fables of the old writers, and of thoſe who haue affirmed, that it contained twenty thouſand Cities. Yet it muſt not be denied, but there were a great number in a Country ſo renowned and well peopled; in a Kingdome that floriſhed as it did, and was ſo frequented, and in ſo ſweete and well tempered an aire. Let vs put the caſe then, that there were a thouſand Cities, or a few more. Hee ſaith, that the ſixt part only ſhall periſh, and that the reſt ſhall be reſtored: ſo as the number of the deſtroyed ſhall bee little in compariſon. Now it appeares ſufficiently by that which followes anon after, that this reſtauration is to be vnderſtood of the worſhip and ſeruice of God.

By the *word lip*, hee vnderſtands the *tongue*, taking a part for the whole: meaning thereby, to ſhew the agreement that the Egyptians ſhould haue with the people of God, and the faith whereby they ſhould make profeſſion of his name. By the *tongue*, hee alſo notes out by a figuratiue maner of ſpeech, a confeſſion. For in regard there was but one tongue onely which acknowledged and called vpon the true God, to wit, of this people that dwelt in the land of *Canaan*; it thereby appeares ſufficiently, that by this word *tongue*, we muſt alſo vnderſtand their conſent in religion. To *ſpeake* the ſame or diuers *languages*, whereby either agreement or diſcord are ſignified; are phraſes of ſpeech very frequent in the Scripture. But let vs obſerue that euery conſent is not ſufficient: for example; if men ſhould agree together to retaine a worſhip of their owne deuiſing and approbation, ought they not to come and conſent to that truth which was reuealed to the fathers? Neither doth he onely ſay, that the Egyptians ſhould ſpeak one and the ſame language; but the *language of Canaan*: for they were to change their ſpeech, & to vſe y which God had ſanctified; not that the pronunciation of this language was more holy; but it is commended, becauſe it containes the doctrine of truth. We are to obſerue this diligently, to the end wee may learne the true manner of conſenting. We ought to ſeek agreement by al means; but let vs beware that the coditions be good whereby it is procured: for it is not lawfull to ſeeke a meane betweene both, as the deſtroyers of true religion doe, which yet would be taken for makers of pacifications. Away with ſuch light and double tongues; let the truth be retained, which hath no other foundation but the word of God. Let them that draw neere to it, ſpeake with vs: and whoſoeuer falſifieth that, let him auoid, and chuſe a language fitting his owne humour: but let vs continue firme and conſtant in this trueth. The Egyptians then cannot ſpeake the language of Canaan, vnleſſe they firſt of all forſake their owne; that is to ſay, all ſuperſtitions.

Some refer this to *Poſtumus*, his time, but without any good ground: becauſe wee may gather from the verſes following, that the Prophet ſpeakes of the pure religion and true worſhip of God. And firſt of all vnder the figure Synecdoche, hee teacheth that the ſpeech ſhall be holy, taking one onely kinde thereof, to wit, that they ſhall profeſſe themſelues to be Gods ſeruants, by *ſweering* by his name. It may be read, *They ſhall ſweare in the Lord*, or, *by the Lord*; becauſe the letter Lamed, often ſignifies By. If we reade it, In the Lord; the ſenſe will be, that they ſhould promiſe to obey him, and that with a ſolemne oath; as when a nation takes an oath of alleageance to their Prince. And it is all one as if he had ſaid; they ſhall ſubmit themſelues vnder the power of God, and yeelde themſelues vnder his gouernment. But in regard the other reading is more generally receiued, I alſo the more willingly allow of it. For ſeeing an *oath* is a part of Gods worſhip, the whole is hereby ſignified, by taking a part for the whole. *To ſweare* alſo *by* the name of God, is often taken to beare witneſſe that hee is the true God.

His meaning is in a word, that they ſhall roundly giue their names to Chriſt. Hence we may gather, that wee muſt make an open profeſſion of our faith, if we meane to yeeld God his true ſeruice: and if any will keepe his faith ſhut vp in his heart, ſuch a one ſhall be ſure to haue but a cold opinion in ſtead of faith; becauſe true faith brings forth a franke confeſſion, and ſo inflames vs inwardly, that we ſhall neither will nor chuſe, but make that knowne to others which we carry in the cloſet of our hearts. Euery knee ſhall bow before mee, and euerie tongue ſhall ſweare by my name, ſaith the Lord: Iſai. 45.23. Where faith is then, there ought alſo to be the outward worſhip & the confeſſion of the mouth: Rom. 10.9.10. Wee muſt in like manner obſerue, that the things which appertaine to Gods ſeruice, ought not to be applied to prophane vſes: it is the profanation of an oath then, to ſweare by any other thing then by the Lord. For it is written, Thou ſhalt ſweare by my name: Deut. 6.13. Doe wee not contemne and defile his holy name, if wee mixe Saints or any other creature in our oathes? Let vs note here alſo with what reuerence we ought to take an oath: for if wee thereby make profeſſion of Gods honour, ought wee not to come thereunto with feare and humilitie? Afterwards, where he ſaith in the end

waies prouided that the condition be good.

If faith in the heart bring not forth an open profeſſion, it will ſurely proue but a cold opinion in ſtead of faith.

Holy things muſt not be applied to prophane vſes.

How we ought to ſweare.

We ought to labour for a conſent in religion, al-

of the verſe, that euery *ſixth Citie* ſhall be deſtroyed, the meaning is, that all ſuch as turne not vnto God to ſerue him ſhall periſh, without hope of reſtitution: this is the reaſon why he oppoſeth the Cities of Egypt which ſhould begin to acknowledge God, againſt thoſe that are appointed to cõfuſion. Where the ſeruice of God is wanting then, there we can expect nothing but vtter ruin: for the word *Hoves* ſignifies curſing and execration, after which followes ruin and eternall death.

Nothing but ruin to be expected, where the ſeruice of God is wanting.

Verſ. 19. *In that day ſhall the Altar of the Lord be in the middeſt of the land of Egypt, and a pillar by the border thereof vnto the Lord.*

HE continues on ſtill that which he ſpake in the former verſe, and expreſſeth more fullie the renument of Egypt, becauſe true religion ſhall floriſh there, the pure ſeruice of God ſhall be eſtabliſhed, and all ſuperſtitions ſhall fall to the ground. Now he vſeth this word *Altar*, to repreſent Gods worſhip, as by the ſigne thereof; becauſe ſacrifices and oblations were exerciſes of pietie. By the *middeſt* of Egypt he vnderſtãds the principall part of all the kingdome, as if he ſhould ſay, in the middes of the kingdome, or in the moſt excellent part of it. As touching the word *pillar*, we may not thinke he ſpeakes of Images that repreſents the ſhape of Saincts, or men, but memorials of the feare of God: or his meaning is, that they ſhall be as ſignes or land-marks, like to thoſe which bound out the ends and limits of kingdomes: and that after this maner there ſhould be ſignes ſet vp, whereby all men might know that God gouerned this people. And doe we not ſee it ordinarilie fall out, that when a people is truly conuerted vnto God, hauing once forſaken and deteſted their Idols and ſuperſtitions, how they openly ſet vp ſignes of true religion, ſo as all may know that God is purely worſhipped there?

When men are truly turned vnto God from their idolatrie, they teſtifie it by ſome publike ſigne.

Ioſephus tels how *Onias* abuſed this place, when he fled to *Ptolemeus Philometor*: for he perſwaded him that it ſhould be a very profitable courſe to ſet vp an *Altar* in the Countrey, vpon which the Iewes, that dwelt there, might offer ſacrifice: and alledged this text, affirming, that this propheſie ought now to be fulfilled. And in the end this wicked Prieſt made the King beleeue it to be true, although the Iewes openlie gainſaid him: for the King regarded his owne benefit; and this bad fellow, who had been depoſed from his office, meant to obteine new credit and fauour. So by this meanes what oppoſition ſoeuer there was, yet could not this wicked counſell be hindred. But *Iſaiah* vnder theſe figuratiue ſignes plainely deſcribes the pure worſhip of God which was then in vſe: for he hath reſpect to his owne time, and to thoſe with whom he had to deale. *Onias* then did wickedlie peruert this place to ſerue his own turne.

Onias.

But the popiſh Doctors are no leſſe impudent at this day, in drawing in a place of Malachie by the haire, as it were, to maintaine the ſacrifice of the Maſſe. For where he ſaith, It ſhall come to paſſe that incenſe ſhall be euery where offred vnto God: from thence they conclude, that there are ſome ſacrifices differing from the ancient ſacrifices; for neither oxen nor other beaſts are to be ſacrificed; therefore it is the Maſſe, ſay they. Truly a very trim argument. Wee may eaſily diſcerne that Malachie ſpeakes there of the ſeruice of God, noting it vnder one of the ſhadowes of the Law, as *Iſaiah* doth in this place: and we ought to marke theſe kinds of ſpeech diligentlie, which the Prophets are wont to vſe very often. *Mal.* 1. 11.

The place of Malachi truly expounded.

Papiſts wreſters of Scripture.

This then may be plainly explaned by another place in Ioel, which we will alledge by way of example, Your ſonnes and your daughters ſhall propheſie, ſaith he, your yong men ſhall ſee viſions, and your old men ſhall dreame dreames, Ioel 2. 28. S. *Peter* tels how this propheſie was fulfilled whe the Apoſtles being inſpired with the holy Ghoſt, ſpake diuers tongues: for whereas they were vnlearned before, they then began to be fit to teach the heauenlie myſteries, Act. 2. We reade nothing there of dreames. The Apoſtle then ſeemes to alledge this place very vnfitlie: but it appeeres that Ioel meant to ſignifie nothing elſe in this place but Propheſie; and vſeth the word *dreames* and *viſions* for ornament ſake, becauſe the Lord in times paſt did make his minde knowne to the Prophets by this meanes, Numb. 12. 6. He alſo had reſpect to the cuſtome vſed at that time, becauſe the Iewes would hardlie haue vnderſtood what the gifts of the holy Ghoſt meant, ſeeing it was a thing as yet vnknowne vnto them: for being nouriſhed vp vnder rudiments of the Law, they could aſpire no higher then to the ſacrifices and ceremonies; or whether the ſignes and ſacraments led them.

The Papiſts argument out of Malachi for the ſacrifice of the Maſſe, anſwered by another place out of Ioel.

The Prophets liſped to them then as vnto babes or children, to whom we vſe not to ſpeake of higher matters then that which they may be able by little and little to comprehend by cuſtome. This doctrine therefore will giue vs the meaning of many texts, the obſcuritie whereof wee might otherwiſe be held a long while in doubt of. It plainly appeeres that the Prophet ſpeakes of Chriſt his kingdome, ſo that the things whereof hee ſpeakes, were not fulfilled till his comming. The ſhadowes muſt be taken away, that wee may behold the truth of things; and ſo by the *Altar* we vnderſtand the pure and true inuocation of Gods name. But yet the Prophet therewithall ſhewes by theſe outward ſignes, that the pure ſeruice of God can not be preſerued without the publick exerciſes of religion, the maner whereof muſt not be diſpoſed according to our will. Let mens inuentions ceaſe then, that God alone may be heard in this matter.

Verſ. 20. *And it ſhall be for a ſigne and for a witnes vnto the Lord of hoſtes in the land of Egypt: for they ſhall crie vnto the Lord becauſe of the oppreſſors, and he ſhall*

ſhall ſend them a Sauiour, and a great man, and ſhall deliuer them.

Drew me, and I will runne after thee Cant. 1. I ſhall runne the way of thy Commandem. &c. when thou haſt ſet mine heart at large: Pſal. 119.

WE cannot offer any acceptable ſeruice vnto God, vnleſſe he preuent vs by his grace. For who will dedicate himſelfe to his obedience, that is not drawne firſt by the ſweet taſte of his goodneſſe, to imbrace him with a right affection? He muſt needes *call* vs firſt then to himſelfe, before we can *call* vpon him: and all acceſſe is ſhut vp againſt vs, till hee haue firſt of all allured vs to come vnto him. He ſaid before, that they ſhould be ſubdued by diuers afflictiõs, to the end that they might be ſubiected to God: he now repeates the very ſame thing; for men will neuer renounce neither themſelues nor their vanities, till they are brought to teachableneſſe by ſtrong hand. Notwithſtanding he by and by addes another kinde of ſummons; to wit, they ſhall goe familiarly vnto God, after they haue taſted of his louing kindneſſe. For the *cry* whereof he ſpeakes, proceedes from faith; becauſe they would neuer betake themſelues to this refuge, vnleſſe they were allured thereunto by the taſte of his mercy. And whereas hee promiſeth to ſend them a *Sauiour*, by whoſe hand the Egyptians ſhal be deliuered; it can be meant of none but of Chriſt; becauſe Egypt was not deliuered from her miſeries, but in regard that the Goſpell was firſt of all preached there.

Chriſt promiſed.

We reade what ſundry changes this Country indured by the ſpace of foure hundred yeeres, inſomuch as it was almoſt vtterly deſtroyed and laid waſte by forraigne and ciuill warres: but when it ſeemed to be at the laſt caſt, as they ſay, behold, it was conuerted to the Lord, and deliuered out of the hands of tyrants and enemies. Thus Ieſus Chriſt deliuered this Country, when he began to make himſelfe knowne vnto it. We in like manner ought to bee thus diſpoſed to know and ſerue God, that when wee ſhall be diuers waies afflicted, we may know that our ſaluation conſiſteth in him alone. And would to God the world had learned this leſſon at this day, ſeeing it is in ſuch diſquietneſſe, that it ſeemes neere to deſtruction. For what end of theſe troubles can it looke for, but vtter ruine, vnleſſe by repentance it acknowledgeth that it hath been iuſtly puniſhed for the owne impieties? And when it is added, *To deliuer them*; we are to gather from hence a verie profitable doctrine; to wit, that God helps vs by Ieſus Chriſt; through whoſe power hee hath aſſiſted his owne, euen from the beginning: for hee was the perpetuall mediator; and by his intereceſſion all good things haue been obtained at the hands of God the Father. Who being now come and reuealed, let vs know that wee can obtaine nothing of the Father, but by his meanes.

Whence we are to expect deliuerance out of troubles.

God helpes vs, but it is through Chriſt.

Verſ. 21. *And the Lord ſhall bee knowne of the Egyptians, and the Egyptians ſhall know the Lord in that day, and doe ſacrifice and oblations, and ſhall vow vowes vnto the Lord and performe them.*

Iſay.

IS*aiah* addes now that which was the principall: for the Lord can neither be ſerued, nor called vpon, vnleſſe wee firſt *know* him to be our Father. As ſaith Saint *Paul*; How ſhall they call vpon him whom they *know not* Rom. 10. 14. For we cannot be partakers of Gods gifts to our ſaluation, vnleſſe the true knowledge which is by faith goe before. Hee hath good reaſon therefore to adde *knowledge*, as the foundation of all religion, or the key which opens the kingdome of heauen vnto vs. Which knowledge we cannot haue, but by doctrine: whence we may conclude, that God reiects all new found ſeruices; for hee cannot approue of that which is void of that knowledge, which proceedes from the hearing of the true and pure doctrine. Men ſhall neuer be able to ſettle a right forme of Gods ſeruice then, if they onely bring that which themſelues haue deuiſed. Theſe places are worthy to be well obſerued; for therein the holy Ghoſt ſhewes vs what true adoration and inuocation is; namely, hauing baniſhed all the inuentions of men, whereunto they obſtinately ſticke, we ſhould ſuffer our ſelues to be taught by the word of God; and if wee once be furniſhed with the authoritie thereof, let vs freely and openly condemne whatſoeuer the world extolleth and admireth. Whereas he ſaith againe, that *Egypt ſhall know*, it is a repetition of ſome waight: for this knowledge is of ſo great importance, that it ought not to be ſlightly paſſed ouer, becauſe it holds the chiefeſt place; without which there is no true worſhip of God.

No ſaluation without ſauing knowledge.

Note.

Why this word Knowledge is twiſe repeated.

And they ſhall ſacrifice.] This place muſt be expounded like the former, where he mentioned the *Altar*. For to what end ſhould *ſacrifices* ſerue, when Chriſt is manifeſted? Vnder this ſhadow then, he mentioneth the confeſſion of faith and prayer, which followed the preaching of the Goſpell. Now vnder this word he comprehends whatſoeuer was offered to God, as beaſts, bread, all ſorts of fruits, and whatſoeuer ſerued to the acknowledgement of Gods goodneſſe. But the difference betweene the old Teſtament and the new, is to be noted; and vnder theſe ſhadowes and ceremonies, we are to vnderſtand that reaſonable ſeruice whereof Saint *Paul* ſpeaketh in the Epiſtle to the Romans, Chapter 12. verſ. 1.

The difference betweene the old Teſtament and the new.

That which is added of *vowes*, is alſo a part of God his ſeruice. The Iewes were wont by vowes, to profeſſe that they acknowledged the goodneſſe of the Lord: and they then eſpecially gaue thanks by a ſolemne vow, after they had receiued ſome rare and excellent benefit of him. They alſo made voluntarie vowes for diuers reſpects, according as euery one thought good. Yet none had libertie to vow this or that, after their owne imagination; but there was a certaine rule preſcribed them. How euer it were, it appeares that the Prophet ſignifies nothing elſe by

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this word *vowe*, but Gods ſeruice, vnto which the Egyptians ſhould giue themſelues after they had receiued ỹ knowledge of the truth. But he mentions thoſe exercíſes of pietie, by which the Iewes made profeſſion of the true religion. From hence the Papiſts draw an argument to prooue that wee muſt fulfill our vowes to God: but ſeeing their vowes are made at random, and without any diſcretion, this place giues thē no warrant for the maintenance of their error. For *Iſaiah* foretels what the Egyptians ſhould do after they had imbraced and followed the doctrine of ſaluation. So in like maner when *Dauid* exhorts the people to vowe, and to pay their vowes, they thinke it makes for them: but he meanes not that they ſhould therefore make *raſh* or *vnlawfull* vowes. For the rule of right vowing ſtands alwaies in force, beyond which wee muſt not paſſe; to wit, Gods word, by which wee are taught what he requires of vs, and what we ſhould vowe and fulfill.

The Papiſts argument out of this place touching their vowes, anſwered.

*Pſal.*76. 12. *Eccle.*5.3.

Gods word muſt be our rule in vowing.

There was neuer any libertie giuen vs to vow whatſoeuer wee liſt: the reaſon is, becauſe we giue our ſelues the raines too much, and ſuffer our ſelues to ruſh againſt God in all things, being more impudent in this behalfe then if we had to deale with men. Now ye ſee the cauſe why it was needfull that men ſhould be reſtrained by ſome bridle, euen to the end they might not giue themſelues ouergreat libertie in Gods ſeruice and religion. Seeing it is thus, we may all ſee that God approues of nothing but that which his Law confirmes, and reiects all things elſe as a ſtrange and ſuperſtitious worſhip. What ſoeuer then any man voweth of his owne head without warrant from Gods word, can not be ſound: and if he fulfill it, he ſinnes double, firſt, for vowing fooliſhlie, as if he toyed and plaid the foole with God: ſecondly, for accompliſhing that which he hath raſhlie vowed without warrant: whereas he ought rather to haue repented himſelfe, and to haue forborne the doing of it. So farre off is it then that ſuch vowes do binde any man, that on the contrarie hauing acknowledged his fault and raſhnes in ſo doing, he ought to change his mind, and to ceaſe from performing of it. If any now ſhall make enquirie touching Papiſticall vowes, it is eaſie to proue that they haue no affinitie with Gods word. For if thoſe which they eſteeme lawfull, and the moſt excellent aboue the reſt are wicked and vnlawfull, as the vowes of Monks are, what may wee thinke of the reſt? They vow perpetuall Chaſtitie, as if it were granted to all in a like meaſure: now wee know this gift is rare, neither is it promiſed to all; no not to thoſe who otherwiſe are indued with great and excellent graces.

Note. 1 2

Vowes of Monks.

Abraham was of an excellent faith, and conſtancie, of ſingular meekenes, and holines, yet had he not this gift. Chriſt himſelfe teſtifies that it is not giuen to all, euen then when his Apoſtles ſo highlie commended ſingle life, Math.19.6.10.11.12. and S. *Paul* ſaith the like, 1.Cor.7.7.9. He then which hath not this gift of continencie, and yet vowes it, doth ill, and ſhal be iuſtlie puniſhed for his preſumption. Hence haue come thoſe infinite ſhamefull examples, whereby God hath iuſtlie puniſhed ſuch pride in the Papacie. They vowe pouertie alſo; as if it were vnlawfull for them to inioy any thing of their owne; yet doe they abound in wealth aboue all men: is not this a plaine mocking of God? As touching the obedience which they vow, it is nothing elſe but meere rebellion: for they ſhake off Chriſtes yoke, to ſubiect themſelues to men. Others vow pilgrimages, to eate no fleſh, to keepe certaine dayes, and other things full of ſuperſtitions. Others vow vnto God fond and doltiſh toyes, as if they had to deale with a little child: for we are aſhamed to make ſuch promiſes vnto men, amongſt whom nothing is confirmed vnleſſe both parties be firſt agreed betweene themſelues, and doe allow of one anothers fact. Surely we ſhould much leſſe enterpriſe ought in Gods ſeruice, vnleſſe wee haue good warrant for our deede out of his holie word. What ſeruice will you call that where the ſtatutes of God are nothing accounted of, and where the will of man only takes place? Can this be acceptable vnto God, thinke we? Nay, ſhall it not rather be termed ſuperſtition, which S. *Paul* ſo much deteſteth? Coloſſ. 2.23. Thoſe which make ſuch vowes then do brag in vaine that they ſerue God therein, as if this place any thing at all fauored their conceit, becauſe the Lord deteſteth ſuch worſhip.

Preſumption in any to vow ſingle life.

Wilfull pouertie.

Papiſts vows of obedience meere rebellion.

Pilgrimages.

Note.

Verſ. 22. *Wherefore the Lord ſhall ſmite Egypt, he ſhall ſmite and heale it: for he ſhall returne vnto the Lord, and he ſhall be intreated of them, and ſhall heale them.*

NOw the Prophet concludes that which he had ſaid before, to wit, that the chaſtiſement whereof he ſpake ſhould be profitable to the Egyptians, becauſe it ſhould be as a preparatiue to bring thē to repentance: as if he ſhould ſay, The affliction wherewith the Lord ſhall *ſmite Egypt*, ſhall turne to the ſingular benefit and good thereof. Thoſe who reade, He ſhall ſmite with an incurable wound, do interpret this place amiſſe, and do much diminiſh the Prophets meaning: for he ſhewes that the wounds ſhall be profitable, becauſe God will vſe them as a meanes to bring them home. Whence we are to gather, that we ſhould neuer refuſe to be chaſtiſed of the Lord, ſeeing he doth it for our great good; in regard that impunitie ingenders a greater licence to commit ſinne. And becauſe men are wonderfullie prone in giuing themſelues the raines whilſt God ſpares them; therefore he himſelfe, is faine to preuent the miſchiefe as we ſay: which he doth by *chaſtiſements and afflictions*, that he might thereby prouoke and prick vs forward to repentance and amendment of life. Loe heere an excellent example ſet before vs in *Egypt*, who found grace and mercie at Gods hands, although

although ſhe was ſtuffed with ſuperſtitions and impietie, and ſurmounted all other nations in idolatry.

But note the meanes how; to wit, by *turning vnto God*: for this is the expoſition of the former member: as if he ſhould haue ſaid, *God ſhal heale the Egyptians, becauſe they ſhall conuert.* Let vs gather from hence, that conuerſion is as it were a reſurrection from eternall death; for we are but dead all the while we remaine vnconuerted: but being once conuerted, we enter into fauour with God, and are deliuered from hell. Not that we merit this grace by our repentance; but becauſe by this meanes the Lord raiſeth vs as it were from death to life. To this repentance there is a promiſe added: whence we gather, that our requeſts are not in vaine, when we craue pardon for our ſinnes: prouided that our repentance be not hypocriticall.

Conuerſion a kinde of reſurrection from eternal death.

Repentance merits not remiſſion of ſinnes.

Now when the Lord ſaith, that hee will *be mercifull* to the Egyptians; hee therewithall ſhewes, that they ſhall obtaine fauour immediately after they be once conuerted. It ſhall be a true conuerſion then, when *calling vpon the name of God* ſhall follow it. But this inuocation cannot be without faith; for the wicked themſelues may haue ſome knowledge of their ſinnes; yet none of them will haue their recourſe to Gods mercy, neither ſhall they euer be truely reconciled vnto him, vnleſſe they bee touched at the heart with the true feeling of that repentance which is ioyned with faith: Rom. 10. 14.

Conuerſion and inuocation goe alwaies hand in hand.

And I will heale.] Hee repeates not that which he ſaid; to wit, the Lord *ſhall ſmite Egypt*, and *heale it*; but he promiſeth *to heale it* in another ſignification, that is, the Lord ſhal ceaſe to correct it. The healing whereof he made mention before, was inward: but this latter is referred to the puniſhments and afflictions. In a word, his meaning is, that God will prepare a ſpeedie remedie to *heale* all their diſeaſes. For as ſoone as we be reconciled vnto God, hee findes nothing in vs that deſerues to be puniſhed. Doe not chaſtiſements come for ſinnes? But ſinnes being pardoned, fo are alſo the corrections which they haue deſerued. And if ſo be we are chaſtiſed, it is a ſigne that our repentance is not yet ſuch as it ought to be. To bee ſhort, let vs keepe in minde this order which the Prophet here ſets before vs. Firſt, men are prepared to repentance by *corrections*. Secondly, they are *healed*, becauſe they are deliuered from *eternall death*. Thirdly, being brought to the knowledge of their ſinnes, they *aske pardon*. In the fourth place, God becomes *gracious* and fauourable vnto them. Laſtly, *corrections ceaſe*, hauing once obtained pardon of the Lord. Now I thinke there is no man which ought not to acknowledge theſe things which *Iſaiah* pronounceth here of the Egyptians in himſelfe, in whoſe perſon God ſets as it were a type and an example before the whole world.

The word Healing, taken heere in a double ſenſe.

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2

Where God forgiues the ſinne, there he vſually remits the outward puniſhment.

1

2

3

4

5

Verſ. 23. *In that day ſhall there be a path from Egypt to Aſſhur; and Aſſhur ſhall come into Egypt, and Egypt into Aſſhur: ſo the Egyptians ſhall worſhip with Aſſhur.*

*Or, ſerue.

NOw the Prophet ſhewes how it ſhall come to paſſe that the Lord will ſhed this his bountie forth euery where: as if he ſhould ſay, This largeſſe ſhall not bee ſhut vp in ſome corner, neither ſhall it be felt of one people alone, as it was wont to be. Now he ſpeakes heere of two nations which were the ſworne enemies of the Church, and therefore ſeemed to be the furtheſt off from Gods kingdome of all others. For a man might haue had much more hope of nations further off, in regard that theſe two made warre, as you would ſay then, vpon God himſelf, and perſecuted his Church of ſet purpoſe. Oh Lord! if it be ſo that he ſhewes himſelfe thus mercifull to the capitall enemies of his Church, that paſſing by their ſinnes, hee adopts them for his children, what wil he then do to other Nations? Thus yee ſee a manifeſt vocation of the Gentiles, contained in this propheeie.

Note heere the patience and bounty of the Lord our God.

When he ſaith, *The way ſhall be open*, and there ſhall bee a mutuall acceſſe, ſo as one ſhall goe to another; hee therein notes their brotherly conference. Wee know that the Egyptians had warres with the Aſſyrians almoſt continually; ſo as they hated one another deadly. Now the Prophet proclaimes heere, that God ſhall turne their hearts, and reconcile them one one another in ſuch ſort, that they ſhall trade and traffique one with the other; & the paſſages which in times paſt were ſhut vp, ſhall *now* be *ſet open*. We are to note that in this place then, which we haue obſerued before in the ſecond Chapter; that is, when men are reconciled vnto God, they ought to nouriſh brotherly kindneſſe betweene themſelues; for all ſtrifes, debates, enuies, and grudgings, ought to ceaſe with vs, when God is at one with vs. Is it not to be meruelled at then, when he ſaith, that the way is open to goe out of *Egypt* into *Aſſyria*? But all this doubtleſſe ought to be referred to the Kingdome of Chriſt, ſeeing wee read not that the Egypuans had this agreement with the Aſſyrians till they came to the knowledge of Ieſus Chriſt.

Men being reconciled vnto God, ought to nouriſh brotherly kindnes betweene themſelues.

Shall ſerue.] This member may be tranſlated, They ſhall ſerue, or worſhip God: but becauſe this word *God*, is not heere expreſſed, it may be referred to the Aſſyrians, and indeed the Hebrew particle *Eth*, leades vs to thinke ſo. Thus you may expound it then; Thoſe which in times paſt burned with a deſire to doe hurt, ſhall change their mindes, and in ſtead thereof, ſhall deſire to doe good. In a word, you ſhall ſee in them the fruit of true repentance; becauſe whereas they had wont to ſpoile one another by often warres, they ſhall now take delight and pleaſure in one anothers company. And this ſenſe will ſute well to the ſcope of the Prophets words. And yet I reiect not the other interpretation which is followed of the moſt; to wit, that thoſe who erewhiles worſhipped many gods,

ſhall now acknowledge but one God onely, and ſhall make one confeſſion of faith. Thus it ſhall be free for euerie one to follow which of the two expoſitions he liketh beſt. But if the laſt bee receiued, the Prophet then makes this brotherly loue to flow from the feare of God, as the riuer from the fountaine.

Verſ. 24. *And in that day ſhall Iſrael be the* *third with Egypt and Aſſhur*, euen *a bleſſing in the middeſt of the land.*

*Or, a third. *Or, ſhall be.

NOw *Iſaiah* ſets downe the concluſion of the promiſe heere, which hee had touched; namely, that the *Egyptians* and the *Aſſyrians* ſhall be *bleſſed* as well as *Iſrael*. For before, the grace of God was ſhut vp as it were in Iſrael, in regard the Lord had made a couenant with this people onely, and had ſpread out his cord vpon *Iacob*; as *Moſes* ſpeakes Deut. 32. 9. And *Dauid* ſaith, God hath not dealt ſo with euerie nation, neither had they knowne his iudgements: Pſal. 147. 20. To be ſhort, the *bleſſing* of God aboad in Iudea onely: but heere he ſaith, that it ſhall be communicated to the Egyptians and Aſſyrians: vnder which two names hee comprehends all nations beſides. They are not named heere by way of honour; but in regard they had been the perpetuall enemies of God, they ſeemed ſo much the further eſtranged from him, and to haue leſſe hope of fauour then any others. Wherefore howſoeuer he adopted to himſelfe the children of *Abraham* onely, yet now he is content to be called the father of all nations, indifferently. Some tranſlate, *Iſrael ſhall be the third*; which I approue not: for in as much as the nowne is of the ſeminine gender, it ſhould bee ioyned with the word *Berachah*: and this word *bleſſing*, is as much to ſay, as example, or mirrour of bleſſing.

Verſ. 25. *For the Lord of hoſtes ſhall bleſſe it ſaying; Bleſſed be my people, Egypt and Aſſhur, the work of mine hands, and Iſrael mine inheritance.*

HE comes againe to the reaſon and expoſition of the former ſentence: for he teacheth that the Aſſyrians and Egyptians ſhall be companions with the elect people by the free goodneſſe of God. And it is as much as if he had ſaid; Howſoeuer theſe titles appertaine onely to Iſrael, yet ſhall they be tranſferred notwithſtanding to another people, whom the Lord ſhall adopt to himſelfe. Now there is a mutuall correſpondency betweene God and his people, ſo as thoſe whom he pronounceth to be *his people* with his own mouth, may alſo anſwer, and by good right ſay, *that he is their God*. This priuiledge is indifferently granted both to the Egyptians and Aſſyrians. But although the Prophet meant to make theſe ſtrangers companions with the Iewes, which were the houſhold-people of God, yet he diſtinguiſheth their degrees by ſpeciall markes. For in calling the Egyptians *Gods people*, he meanes that they are partakers of that honour which God vouchſafed onely to the Iewes. He adornes the Aſſyrians with the proper title giuen to the Church, ſaying, that they are the *worke of his hands*.

The Church (as we haue ſaid elſewhere) is called the *worke*, or *workemanſhip* of God Eph. 2. 10. becauſe the faithfull are reformed by the ſpirit of regeneration, to the end they may beare the image of God. Thus by the *worke of the hands*, he meanes not our *creation*, as we are made men, but *regeneration*, as wee are created vnto newneſſe of life; that ſo being ſeparated from the world, wee may bee made new creatures. Whence wee perceiue, that in the matter of our new life, we ought to attribute nothing vnto our ſelues, becauſe wee are altogether the workmanſhip of God. But when the Prophet ſpeakes of *Iſrael*, he adornes him with his preheminence; to wit, that he is the *heritage of God*: to the end hee might ſtill retaine the right and honour of the firſt borne among his new brethren. For this word *heritage*, hath a greater emphaſis in it then we thinke commonly of. For queſtionleſſe that ſame couenant which God made firſt with them, gaue them ſuch a priuiledge, as could not be diſanulled by their vnthankfulneſſe; becauſe the gifts & callings of God, are without repentance: as Saint *Paul* teacheth, Rom. 11. 29. Epheſ. 2. 12. Which ſhewes, that they are the firſt borne in Gods houſe. Howſoeuer then that the grace of God bee now ſhed forth and ſpread abroad further of, yet ceaſe they not to hold the firſt degree, not by their merit, but by the ſtedfaſtneſſe of the promiſe.

The meaning of this phraſe, The worke of mine hands.

If our new birth be the workmanſhip of God, ought we to attribute any thing to our ſelues?

The Iewes.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *In the yeere that Tartan came to Aſhdod, (when Sargon King of Aſſhur ſent him) and had fought againſt Aſhdod and taken it.*

IN the former Chapter *Iſaiah* propheſied of that calamitie threatned againſt the Egyptians, therewithall promiſing them Gods mercie: now repeating againe the ſame argument, hee ſhewes that Iſraell ſhall be confounded by this chaſtiſement of Egypt, becauſe they put their confidence in them. He alſo ioines the Ethiopians with him. Whence we may coniecture that the Ethiopians were ioined in league with the Egyptians: which I haue touched heretofore, and ſhall touch it againe in the 37. Chapter. Firſt, we are to note the time of this propheſie: for neceſſitie did preſſe

I

The time of this propheſie.

preſſe the Iewes in ſuch wiſe then, that they were conſtreined to ſeeke help of other nations. The holie hiſtorie witneſſeth, that *Tartan* was one of the Captaines of *Senacherib*: for which cauſe we muſt needs acknowledge that this *Sargon* was *Senacherib*, who (as wee may ſee by this place) had two names. We are likewiſe to conſider in what caſe the ſtate of Iſrael was: for the ten Tribes had been led away captiue: and it ſeemed that the kingdome of Iudah was vtterlie waſted, in regard the whole Countrie was almoſt conquered, Ieruſalem excepted, which was beſieged by *Rabſaces*, *Tartan*, on the other ſide, laid ſiege againſt Aſhdod, 2. King. 18. 13. & 17. Now in the 17. verſe of the 18. Chapter there are three Captaines named: whence wee rightlie collect, that *Sennacheribs* camp at that time was diuided into three parts, that ſo at one inſtant all being amazed and troubled, and ſome put to their ſhifts, the reſt might haue no opportunitie to aid and ſuccour one another. The Iewes therefore had no other refuge but to ſeeke for help of ſtrangers. The Prophet in the meane while is ſent from God to tell them in flat termes, that it is but in vaine for them to depend vpō the ſuccour of the Egyptians, who were alreadie purſued euen by Gods immediat hand: and ſo farre was it off that they ſhould be helpfull to others, that they were ſcarce able to defend themſelues againſt their enemies. Thus the Iewes were to know for certaine, that they were iuſtlie puniſhed for their infidelitie, becauſe they left God, to flee for help to the Egyptians.

2. King. 18. 17.

Tartan, Rabſaris, and Rabſache.

The drift and ſcope of this propheſie.

We are heere then to obſerue the drift and ſcope of the text: for it is not Gods meaning to admoniſh the Egyptians, but to correct the infidelitie of his people: which infidelitie often caried them away to falſe and peruerſe hopes. That the Prophet might teach them therefore to reſt vpon God alone, he heere ſets before them what iſſue and ſucceſſe they ſhould haue frō theſe vaine helps which they ſo greedily ſought after. Now this admonition doubtleſſe was very ſeaſonable, becauſe the Egyptians had now begun to hinder the paſſage of the Aſſyrians, and had conſtreined them to returne from whence they came: which was the beſt newes the Iewes could poſſiblie heare tell of. But to the end they might not reioice too much in theſe goodly beginnings, he threatens that this ſuccor ſhall turne into ſmoke, becauſe the Ethiopians and Egyptians ſhall in ſhort ſpace be ouercome to their great diſgrace and confuſion.

Verſ. 2. *At the ſame time ſpake the Lord by the hand of Iſaiah the ſonne of Amoz, ſaying, Goe, and loſe the ſackcloth from thy loines, and put off thy ſhooe from thy foote; and he did ſo, walking naked and bare-foot.*

TO the end the Lord might confirme this propheſie by ſome externall ſigne, he commands *Iſaiah* to walke naked. For if the Prophet had done this of his owne head, he had iuſtlie deſerued to haue been mocked for his labor: but in regard he did it at Gods bidding, there is nothing to be ſeene in him which is not worthie of admiration, yea, of great feare. Vnder this nakednes, and ſuch other ſignes, there are weightie matters included beſides, God neuer did any thing either immediatlie by himſelfe, neither yet by any of his ſeruants, but the reaſon of it is forthwith declared. Thus *Iſaiah* walks not naked only, but ſhewes what his drift is, that is to ſay, why the Lord enioined him to do it; otherwiſe the falſe Prophets might imitate the ſeruants of God, changing themſelues into diuers fearefull formes to dazle the eies of ſimple people, and ſo get eſtimation: but ſuch ſignes are nought worth, becauſe God is not the author of them. Which we are diligentlie to obſerue, in regard of the Papiſts, who are readie to aduance and ſet vp new Ceremonies in ſtead of true Sacraments. This is the rule which we muſt oppoſe againſt them, to wit, if theſe Ceremonies of theirs be of God, then ought we to receiue them: if not, then is it lawfull for vs to reiect them; nay, we can in no wiſe approue of them, but we therein offer wrong vnto God, becauſe mortall men doe then vſurp that authoritie which vnto him belongeth.

Papiſts readie to ſet vp new Ceremonies, in ſtead of true Sacraments.

What rule muſt be oppoſed againſt papiſh Ceremonies.

Beſides, God impoſeth not, nor ſets ſignes before vs without the word: for what Sacrament would it be if wee ſhould only behold the bare ſigne? It is the doctrine only which makes the Sacrament. Let vs know then that there is nothing but plaine deceit when the word goes not before. The Papiſts do therefore fondlie impoſe the name of Sacrament to their vaine Ceremonies, when they are not able to confirme them by the pure Scriptures. Well, the Lord hath ſo ioined theſe things together, that none can ſeparate thē, but withall they offer violence to the order which he hath inſtituted.

When God impoſeth any Ceremonie, he addes his word vnto it.

Now in that *Iſaiah* is commanded to *looſe the ſackcloth*, the moſt of the interpreters gather that ỹ Prophet was at that time clothed with a mourning weede, in regard that he bewailed the calamitie of Iſrael: for *ſackcloth* was a mourning garment, as appeares by that which is ſaid in Ioel, Chap. 1. 13. They ſay then that this was done, that in bearing vpon him the garments of the guiltie or condemned, he might aske pardon of God: or, that it could not be that his apparell and countenance ſhould teſtifie gladnes, becauſe his heart was in heauines. And indeed it was vnpoſſible but he muſt needs be ſore afflicted in beholding ſo great and horrible calamities.

Some thinke it was his ordinarie apparell, in regard that the Prophets vſed to weare a mantle, as teſtifieth Zachariah 13. 4. But this is too weake a coniecture; neither hath it any ſhew of reaſon. It is more likelie that he was clothed with ſackcloth, to expreſſe his ſorrow. For thoſe of Iudeah were become ſo ſenſeleſſe, that they cared not awhit; neither thought they that this miſerie ſhould euer be able to come neere them: no not then when their poore brethren were miſerablie afflicted

flicted and scattered before their eyes: nay, they rather thought themselues out of all danger, and made a mocke at the words of the Prophets, who threatned and foretold their ruine. This was the cause why *Micha* also complained, that none bewailed the calamitie of Israel. *Mich.* 1.11.

Some also aske whether this was a thing done indeed, or rather whether it were not a bare and naked vision, which hee was to set forth to the people. The most receiued opinion is, that the Prophet neuer stripped himselfe naked, but that it was shewed him by way of vision onely, and that but once. Their reason is, because he was not able to indure to goe naked the space of *three whole yeeres*, both in regard of the heate and cold, and of other incumbrances occasioned by the time. But what hurt is it if wee should say that the Prophet couered himselfe in his house, and abroad also; onely that he shewed this spectacle of nakednes to the people, when he was to performe his propheticall office? For I am not much moued with that reason, that hee could not indure the heate nor cold, because God who had inioyned him to doe it, was also able to arme and preserue him when hee did it. But they bring an other reason; to wit, that nakednesse had been vnbeseeming a Prophet? I answere, that this nakednesse was no more dishonest, then circumcision; which spectacle, (in the opinion of prophane men) was the most ridiculous thing that could be imagined; seeing the priuie members were then discouered. I doe not thinke, neither would I any should, that the Prophet stripped himselfe so naked, but that he couered those vncomely parts which would haue giuen but a foule and deformed spectacle to the beholders. It was sufficient that the people were taught what the Lord meant heereby, and that they might be moued with it, as a thing extraordinarie.

Whether the Prophet stripped himselfe naked, or not.

Vers. 3.

That also which moues mee to be of this iudgement, is that which is said here, *By the hand*, or, *in giuing commission*: for albeit this maner of speech be often found elsewhere, yet wee neuer meete with it in any place, but it imports some hidden vehemencie, by which the effect it selfe is noted out. The Prophet then sets himselfe before God, and in the middest of the Citizens, as the herauld of the calamitie that was to come; and that not by word onely, but euen by a visible signe also. It is to be obserued in like manner, that it is not noted in the text in vaine, that *Isaiah* did so.

When God inioynes vs any seruice, he therewithall furnisheth vs with abilitie to performe the same.

Thus haue you mine opinion; to wit, that the Prophet went naked as oft as hee preached: onely shewing those parts of his body, which might be seene without blushing. As touching the *sackcloth*, although priuate men were wont to confesse their sinnes in time of trouble in that maner; yet it is probable that *Isaiah* vsed this signe, both by reason of his office, as also to confirme his doctrine, and the better to rouse the people out of their securitie. If at any time it fall out that the Lord chastiseth either our selues, or our brethren, hee commands vs not to change our raiment, neither is it needfull: but we are altogether cruell and inhumane, if the afflictions of our brethren, & the subuersion of the Church moue vs not. And if it be our parts to mourne, wee ought also to stirre vp others to doe the like, and by our example, to prouoke them to feele the calamitie of the Church, that they may be touched with some compassion. *Heb.* 13.3. *Rom.* 12.15, 16.

Master Calvins iudgement touching the Prophets going naked.

Vers. 3. *And the Lord said; Like as my seruant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoote three yeeres, as a signe and wonder vpon Egypt and Ethiopia;*

4. *So shall the King of Assur take away the captiuitie of Egypt, and the captiuitie of Ethiopia; both young men and old men, naked and barefoote, with their buttockes vncouered, to the shame of Egypt.*

THree yeeres.] Why puts hee this space of time? Because it was granted to the Egyptians and Ethiopians of the Lord, as a time of truce; to the end they might come to repentance: also that hee might thereby proue the faithfulnesse of his people, that without delay they might pull themselues backe from seeking all vnlawfull succours: thirdly, to the end the Egyptians and Ethiopians might know, that their ruine was not far off; howsoeuer they seemed to bee in a well setled estate. Moreouer, the Lord meant heereby to discouer the rebellion of the wicked; for doubtlesse many shewed their impietie in scoffing at the Prophets nakednesse: as on the contrarie, that the faithfull being moued with such a spectacle, might learne not to stay their mindes vpon faire words, although the prosperitie of the Egyptians were a very sweete allurement vnto them. As touching this *nakednesse*, we are not barely to consider of it alone, but rather the marke and end which the Lord had ingrauen in it: euen as in the visible Sacraments, wee ought to behold the things which are inuisible. These two words, *captiuitie*, and *carrying away*, are collectiues, and are taken for the troope of the captiues, and those that were carried away out of the Country. Lastly, he saith, that no respect should be had of *age*: for the *old* should be led into captiuitie as well as the *young*. Quest. Ans. 1 2 3 4 5

Isaiah his nakednesse not to be considered barely in it selfe, but the end wherefore it was inioyned him.

Vers. 5. *And they shall feare and be ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.*

HE now shewes for whose sakes hee foretold that these things should befall the Egyptians and Ethiopians; to wit, to the end the Iewes might learne to hope in God in the midst of their afflictions, and might not call strangers to succour them; which the Lord had forbidden. He calles them their *expectation*, because the Iewes alwaies turned

their

their eyes towards them, as oft as they were preſſed with any incombrance, putting their truſt in them. For wee are wont to caſt our eyes vpon that, from whence wee looke for ſuccour: and thence it is that *to looke*, is often taken among the Hebrewes, to hope. But they were to looke vnto God onely: ſo that their wandring lightneſſe is heere reproued. The like ought to happen vnto vs, and that iuſtly; that being made naked, and forſaken of all, we might be plunged in our owne ſhame and reproch; becauſe we refuſe the refuge which God hath ſet before vs, when he calles vs to himſelfe, hauing ſuffered our ſelues to be ſeduced by Satans illuſions.

Pſal. 34. 6. *Iob* 6.

Verſ. 6. *Then ſhall the inhabitants of this Ile, ſay in that day; Behold, ſuch is our expectation, whither wee flee for helpe, to bee deliuered from the King of Aſſur: and how ſhall wee be deliuered?*

HE calles not Ieruſalem an *Ile* onely, but the whole Country of Iudea. They thinke that this name is giuen vnto it, becauſe the Mediterraneum ſea inuirons it. For mine own part, I thinke he brings this ſimilitude for another reaſon; for it hath but a little portion of the ſea. But as an Ile is ſeparate from the dry lands: ſo had the Lord ſeparated Iudah from other Countries. For it was ſeparated from all thoſe nations which were the deadly enemies of the Iewes; becauſe there was a wall betweene them, as Saint *Paul* ſaith, Eph. 2. 14. which at the laſt was broken downe at the comming of Chriſt. Moreouer, *Iſaiah* here confirmes his prophecie: as if he ſhould ſay; Albeit you cannot now bee moued with my nakednеſſe, yet you ſhall in time know by the effects, that theſe things were not ſet before you in vaine. And God is wont to conſtraine the rebellious and vntractable at the laſt, to confeſſe their fault, that being aſtonied, they might learne to diſpute in themſelues, how their hardneſſe of heart coulde poſſibly blinde them ſo farre.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *The burden of the deſert ſea. As the whirlewindes in the ſouth vſe to paſſe from the wilderneſſe, ſo ſhall it come from the horrible land.*

The occaſion of this prophecie againſt Caldea.

THE Prophet hauing taught the people to put no confidence in the Egyptians, but in Gods mercy onely; & hauing threatned them with the calamities which ſhould happen to thoſe nations that ſuccoured them, whereupon they reſted and relied: he now addes a conſolation for the incouragement of the faithfull. For hee telles them that the *Chaldeans*, vnder whoſe power they were to be held captiue, ſhall be rewarded according to their deſerts: whence the Iewes were to gather, that God had a care as touching the wrongs which they ſuſtained.

By the *deſert*, hee meanes the land of the Caldeans; not it was inhabited, but becauſe that the Iewes had a deſert on that ſide very neere vnto them; as if we ſhould take the Alps for Italie, in regard they are neerer vnto vs; as alſo that it is our way by which wee goe into that Country. But the reaſon is to be marked; for he deſcribes not the nature of the Country, but telles the Iewes that the ruine of their enemies is at hand, and that it is as certaine, as if they ſaw it before their eyes; euen as this deſert was. Beſides, we may note that the Prophets are wont ſometimes to ſpeake ambiguouſly and darkly of Babylon; to the end the faithfull onely might vnderſtand ſuch ſecret myſteries. As for example, *Ieremiah* changeth the name of the King.

Now he ſaith, that this ſhall come from the *South*, becauſe the ſouth wind is tempeſtuous, and is moued with ſtormes and whirlewinds. Where hee addeth that ſuch tempeſts come from the *deſert*; it is by way of amplification: for if any tempeſt ariſeth in a place inhabited and frequented, it will not be ſo fearefull as thoſe which ariſe from the deſerts. That he might expreſſe the horrour then of this diſcomfiture, hee compares it to *tempeſts* which begin to make a noiſe in the deſerts firſt, and then take a violent courſe, and keepe a great and hideous thundering. Yet notwithſtanding it ſeemes the Prophet meant to ſay, that euen as the enemies ouerflowed from this ſide, as a tempeſt to ſpoile the land of Iudeah: ſo preſently after, there ſhould bee a whirlewind raiſed for their ouerthrow. For it had not been enough to haue ſpoken of the ruine of Babylon; vnleſſe the Iewes had therewithal been informed that it proceeded from God.

Wee haue ſhewed the reaſon in the 18. Chapter, why he calles it an *horrible* or terrible nation; to wit, becauſe after ſo many examples of Gods wrath executed vpon it, it was a terrour to all that beheld it, in regard of the deformitie thereof. For the circumſtance of the place will not beare y^t ſhould be called *horrible*, in regard of Gods power, which was the protection of it. Although then that Babylon was taken and ſpoiled by the Medes and Perſians, *Iſaiah* notwithſtanding pronounceth that the deſtruction thereof ſhall come to the eares of Iudah; becauſe the Lord will by this meanes bee auenged of the outrages done vnto his people, whoſe gardian he promiſed to be.

Verſ. 2. *A grieuous viſion was ſhew-*

ed

ed vnto me. The transgresser against *a transgresser, and the destroyer* against *a destroyer. Goe vp Elam, besiege Media: I haue caused all the mourning thereof to cease.*

A *Grieuous vision.*] Seeing it is his purpose to asswage the sorrow of the people, it may seeme an improper speech to call that a *grieuous vision*, which was rather matter of ioy. But this is to be referred to the Chaldeans, who were puffed vp with their prosperitie, and feared no danger at all to be neere thé. For abundance ordinarilie begets pride and carelesnes: as if he should say, The Chaldeans make a buckler of their strength and riches in vaine: and the hard stone hath met with an hammer harder then it selfe wherewithall it is broken.

Abundance vsuallie begets pride and securitie.

The destroyer.] Because Babylon had obteined the Monarchie by pilling and wasting other nations, she seemed to be exempt from all danger. Albeit then that they were feared, and had exercised all maner of cruelties and hard dealing, yet must they at length be forced to suffer the same robbing and spoiling which they had executed vpon others. And to the end the Prophet might get credit to his speech, he admonisheth them it is iust, that *violence* should be answered with *violence*. *Elam* is a part of Persia, but is taken here for the whole Countrie: and for this cause also the Persians are called *Elamites*. But it is to be noted, that there was no appearance of any warre at all when *Isaiah* propheſied these things: yea, himselfe was dead an hundred yeares before there was any suspition of this discomfiture. Whence it sufficientlie appeareth, that he could no way attaine the knowledge of these things, but by the spirit of God: and this serues greatlie to confirme the certentie of this propheſie, as also to giue authoritie vnto it. Whereas he commands the Medes and Persians to performe this seruice, his meaning is, that such calamities should not fall out to the Babylonians by hap hazard, nor at random, but by a certaine decree and appointment of God; in whose name he proclaimes these things, and not in the name of a priuat man. Thus representing as it were the person of God, he might well command his souldiers to assemble thémselues together, and to make warre, as a Generall or Chieftaine. Now we haue alreadie shewed in the tenth Chapter how the Lord vseth the seruice of theeues, robbers, and such other wicked fellowes.

It is iust that violence should be payed home with violéce.

I haue caused all the mourning thereof to cease.] Some thinke this *mourning* whereof the Babylonians were the cause, *ceased* after they were subdued by the Medes and Persians. For their tyrannie had occasioned many to sigh and lament, which of necessitie befalles the wicked and tyrannicall rulers. But it may be others are neerer the true sense of the Prophets words, when they say, that the mourning ceased because the Babylonians found no mercie, in regard that themselues had shewed none to others. But yet I expound it more simplie, to wit, that the Lord stopped his eares at their *mournings*: as if he should say, their complaints and lamentations shall nothing auaile them. For as they had been vnkinde and cruell, it was iust they should receiue that measure which they had met vnto others.

Vers. 3. *Therefore are my loynes filled with sorrow: sorrowes haue taken me as the sorrowes of a woman that trauaileth: I was bowed downe when I heard it, and I was amased when I saw it.*

HEre the Prophet brings in the Babylonians, lamenting as if the thing had been presentlie acted: for it was not enough simplie to foretell the destruction of Babylon, vnlesse the people had beene therewithall so confirmed, as the matter might appeare to be finished alreadie as it were in the sight of the faithfull. This description then was necessarie: not that we should thinke the Prophet here discouers the affection of his heart, as if he had pitied the Babylonians: nay rather he takes the person of some Babylonian vpon himselfe, as we haue said in another place. It ought to content vs that the secret iudgements of God are thus presented before vs as in a looking-glasse, that the dulnes of our faith might be quickned and comforted. The Prophets do therefore more fullie and elegantlie describe and set forth these things, then can be any way comprehended by mans reason. Whilest *Isaiah* then thus expresseth his griefe, he therewithall teacheth the faithfull how seuere Gods vengeance should be vpon the Chaldeans; and what horrible punishment Babylon shall feele: euen as it fares with vs when some sudden feare surpriseth vs, or whé one brings vs some heauie tidings.

The reason why the Prophets are wont to speake of iudgements to come, as if they had bin alreadie present.

And he yet further expresseth his griefe, when he compares it to *the sorrowes of a woman trauailing with childe*: as one who being grieuouslie pained turnes this way and that way looking for succor with wringing the hands. The Prophets are faine to vse such kinds of speech because of our dulnes: for we perceiue not the iudgements of God, vnlesse they be pointed out vnto vs with the finger as it were, so as we may euen touch and feele them. But we are thus admonished of them before they come, to the end we may stand vpon our watch.

Vers. 4. *Mine heart failed: fearefulnes troubled me: the night of my pleasures hath he turned into feare vnto me.*

OThers translate not amisse, My heart hath wandred hither and thither, because the mind is almost besides it selfe when any great feare falles vpon it. *Isaiah* declares then the sudden destruction of Babylon, at which a man trembles much more then when it is foreseene, and meanes vsed to preuent it. *Daniel* recites how that which *Isaiah* heere foretold came to passe, and saw it with his eyes.

eyes. *Balthezar* in the night had prepared a ſtately banquet, and thought of nothing leſſe then to be put to death when the Perſians came in ſuddenly vpon him. Theſe delights were then ſuddenly changed into *feares* and *terrours*.

Verſ. 5. *Prepare thou the table: watch in the watch-tower: eate, drinke: ariſe yee Princes, anoint the ſhield.*

THis may be read otherwiſe: as if he ſhould ſay; When they made readie the table, and whileſt the watch-men were fitted for their places, whileſt they eate and dranke, behold they were ſuddenly ſurpriſed with feare and aſtoniſhment: one beganne to cry alarum, alarum, ye Princes ariſe, anoint the ſhield. Thus the Prophet ſets the matter forth in liuely tables, euen as if it were a thing then acted. Truely *Xenophon* deſcribes not the taking of the Citie more like an Hiſtoriographer then our Prophet heere doth. Whence we may diſcerne, that *Iſaiah* was not taught this prophecie by naturall coniectures, that hee could thus in liuely colours ſet forth that which was to him vnknowne, but that the Spirit of God was his ſchoolemaſter.

Xenophon.

A manifeſt proofe, that the Prophets writ as they were moued by the holy Ghoſt. 2. Pet. 1. 21.

Wee are further to note the time wherein theſe things were foretold: for the eſtate of the Kingdome of Babylon was then moſt flouriſhing, and ſeemed to bee inuincible; ſo as it feared no dangers. *Iſaiah* derides that vaine confidence of theirs, and ſhewes, that this greatneſſe can eaſily bee brought low. It ought not to ſeeme abſurd, that he brings in the *watch-man* ſpeaking: for albeit the ſiege laid againſt the Citie, yet nothing daunted this proud and witleſſe Tyrant from plunging himſelfe ouer head and eares in voluptuouſneſſe and exceſſe; and yet it is not to be doubted, but *watches* were ſet to keepe all ſure.

Princes were wont to haue a guard round about them, to the end they might the more ſecurely ouerflow in all wantonneſſe without feare: but the Prophet of ſet purpoſe mixeth the *watches* with the *delicates of the Table*; the more euidently to ſhew, that this wretched Tyrant was ſmitten with a ſpirit of ſenſeleſneſſe, before he beganne to drinke himſelfe drunke. The King of Babylon then banqueted and made great cheere with his Nobles, at the verie time when hee was ouerwhelmed with ſudden deſtruction, without taking any heede: not that he was out of danger before, but becauſe he was careleſſe, and ſcorned the enemie. A man would haue thought this impoſſible the day before it happened: for the conſpiracie of *Gabrias* and his faction, who betrayed the King, was not yet knowne. But who would haue imagined that ſo ſtrange a thing ſhould come to paſſe, had hee liued in the time when *Iſaiah* vttered this?

Verſ. 6. *For thus hath the Lord ſaid vnto me; Goe, ſet a watchman to tell what he ſeeth.*

THe Prophet is commanded to appoint a *watchman* to ſtand in the Tower, and to tell what he ſees afarre off; becauſe it could not yet be ſeene with the eyes, neither comprehended by coniecture. To the end then that euery one might vnderſtand that hee ſpake not at randome, he teſtifies, that he publiſheth the things which he cleerely and plainely knew by a propheticall ſpirit: for he is mounted aboue the reach of mans iudgement, to whom ſuch things are vnknowne and incredible. And this is diligently to be obſerued: for wee muſt not thinke that the Prophets foreſaw things by their owne induſtry, or learned that which they publiſhed, of men; but let vs know, that they were carried vp in the ſpirit farre aboue the reach of mans reaſon, to behold things afarre off, as if they had been in a watch-tower; for which reſpect, they were rightly termed Seers. For albeit we *ſee*, yet are we hoodwincked, and haue much adoe to perceiue that which lieth before our feete: yea, he that hath the cleereſt ſight, is oftentimes very blinde; becauſe he comprehends nothing but what hee can gather by reaſon. But the Prophets ſpake by the Spirit of God, as from heauen.

1. Sam. 9. 9.

The Prophets ſpake as they were moued by the holy Ghoſt.

The ſumme of all is, that ſuch ouerſhoote themſelues, as would meaſure this prophecie by their owne iudgement; becauſe it came from God, and therefore ſurpaſſeth our capacitie very much. There is alſo much more authoritie giuen to this prophecie, in that he ſets the watch in the *name of God*. If any obiect then, Thou telleſt things incredible, as if they were already come to paſſe. He anſwereth, I publiſh nothing at aduenture; for he which is appointed a watch-man by the Prince, ſeeth that a farre off, which is vnknowne vnto others. Thus *Iſaiah* perceiued thoſe things by the reuelation of the holy Ghoſt, which others knew not of.

Obiect. Anſ.

Verſ. 7. *And hee ſaw a chariot with two horſemen: a chariot of an aſſe, and a chariot of a camell: and he hearkened, and tooke diligent heede.*

8. *And he cried, A lion. My Lord, I ſtand continually vpon the watch-tower in the day time, and I am ſet in my watch euery night.*

THat which hee now addeth, containes a liuely deſcription of this diſcomfiture: for the Prophet publiſheth that which he vnderſtood from the watch-man, whom he had ſet in the tower by the commandement of God. He here brings in this watch-man looking a farre off, and reporting that which he ſaw: and as if hee had not ſeene cleerely enough at the firſt bluſh, he ſaith it was a *chariot*: but afterwards viewing it more circumſpectly, he ſaith there were *two horſmen* in this chariot. For our iudgement is darke and confuſed at the firſt, in regard of the nouelrie of

Verſe 6.

the matter, or by reason of the distance of place; and afterward as the thing approcheth neerer, so we iudge better of it. Now it is no wõder that matters belonging to men should be referred either to the Prophets, or to the visions of God: for we know that God takes vnto him the affections of men, that he may the better applie himselfe to our weakenes.

Lastly, he *saw a Lion*: by which some thinke *Darius* should be signified, who conquered and sacked Babylon, as it appeares by the fifth Chapter of *Daniel*: Whereas the watchman saith he is *continuallie* vpon his *watchtower* day and night, it serues to confirme the prophesie; as if he should say, nothing is more certaine then this vision: for those whom God sends to watch, are neither blind, nor sleepie. In the meane while he exhorts and stirres vp the faithfull by this example to be as *attentiue* as himselfe; that by the light of the word they may discouer Gods power afarre off.

Vers. 9. *And behold, this mans Chariot commeth with two horsemen. And he answered and said, Babel is fallen, and all the Images of her gods hath he broken vnto the ground.*

BY this we plainly see that he brings not in the watchman of king *Balthazar*: for this kind of speech fits not such a person; the Prophet then by Gods commandement publisheth what should fall out. Now this may be referred vnto *Darius*, and also vnto God, as well as to the watchman; howbeit, there is no great difference: for *Darius* being Gods seruant in this behalfe, it is no absurditie to bring him in heere as his Herald. There would be better shew of reason to applie it vnto God, in regard that *Darius* thought nothing lesse then that he was Gods seruant, when he caused the Idols of the Babylonians to be broken downe. But the matter coheres better to referre it to the watchman, euen as if the Angell should adde an interpretation to this prophesie.

There is a close opposition in this place betweene the liuing God, and dead Idols. This phrase of speech also is to be noted, in that he calles them *Images of God*. For the Babylonians knew well enough (which all Idolaters doe in a manner confesse) that their Images were no Gods: notwithstanding, they attributed vnto them a diuine power. But when men are come to that passe, they turne the truth of God into a lye; yea, they vtterlie renounce him. But occasion will be offred vs hereafter, where we shall speake of this matter more at large. We heere see that the ruin of Babylon was as a iust punishment for her Idolatrie: for the Prophet shewes the cause thereof, when he saith, that God could not indure she should glorie in her Idols.

Vers. 10. *O my threshing, and the *corne of my floore: that which I haue heard of the Lord of hostes the God of Israel, haue I shewed vnto you.*

* Or, the sonnes.

BEcause the riches of this so mightie a Monarchie dazled the eyes of all, by the brightnes thereof, it might be esteemed but a fabulous matter whatsoeuer the Prophet foretold touching the destruction of it. That is the reason why he drawes the minds of the faithfull vnto *God*, that so they might know it is he alone who tooke in hand to roote Babylon out, and that such greatnes should not come to ruine at mens appetites, but by his power only. *The threshing and sonnes of the floore*, are taken for one and the same thing: for it is an vsuall phrase of speech among the Hebrues, who are wont to repeate one thing often.

This place is diligentlie to be noted, to correct a vice naturallie grafted in vs; namely, when we measure Gods power by our own ell. For his counsell not only farre surpasseth our weake reach, but we are also ill iudges, and deprauers of his works: neither can we be brought to see the greatnes of them further forth then our owne skill and wit stretcheth. But Gods infinit power ought alwaies to present it selfe before vs: and then especiallie when our own wit and reason is brought to the last cast: as when the Church is so oppressed with tyrants, that it seemes past hope of recouerie, yet euen then let vs know that the Lord will bring them to nothing; and by treading their pride vnder foot, and by breaking their power, will shew that it is his *threshing*. For ỹ Prophet foretold this of no mean or common person, but of the mightiest and most florishing Monarchie of the world. By how much the more then such are exalted, so much the sooner shall their destruction come vpon them, and the Lord shall send his threshers amongst them.

We must expect the restauration of the church when it seemes she is past recouerie.

We are also to know that the example of this incredible ruin which the Lord here sets before vs, appertaines to such as are partakers with them in their sinnes. When he saith *he heard this of the Lord of hostes*, it is as it were a seale to ratifie the prophesie: for he protesteth that he broached none of his owne coniectures, but receiued them of the Lord himselfe. Wherein we may note that Gods seruants ought to be furnished with this assurance, that they speake in the name of God, as the Apostle *Peter* witnesseth; Let him that speakes (saith he) speake as the words of God, 1. Pet. 4. 11. For seducers will brag much of the name of God, but his faithfull seruants are assured in their consciences that they haue published nothing but that which God hath commanded them. We may also obserue that this confirmation was exceeding necessarie, because the whole world (as it were) quaked vnder the puissance of so mightie a Monarchie.

But it is not without good cause that he adornes God with these two epithites, calling him the *Lord of hostes, and God of Israel*. As touching the first, it is true that it alwaies agrees vnto God: but doubtlesse the Prophet had

had a speciall regard therein now vnto the present matter; opposing the power of God against all the forces of the Babylonians. For the Lord hath not one *host* alone, but infinit hostes for the bringing downe of his enemies. He is called the *God of Israel*, because he shewed himself to be the protector and defence of his people, in the destruction of the Babylonians: for the Iewes were then set at libertie, when this Monarchy was abolished. In a word, all things are done here in fauour of the Church; to which the Prophet hath a speciall eye. For he teacheth not the Babylonians, who would haue contemned these propheeies; but the faithfull, that they might be assured that God had a speciall care of them, howsoeuer the Babylonians molested them, and had scattered them here and there.

Vers. 11. *The burden of Dumah. Hee calleth vnto me out of Seir; Watchman, what was in the night? watchman, what was in the night?*

The cause of this prophesie against Dumah not certainelie knowne.

IT appeares by the 25. Chapter, vers. 14. of Genesis, that this people came of *Ismaels* sonne, to whom this name is giuen: for which cause his successors were called Dumeans. The certaine cause of the destruction which is here denounced against them, is not knowne: and this prophecie is so much the more obscure, by reason of the briefnesse of it. Yet we must alwaies remember what I touched before; to wit, that the Iewes were to be fortified against the horrible offences which were at hand. For when so many seuerall changes fall out, especially if the world be so moued, that all things are confused; we then begin to be troubled, doubting in our selues whether things fall out by chance, or whether they be gouerned by the prouidence of God. For this cause the Lord tells vs, that he is the authour of this change, and renueth the face of the world; to teach vs that nothing is permanent here below, that so wee might with our whole heart aspire to that Kingdome of Christ which onely is perpetuall.

The reason of it in respect of the Iewes.

In regard then that these changes were neere, it was needfull the Iewes should be aduertised of it aforehand, that when they saw them come to passe, these things might be called to minde, that therein they might behold the prouidence of God, and so gather increase of faith. Neither is it to be doubted but the Iewes were carried with diuers distractions of minde to and fro, in seeing the world so shaken on all sides, and therefore sought by all meanes they might, to auoid these waues and tempests. For it is our desire alwaies to be in such a place of safetie, as we may be free from all danger of gunshot, as they say. Some of them peraduenture then might seeke some other place of aboad, the better to prouide for their owne affaires: but when the mischiefe should presse them on euerie side, this might make them tarry at home; and admonished them that they could finde no better or safer habitation then in the companie of the faithfull.

By this example also many might be aduertised, who for feare of dangers, separated themselues from the Church; thinking they could finde none greater out of it. The Iewes then might be solicited with such thoughts: for we haue seene in the eight Chapter, that they had restlesse mindes. Seeing then they were thus in doubt, that they ranne to strangers for succour; they might easilie be out of heart. And therefore as I take it, this is the principall reason why *Isaiah* thus denounceth the ruine of the *Dumeans*; namely, that the Iewes might willingly put themselues vnder Gods protection, and aboue all things might recommend the safetie of the Church vnto him.

We ought to keepe our selues in the lap of Gods Church, though we see her suffer sundy trials. 1. *Pet.* 4. 17. 18.

Let vs hence learne to keepe our selues in the lap of Gods Church, be it that wee see her afflicted with diuers and sundry calamities; and let vs rather gladly susteine those louing chastisements which are proper to her children, then to wander abrode to drinke the lees and dregs which shall strangle and choke the wicked. For if the children be thus chastised, what shall become of the strangers and reprobates? It may be also that the Dumeans molested Gods people, whilest their neighbours assailed them on all sides.

Of Seir.] It was a mountaine of Idumea, as it appeareth, Gen. 14. 6. And vnder the name of this mountaine, hee comprehends the whole Kingdome. Now in this place he represents, as in a glasse, those things which had neede of words of vehemencie. And seeing the Idumeans *asked the watchman what was in the night?* it is very likely they were not farre off, and were in hazard of the common danger: for he brings them not in inquiring, as curious to know what newes; but they aske what the watch saw in the night: as when one inquires, then comes another; and the third will come and doe the like. Hereunto tends the *repetition*, that it was not one alone that inquired, but many; as men are wont to doe when things are doubtfull and perplexed, when euery one affrighted in himselfe, giues credit to nothing that is told them.

Vers. 12. *The watchmen said; The morning commeth, and also the night: if yee will aske, enquire: returne and come.*

HIs meaning is, that this feare shall not last a day onely, or some little space: as if the watchman should answer, I will tell you that to morrow which I told you to day; and if you feare now, you shall also feare to morrow. Now it is a most miserable condition, when men are so troubled, as they hang in suspence whether they shall liue or die; it being that extreme curse, wherewith the Lord threatens the wicked by *Moses*, Who will warrant me life till the euening? And when the euening is come, who will let mee see the morning? Deut. 28. 67. True it is, that the faithfull are inuironed about with many dangers:

gers: but they know that themselues and their liues are in the hand of God: and therefore they see life in the midst of the horrours of death; or at the least they asswage their feares and perturbations by hope and patience. But the wicked alwaies tremble, and are not onely vexed with feare, but they also consume away in their troubles.

The faithfull see life in the middest of the horrors of death.

That which is by and by added, *returne, and come*: may be expounded two waies; either that they shall lose their labour in running vp and downe without ceasing: or else thus, if any of you be better aduised, get you to Dumah, and there they shal meete with more feares then in the countrie, for they shall finde rest in no place whatsoeuer. Now in regard that God hath alwaies a care of his Church, wee shall finde no place of refuge more safe then there, yea, although we should compasse sea and land.

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Vers. 13. *The burden against Arabia. In the forest of Arabia shall ye tarrie all night, euen in the waies of Dedanim.*

The reason of this burden against Arabia.

NOw he comes to the Arabians, foretelling that they also must keepe their turn in meeting with Gods iudgement, and all to the end hee might exempt no one region which were knowne to the Iewes. Now hee shewes that they shall be surprized with so great feare, that they shall forsake their owne houses to flie into the *forests*. Then he names the place whither they shall flee, to wit, *Dedanim*.

Vers. 14. *O Inhabitants of the land of Tema: bring forth water to meete the thirstie, and preuent him that fleeth with his bread.*

HE now amplifies that trembling, wherewith God had determined so seuerely to smite the Arabians, that they should thinke of nothing else but of their flight, so as they should not haue so much leisure as to prouide them of necessarie things for their voyage. *Isaiah* then tels them that they shall come into the region of *Dedanim* emptie and destitute of all things, not hauing any food at all to susteine their life. And therefore he exhorts the Inhabitants there to meete them with *bread and water*: for otherwise they should perish by reason of extreame want. I know that others expound this place otherwise; for they thinke the Prophet deuides the Arabians, who had bin curnish and cruell to the Iewes: as if he should say, you would now be glad to beare water to those that are athirst: but this exposition is too constreined. And yet I denie not but their crueltie was sufficientlie recompenced, when they were faine to run on this maner to and fro. Notwithstanding mine exposition is more simple, to wit, that the Arabians should be in so miserable a case during their flight, that they should not haue so much as a little *water*: and therefore must needs perish for thirst, vnlesse some came in time to succor them: and he also tels them that they should haue no lesse neede of *bread* then of water. He calles their neigbours to relieue them, not as exhorting them to doe their dutie, but that he might expresse the matter the more clearely. He commands then to bring forth their bread, not as though they deserued it, but because they stood in neede by reason of extreame want. Yet in as much as the law of nature requires this dutie, the Prophet closely intimates, that the vnworthie & hungrie are defrauded of their bread, whē men refuse to supplie their needs.

Vers. 15. *For they flee from the drawne sword,* euen *from the drawne sword; and from the bent bow, and from the grieuousnes of warre.*

HIs meaning is, that the calamitie shall be so fearefull, that the Arabians shall not flee without cause: the reason is, because the enemies shall pursue them so hotlie with *swords* and *weapons*, that they shall not be able to saue themselues by flight. It is manifest enough why he mentioneth this discomfiture: for the Iewes were to be admonished in time of that which was afterward to fall out, that they might know the world was gouerned by the prouidēce of God and not by chance: and that by other mens harmes they might learne to see God the Iudge of all nations which way soeuer they turned their eies. But it is not knowne, neither doe histories make mention whether the Arabians were the enemies of the Iewes or no. Howsoeuer it be, it is certaine that these things are set downe for the consolation of the faithfull, to the end they might behold Gods iustice executed vpon all nations, and might also acknowledge that his tribunall seate was erected and set vp in Ierusalem, from out of which he should passe iudgement against the whole world.

Vers. 16. *For thus hath the Lord said vnto me, yet a yeere according to the yeres of an hireling, and all the glorie of Kedar shall faile.*

HE also addes that the calamitie whereof he hath propheſied was neere to the Arabians, which serued greatlie for the consolation of the faithfull. For our passions do naturallie boile so within vs, that wee can not indure to be deferred any long time: the Lord therefore hath respect to our weaknes when he saith, that he will put his hand to the worke. For this cause the Prophet shewes that he foretels things which should not be long before they came to passe, that so the Iewes might with the more courage beare their afflictions, out of which they were to assure thēselues to be deliuered in short space. We haue spoken heretofore of the similitude of the *yeres of an hireling*, which he now addeth the better to expresse the matter: for it is all one in effect as if he had said, Be of good cheere, the time shall not be prolonged. The *Chap.* 16.14

prophane

prophane authors haue vſed this ſimilitude, when they would expreſſe a ſet and deſired time: as a place of *Horace* teſtifieth, where he ſaith; that the day ſeemes long to thoſe which labour, and are to giue vp an account of their taske.

Horace.

Verſ. 17. *And the reſidue of the ſtrong Archers of the ſonnes of Kedar ſhall be few: for the Lord God of Iſrael hath ſpoken it.*

And the reſidue.] He affirmeth that this calamitie ſhal not be as yet the end of their puniſhments; becauſe that which yet *remaines* to Arabia, ſhall vaniſh by little and little: as if he ſhould ſay; The Lord will not onely impoueriſh the Arabians by warre, but will purſue them to the vtmoſt, till all hope of ſuccour be cleane taken away from them, and that they be cut off. For ſuch are the iudgements of God which hee executes vpon the wicked. Whereas on the contrarie, he mitigates and tempers the ſtripes wherewith he ſmites his children, leſt they ſhould be quite out of heart. By *the ſtrong*, he meanes the warlike men that are fit to beare armes, ſaying; that euen they in the end ſhall drop away, although they eſcaped frō the firſt deſtruction. True it is that hee hath threatned the Iews heretofore with the like plagues; but he alwaies added ſome promiſe, either to aſſwage the burthen of them, or at the leaſt that they ſhould not bee too much out of heart. For it may fall out ſometimes, that the children of God ſhall be much more ſharply afflicted then the vnbeleeuers; but the hope of fauour which is ſet before them, puts a difference betweene them and the reſt of the world. Now when we heare that God executes ſuch horrible iudgemenes vpon the wicked; is it that we ſhould be troubled when we fall into ſore temptations? Nay, rather we ought to gather this conſolation, that he will chaſtiſe vs gently, and not condemne vs to death.

Though the faithfull are ſometimes more ſharply afflicted then the wicked, yet the hope of fauour puts new life into them.

The God of Iſrael.] The Prophet teacheth, as we haue heretofore ſeene, that we are not onely to know that theſe things fell out by the diuine prouidence; but that the God whom Iſrael worſhipped, had ſo ordained them to come to paſſe. For all men are ſometimes conſtrained to reuerence God, albeit they beare themſelues in hand, that things are guided by fortune; becauſe theſe thoghts enter now and then into the mindes of the moſt rebellious, as well in proſperitie as in aduerſitie, that certainlie there is a God in heauen: but yet they forge a kind of diuine power, according to their own fantaſie, whether in heauen or in earth. Becauſe then profane men imagine a God in their owne braine, therein ſhewing their vanitie and beaſtlineſſe; the Prophet brings backe the Iewes to that God whom they worſhipped, to the end they might acknowledge, that it was in him in whom their felicitie conſiſted, becauſe he receiued them into his ſafegard and protection. For it is not enough that we honour ſome God at randome, who gouernes the world; but wee ought to know the true God, who hath reuealed and manifeſted himſelfe vnto vs in the perſon of his Sonne Chriſt. Yea, we ought to note this diligently againſt all profane thoughts of many, who forge I know not what confuſed diuinity, becauſe they dare not plainely deny that there is a God.

THE XXII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *The burden of the valley of viſion. What aileth thee now that thou art wholly gone vp into the houſe toppes?*

Or, what haſt thou to doe here?

ISaiah prophecieth againe againſt Iudea: which he names the *valley of viſion*. And he rather attributes this title to whole Iudea, then to Ieruſalem, of which he will ſpeake afterwards: but now in the Preface hee comprehends the whole land. He calles it a *valley* for iuſt cauſe; for it was inuironed on euery ſide with mountaines. The ſimilitude receiued by many; namely, that Ieruſalem is called a *valley*, becauſe ſhe ſhould be debaſed from her dignitie, is ſomewhat too much conſtrained. It is well enough knowne why the word *viſion* is added; to wit, becauſe the Lord had inlightened all Iudea with his word: the Prophets were euer reſident there, who for that cauſe were alſo called Seers: 1. Sam. 9. 9. And herein there is a cloſe oppoſition; for there is leſſe light in the *vallies*, then in places that are plaine and open; becauſe the height of the mountaines hinder the light. Yet notwithſtanding all this, he ſhewes that this valley is more cleere, then thoſe regions that lie open on all ſides to the light of the Sunne; which doubtleſſe came to paſſe by the ſingular goodneſſe of God. For his meaning is not, that it was inlightened by the beames of the Sunne, but with the word of God. Beſides, no doubt but the Prophet meant to caſt downe that vaine and fooliſh confidence wherewith the Iewes were puffed vp, in regard that God had beautified them with excellent priuiledges aboue others: for they deceiued themſelues whileſt they thought, that becauſe they had the word and the propheties, they were therefore fenced againſt al dangers; notwithſtanding their diſobedience and rebellion againſt God. His meaning then is, that theſe *viſions* ſhould not hinder the Lord to auenge himſelfe vpon their vnthankfulneſſe: nay, by

The reaſon why Iudea is called a valley.

The reaſon why it is called the valley of viſion.

this note of thankfulnes, he aggrauates their crime; that in so great light of the heauenly trueth, they ceassed not to stumble, as if they had been vtterly destitute of it.

What hast thou to doe here?] He now bends his speech to Ierusalem; not that this destruction concerned that Citie alone, but because the whole land thought themselues secured vnder the shadow of the Sanctuarie, which was in it: as also that the Iewes might thinke what was like to befall them, if this Citie which was so well furnished, should be thus dealt withall. He askes by way of admiration, whence it comes that euerie one left his house, *fleeing to the tops thereof* to saue their liues. Now the roofes of the Iewes houses were made otherwise then ours are: and thence it is that Iesus Christ saith; What I tell you in the eare, that preach you on the house tops: Mat. 10. 27. When the inhabitants of Ierusalem then fled to the tops of their houses, and left the houses themselues to the wils of their enemies, it was a signe that they were exceedingly frighted. They might all get vp thither to chase away their enemies with darts and arrowes: but his meaning rather is, that the enemie constrained them to runne vp thither, because they were not onely amased at their comming, but also fled for feare: yet so, as their flight should not saue them.

Vers. 2. *Thou that art full of noise, a Citie full of brute, a ioyous Citie: thy slaine men* Or, are not slaine. *shall not bee slaine with sword, nor die in battell.*

HIs meaning is, that it was peopled and full of inhabitants; because there is great noise where many people are gathered together, neither can the feare there be so great. *Isaiah* addes this by way of amplification; to wit, that whereas being a sufficient number, they should haue been vpon the walles and ramparts to defend the Citie, they like cowards gaue place to the enemies, and fled vp to the tops of their houses. He therefore presseth the Iewes the more neerely with these words, that they might duly weigh the iudgement of God: for when mens hearts are cast downe with so great feare, it is certaine that such an astonishment is sent of God. It is as much thē as if the Prophet had said, Whence comes it that thou hast no more courage to resist? Surely because the Lord himselfe chaseth and pursueth thee.

Now this doctrine is taken out of the 28. of Deuteronomie: for we haue often said, that the Prophets doe many times borrow sentences out of *Moses*, to serue their turne withall: onely the difference is, that they apply that particularly, which *Moses* spake in generall. The Prophet reprocheth the Iewes then with this their calamitie very iustly: for it was fit they should be touched to the quicke, to the end they might learne that all the trouble and euils which they indured, happened to them in regard of their trespasses and sins. For the Lord had promised them continuall assistance: but being now left of him, they were to confesse themselues vnworthy of his aid, and that they had caused the Lord to recoile backe from them by their rebellions.

The Lord neuer deceiues, neither promiseth he any thing in vaine: but these poore wretches are depriued of his loue and fauor by their owne default: which is yet better expressed by that interrogation which followeth; *What hast thou to doe here?* For it is as much as if by the present act, he shewed that Ierusalem is left destitute of her protectour and defender: because this manner of speech signifies as much as some strange and vnwonted thing. And to the end he might the better set forth the vengeance of God, hee tells them that those which were *slaine*, died not like valiant men in battell; but that they died onely for want of heart and courage: for this womanish and timorous heart, was a sure token to them that they were all left of God; whose assistance if they had had, they should boldly and manfully haue made resistance. So then hee not onely affirmes that this discomfiture was accompanied with shame and dishonour; but he also attributes the want of heart and courage to resist to the wrath and anger of God: neither is it to be doubted, but by the circumstance of this their flight, hee beates downe their vaine arrogancie and pride.

Vers. 3. *All thy Princes shall flee together from the bowe: they shall bee bound: all that shall be found in thee, shall be bound together, which haue fled from farre.*

THis verse is expounded diuers waies. The matter in it selfe is cleere enough: but there is some difficultie in the words. Now because the letter Mem signifies Before; some expound the word *Meraiuk*, They fled before others: who notwithstanding were neerer vnto danger, in regard they dwelt vpon the borders of the Country. Others thus, Although they were very far off from Ierusalem, yet they ranne away as men possessed with feare, who flee without stay, thinking that they haue the enemie alwaies at their heeles. But I take this sense to bee better agreeing; *They ranne farre off*: that is to say, those who fled to Ierusalem, as to a Sanctuarie, shall bee taken and bound by the enemies.

Now Ierusalem was as the common Citie of refuge for the whole Country of Iudea: and therefore after any warre was begun, the inhabitants on all sides drew themselues thither. But they were surprised, notwithstanding they thought it such a place of safetie. Some referre this to the siege of *Senacherib*: but I cannot be led by any meanes to expound it so, because hee speakes of the destruction of Ierusalem. But we know when it was besieged by *Senacherib*, the Lord deliuered it forthwith; neither was there any taken *or bound*, neither was any *slaine* there. These things fell out then a long time after the

2. *King.* 18. 13. 2. *King.* 39. 15. 2. *King.* 14. 12.

Prophets

Prophets death: and the holie hiſtorie witneſſeth the ſame: as alſo that the Princes determined to flee when this calamitie hapned: but neither their flight to Ieruſalem, nor their running away from it did them any good at all, becauſe they fell into the hands of the enemies.

In that he ſpeakes expreſſie of the *Princes*, it aggrauates the indignitie of the fact, for they ſhould haue been the formoſt in venting of their liues for the ſafetie of the people, no leſſe then if they had bin their ſhields and bucklers to fortifie and defend them.

1 But Ieruſalem being now in her floriſhing eſtate and in great proſperitie, theſe things might ſeeme incredible, becauſe it was a

2 ſtrong and well fenced Citie: beſides, it boaſted chieflie in this, that it was vnder Gods protection. For the people thought that God was faſt lincked (as you would ſay) to the

Ier.7.4. Temple which was amongſt them, of which they bragged in ſuch wiſe, that they perſwaded themſelues they could not be hurt by any power or forces whatſoeuer, though the whole world ſhould conſpire their deſtruction. This propheſie therefore might ſeeme very ſtrange, to wit, that they ſhould become heartleſſe, and betake them to their heeles, and yet ſhould not eſcape this way neither.

Verſ.4. *Therefore ſaid I, Turne away from me: I will weepe bitterlie: labour not to comfort me for the deſtruction of the daughter of my people.*

TO the end the Prophet might affect the hearts of the Iewes the more with this calamitie he takes vpon him the perſon of a *mourner*: and not that only, but with bitter lamentation he bewailes the deſolation of Gods Church. For this place muſt not be expounded like the former, wherein he expreſſed and ſet forth the ſorrow and heauines of forreine nations: But in regard he ſpeakes heere of the afflictions of the Church whereof himſelfe was a member, he hath good cauſe to mourne in good earneſt, and to call vpon others to lament with him. That which happens to the Church then in generall, ought no leſſe to moue vs, then if each of vs felt the miſerie vpon himſelfe in particular: otherwiſe where ſhall this ſentence be verified, The zeale of thy houſe hath eaten me vp? Pſal.69.10. Now the Prophet mournes not

1 apart nor in ſecret without witneſſes, firſt, becauſe he meant (as I ſaid euen now) to prouoke others by his example not onely to mourne and weepe, but rather to repent, that ſo they might preuent the iudgement of God which hung ouer their heads, and might prouoke him no more for the time to come.

2 Secondlie, to the end that himſelfe who was as the herauld and meſſenger of God, might publiſh and declare the wrath that was like to fall vpon them; ſhewing by this his owne deed, that it was no vaine thing which he ſpake.

We may eaſilie gather from that which is added, that the Prophet ſpake that with his mouth which he felt in his heart when he ſaith, *I will weepe bitterlie for the daughter of my people*: for himſelfe being one of *Abrahams* of-ſpring, he could not but be touched to the quick with this common calamitie, and therefore teſtifies, ỹ he hath iuſt cauſe to mourne. He calles the *daughter* the aſſemblie of the people, according to ỹ vſuall phraſe. Whence wee may note, that when the Church is afflicted we ought to be moued with compaſſion by the example of the Prophet, vnleſſe wee be more then yron hearted. For wee are vtterlie vnworthie to be numbred among the children of God, or to be accounted among the communion of Saincts, vnleſſe our ſelues, with all we enioy, be in ſuch wiſe conſecrated vnto her, that nothing can ſeparate vs by any meanes from her. Therefore in ſeeing the Church ſo many waies, and with ſuch diuers calamities afflicted at this day, and an infinit number of ſoules to periſh, whom Ieſus Chriſt hath redeemed with his pretious blood, muſt we not needs be cruell and barbarous if we be moued with no ſorrow at all? Eſpeciallie the Miniſters of the word ought to be thorowlie touched with the feeling of this ſorrow: for as they are held for the watchmen, and therefore can ſee further off, ſo alſo ought they to ſigh when they perceiue the ſignes of a ſcattering of the ſheepe to be at hand.

We ought to be thorowlie touched with ſorrow for the Churches affliction, vnleſſe we will proue our ſelues yron-hearted.

Now the Prophets publike teares ſerued (as we haue ſaid) to breake the hearts of the people: for he had to doe with men of ſuch obſtinacie, as could not eaſilie be brought to lament. There is a place almoſt like vnto this in *Ieremiah*, where he bewailes the deſtruction and ſcattering of the people, ſaying, that his ſoule fainted with ſorrow, Iere.4.31. And in another place, Who will graunt that my head might be filled with waters, and that mine eies might be a fountaine of teares to weepe day and night for the ſlaine of the *daughter* of my people? Iere.9.1. When the Prophets perceiued they labored in vaine to breake the hard hearts of this people, ſurely they could not chuſe but be ouerwhelmed with griefe and ſorrow, and therefore they indeuored by all meanes to mollifie ỹ hearts of the obſtinate, that if it were poſſible they might be bowed and brought back againe into the right way.

Ier.9.1.

Verſ.5. *For it is a day of trouble, and of ruin and of perplexitie by the Lord of hoſts in the valley of viſion, breaking downe the Citie: and a crying vnto the mountaines.*

HE againe ſignifies that *the Lord* is the Author of this fearefull iudgement: and to the end the Iewes might not gaze heere and there, wondring that the enemies ſhould get the vpper hand, he tels them plainely that they fight againſt *God himſelfe*. Now albeit we often meete with this doctrine in the holie Scriptures, yet notwithſtanding it is no way ſuperfluous, neither can it be ſo often repeated but we forget it when we are to practiſe it:

Though it be often told vs that God is the author of our afflictiõs, yet we forget it when we ſhould put this knowledge in practiſe.

it: thence it is that we humble not our selues before our Iudge, but cast our eyes rather vpon men and externall meanes, then vpon *God*, who would easilie remedie our euils.

By *day*, he meanes a time prefixed, according to the vsuall prase of the Scripture; because it seemes that God yeelds ouer his right for a time, when he winkes at mens wickednesse: but he forthwith recouers it againe in that season that himselfe hath appointed. Now it is not for nought that he names the *valley of vision againe*: for the Iewes thought themselues secured from all dangers, because it pleased God to inlighten them by his word. But because they did vnthankfully reiect the doctrine thereof, it was but a vaine confidence, to thinke the bare inioying of it should any way profit them: for the Lord not onely punisheth the infidelitie of those that are out of the Church, but that also of the Church it selfe. Nay, rather he begins to manifest his anger against it first; for he will not indure to haue his graces abused, nor that men should boast of his titles in vaine. That which is added touching

The cry of the mountaine, it may be referred to God, to the Caldeans, and to those also which fled; because the vanquishers raised vp a *cry* to augment the terrour: but the vanquished either cried for mercie and fidelitie, or else testified their sorrow by teares & weepings. The singular number may also be take for the plurall, or else it is meant of that side of the Citie in which the Temple was built. Both expositions agree to the text; and there
1 is no great difference whether we say, That the enemies *cried* from *the mountaine of Zion*,
2 to incourage one another: or that their cry was heard of the *neighbour mountaines*, when
3 they pilled and destroyed the Citie: or that the citizens themselues made their lamentations sound to the mountaines which inuironed the plaine of Iordan.

Vers. 6. *And Elam bare the quiuer in a mans chariot with horsemen: and Kir vncouered the shield.*

THe expositours are of opinion that this is a continued speech, & that the Prophet denounceth the same iudgement against the Iewes, that he had done before. But when I consider all things aduisedly, I am enforced to bee of the contrarie opinion: for I thinke the Prophet vpbraides the Iewes with their obstinacie and rebellion, for that they repented not, albeit the Lord had chastised them: and thus he repeates the historie of the time past, to put them in remembrance that God his chastisements had done them no good. Thus should these things bee distinguished from the former. In the other verses he foretold what should happen to the Iewes: but now he shewes that they are iustly punished, and that they haue deserued these violent blowes wherewithall the Lord smites them.
1 For hee had called them to repentance not
2 onely by his word, but also by most wofull effects: yet had they shewed none amendement at all, notwithstanding that their wealth was wasted, and the Kingdome weakened; but proudly persisted in their rebellion. There remained nothing thē but ỹ the Lord should bring heauie iudgements vpon them, seeing they thus persisted in their obstinacy and rebellion.

See the exposition of the eleuenth verse, for that giues light to this.

Now I haue translated this Hebrew coniunction *Vau*, by way of opposition; it being often taken in this sense. Those who thinke the Prophet threatens in the time to come, retaine the proper sense: as if the Prophet hauing made mention of God, should by and by adde the executioners of his vengeance. But I haue already shewed what exposition I haue approued; and it shall appeare hereafter by the course of the text, that mine opinion is not without good reason. In that hee names the *Elamits*, and the Kirenians, it agrees better, as I take it, to the Assyrians, then to the Babylonians. For although these nations did neuer make war vpon the Iewes by their owne instinct; yet is it very likely that they were in wages with the King of Assyria, and occupied a place in his host, when he besieged Ierusalem. Now we haue said alreadie, that by the Elamits are meant the Esterne people: and vnder the name of *Kir*, it is certaine that the Prophet comprehends the Kirenians. And because they bare *shields*, he saith, they *discouered* them; because they drew them forth of their cases, when they entred into the battell. Whereas some translate, In the chariot of horsemen; I reiect it not: yet had I rather render the words of the Prophet, word for word: for I thinke he meanes a chariot of warre. They vsed then two sorts of chariots; one serued to beare the baggage; and the other to fight in. Now the Prophet
1 speakes of those whereupon the horsemen
2 were mounted.

Vers. 7. *And thy chiefe vallies were full of Chariots: and the horsemen set themselues in array against the gate.*

Or, and that it came to passe, &c.

IF this be a threat, it should be expounded in the time to come; to wit, And it shall come to passe. But because the words following are put in the time past, and that it appeares the Prophet speakes of things alreadie fallen out, I haue not been afraid to appropriate this beginning to that which is by and by added.

The chiefe of the vallies, is taken for faire and fruitfull. Now he puts the Iewes in mind of these distresses, into which they were brought by *Senacherib* whilest hee besieged them, and whilest the enemies were before the gates of the Citie: for then ought they to haue fled vnto God for succour. But then did these poore Iewes runne so much the further away from him, and the more shamefully did they manifest their rebellion herein, shewing themselues vtterly desperate. Therefore is it that hee vpbraides them with this obstinate rebellion.

Vers. 8.

* Or, carried away.

Verſ. 8. *And he * diſcouered the couering of Iudah: and thou didſt looke in that day to the armour of the houſe of the forreſt.*

HE ſhewes in what anguiſh the Iewes were when they were thus hardlie beſieged. Some referre this ſpeech vnto God, others to the enemies, but I had rather take it indefinitlie: for *he hath caried away*, is a phraſe of ſpeech vſed of the Hebrues, that is, the *couering of Iudah* was caried away. By the word *couering*, all almoſt vnderſtand the Temple, or the name of God it ſelfe, vnder which the Iewes falſlie bragged. But for mine owne part I take it more ſimplie for their Armorie, wherein they ſhut vp (as in a moſt ſecret place) their inſtruments and furniture for the warre. For he calles it not a *couering*, as if theſe things were not diſcouered to all, but becauſe they were laid vp in a place put apart or conſecrate. And thus hee ſets that forth which we ſee to happen in great hurlie burlies, for then euery one runnes to his weapon, bringing out the munitions for war which were hidden before.

The latter member is ioined with this, to wit, that they then ſearched diligentlie euery place where they might get weapons in ſuch an extreame neceſſitie, becauſe the furniture for warre had been hid a long time whileſt they inioyed peace. Now the holie hiſtorie witneſſeth that *Salomon* had built this *houſe of the foreſt*, that all the armor and inſtruments of warre might be laid vp there. The change of the perſon in this word *thou*, darkens not the ſenſe, but rather confirmes that which I haue ſaid, to wit, that the Prophet recites after what maner the Iewes were letted in making preparations to defend the Citie.

1.King.7.2.

Verſ. 9. *And ye haue ſeene the breaches of the citie of Danid, for they were many: and ye gathered the waters of the lower poole.*

HE cõtinues forth his diſcourſe, for whilſt matters go well, and that all things are in quiet, men care not greatlie neither for munition, nor for warlike furniture: nothing but neceſſitie awakens men, and makes them carefull: peace and reſt makes vs become lazie & ſlothfull. As long then as they thought themſelues free from gunſhot, they neglected to make vp the breaches of the walles: but when the drum once ſtroke vp, then they gaue themſelues to the care of theſe things, and to take order for letting the enemie frõ getting paſſage. By *the Citie of Danid*, hee meanes the middeſt of the Citie, which was deuided into two parts, which we may ſee in many Cities. Ieruſalem was enuironed with walles, and ditched round about: but this middle place was the ſtrongeſt fortreſſe they had, and it was called *the Citie of Danid*. The Temple alſo was fortified, ſo as the Citie was deuided as it were into three. Now *Iſaiah* meanes to ſay that the Iewes had almoſt loſt all hope of ſauing the Citie when they thus retired into the *middleſt*, which was ſtronger then all the reſt. And it appeares very well by the holie hiſtorie that their caſe was very deſperate. Thus wee may alſo gather, that the propheſies were not gathered in order, ſo as they which put them into one volume did not ſtand much vpon the circumſtance of the time. He addes, *the waters were gathered* for their neceſſitie, that the neceſſities of thoſe which were beſieged might be ſupplied therewith, and thus the *poole* ſerued them for a Ciſterne.

Neceſſitie is it which cõmonly awakens vs.

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Verſ. 10. *And yee numbred the houſes of Ieruſalem, and the houſes haue yee broken downe to fortifie the wall.*

HIs meaning is, that they viewed the Citie narrowlie and on euery ſide, that no houſe nor building might annoy the defence of it. Others ſay that the houſes were numbred that they might haue watchmen out of them: but the firſt expoſition ſeemes the fitteſt, for it is confirmed by that which is added after, that there were houſes *broken downe* to repaire the walles of the Citie. We make no reckning of theſe things in the time of peace: and oftentimes men of meane eſtate will build houſes euen vpon the very ramparts, therefore they muſt be pulled downe in time of warre, that from thence they may fight and repulſe the enemie; and alſo leſt any ſhould haue any ſecret ſpeech with the enemie, if *houſes* were ſo neere the walles.

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Verſ. 11. *And haue alſo made a ditch betweene the two walles for the waters of the old poole, and haue not looked to the maker thereof, neither had reſpect vnto him that formed it.* * Or, long ago.

THe firſt part of this verſe is conioined with that which hath been expounded heretofore; for his meaning is that they were put to their plunges, and ſo flighted with imminent danger, that they were driuen to vſe all meanes poſſible to fortifie themſelues againſt the enemie. In the ſecond part of the verſe he taxeth their ſenſeleſnes, in being ſo taken vp with ſeeking after worldlie helps, that they *forſooke* that which was the principall. For whereas they ſhould firſt haue had their recourſe vnto God, they neglected it, in contriuing of *ditches*, ramparts, walles, and other defences of warre, and yet did their chiefe defence all this while reſt in God. Now then it appeares that that which I ſaide in the beginning is true, to wit, that he foretels not heere the deſtruction of the Iewes, but only puts them in minde of that they had felt in former time: that from thence he might take occaſion to ſhew how iuſtlie the Lord was angrie with them, becauſe no chaſtiſement nor correction whatſoeuer could amend them. For their extreame dangers into which they were fallen, ought to haue admoniſhed them of their impietie and contempt of God, but they became ſo much the more hardened.

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hardened. And yet there is ſcarcely any man
1 ſo obſtinate, who in time of aduerſitie, and
2 eſpecially in the middeſt of great dangers,
3 but comes to himſelfe, and by himſelfe alone
4 conſiders that he is iuſtly puniſhed, that hee hath offended God, and prouoked his wrath againſt him. But the Prophet ſaith, that not ſo much as one of the Iewes remembred God in theſe great calamities, and that therefore the Lord had good cauſe to leaue them, without thinking anie more vpon them.

From hence let vs gather, that it is a ſigne of a deſperate impietie, when men amend not for the rods and ſcourges which are laid vpon them. First of all wee ought to follow
1 God cheerefully, and to yeeld him voluntary
2 obedience: ſecondly, as ſoone as he chaſtiſeth and correcteth vs, we are forthwith to repent vs. But if his rod doe vs no good, what
3 remaines but that God muſt double his blowes, and make vs feele them in ſuch ſeueritie, that we at the laſt be brought to vtter deſtruction by them? This doctrine is moſt fitting for this ſeaſon, wherein God calles vs to repentance by ſo many of his ſcourges and afflictions. But ſeeing there is no repentance, what are wee to looke for, but that God ſhould vtterlie cut vs off, hauing before vſed all meanes poſſible?

To him that made it.] He cloſely cõfeſſeth by theſe words, ỹ God abſolutely condemns not ỹ care we haue to reſiſt our enemies, & to auoid dangers; but that falſe confidence which wee put in externall means. For our inconſiderate haſtineſſe is iuſtly condemned of diſloyaltie and high treaſon; when wee forſake God, to flie vnto ſwords and ſpeares, to fortreſſes and bulwarkes. Let vs learne then to flie to him alone when dangers inuiron vs on all ſides; and let vs runne with all the powers of our ſoule, to the aſſured fortreſſe of his holy name. This being done, then is it lawfull to vſe thoſe meanes which hee giues vs: but all things will worke to our deſtruction, vnleſſe we firſt of all put the hope of our ſafetie in his protection.

What courſe we ought to keepe in the time of peril.

Prou. 18.10

Hee calles God the *workman and maker* of Ieruſalem, becauſe hee had his habitation there, and would there be called vpon. Now ſeeing this citie was the image of the church, this title alſo belongs to vs: for the Lord is called the *Creator* of the Church in a ſpeciall regard. For howſoeuer this title appertaines to the creation of the whole world; yet this ſecond creation whereby he deliuers vs from death by regenerating and ſanctifying vs, is a benefit which is peculiar to the elect: others haue no part of this. Now this title imports not a ſudden act; but ſuch a one as is conſtant and perpetuall: neither is the Church created once, to be left by and by; but the Lord defends and conſerues it euen vnto the end: Thou wilt not deſpiſe the worke of thine hands, ſaith the Pſalmiſt: ſo *Paul* teſtifieth, that hee which hath begunne a good worke, will accompliſh it vnto the day of Chriſt.

The firſt creation belongs to all: the ſecond peculiar to the elect onely.

Pſal. 138.8. *Phil.* 1.6.

And beſides, this title containes in it a wonderfull conſolation: for if God be the *maker*, then neede we not to feare, if ſo be we depend vpon his power and goodneſſe. But we cannot caſt our eyes vpon him, vnleſſe we be indued with true humilitie & confidence; that being diſpoſſeſſed of all haughtineſſe, and ſo brought to nothing, we be readie to attribute the whole glorie to him alone. Now this cannot be done, vnleſſe herewithall we bee fully perſwaded that our ſaluation is in his hand, being aſſured ỹ we cannot periſh; no not although a thouſand deaths ſhould compaſſe vs about. Well, their fault then was the greater, in regard the prerogatiue of this Citie, which had been approued by ſo many euident ſignes, could not yet prouoke the Iewes to commit themſelues vnto Gods protection. As if he ſhould ſay; What folly is it for you to thinke to keepe the *Citie*, when you deſpiſe the *workman* that made it?

A conſolation.

Long ago.] The Hebrew word ſignifieth as well diſtance of place, as length of time. If we referre it to the place, the ſenſe will be, that the Iewes are double vnthankfull that they *looked not vnto God*; no not a farre off. Wherein we are to note, that we ought not onely to looke vnto God when hee is neere vnto vs, but alſo when it ſeemes hee is farre diſtant from vs. Now we thinke him abſent when we feele not his preſent helpe, and when he aſſiſts vs not as ſoone as we ſtand in neede. To be ſhort, he ſhewes what is the nature of true hope; for it is a groſſe and carnall kind of *looking vnto God*, when we acknowledge his prouidence no further then we can ſee it before our eyes; hope you know muſt mount aboue the skies. I grant the Lord is alwaies properly and truely preſent; but he is thought abſent and farre off in regard of the weakeneſſe of our ſight. This muſt bee conſtrued then according to our ſenſe, and not as the thing is indeed. Wherefore albeit that he ſeemes to be abſent in theſe calamities wherewith the Church is now afflicted, yet let vs lift vp our mindes vnto him; let vs awaken our hearts, and ſhake off all ſloth, that ſo wee may giue our ſelues to the calling vpon his name. But the other ſenſe agreeth better; to wit, that they *looked not* vnto God who created and made his Church; not yeſterday, or the day before it, but a great while ſince; as one who ſhewed himſelfe the *maker* of it many ages off. He is called then the *ancient maker* of his Church: becauſe that if the Iewes would but haue called to minde the long progreſſe of time; they ſhould haue knowne him to haue been a *perpetuall conſeruer of his worke*; wherein their ingratitude is yet the leſſe excuſable.

The nature of hope deſcribed.

Hope muſt mount aboue the skies.

Verſ. 12. *And in that day did the Lord God of hoſtes call vnto weeping and mourning, and to baldneſſe, and girding with ſackcloth.*

THe Prophet further amplifies this wicked rebellion of the people. For this circumſtance cuts off all replies: for in the middeſt of ſuch extreme dangers, they had deſpiſed the holy exhortations of the Prophes, and

and had reiected the fauor of God, when he was readie to haue healed and reſtored them to their former happines. Here we ſee a ſigne of deſperate malice, when men are ſo beſotted that they proudly deſpiſe inſtruction and correction, kicking obſtinatlie againſt the ſpurre: then (I ſay) may we euidentlie perceiue that they are giuen vp into a reprobate ſenſe. Whereas he ſaith *the Lord called them*, we may expound it two waies: for although he ſhould not ſpeake at all, yet he *calles vs* ſufficientlie by his rods and chaſtiſements. Put the caſe we had no Scripture at all, no Prophets nor Teachers, and that there were none to admoniſh vs: yet doth God notwithſtanding inſtruct vs by afflictions and calamities, ſo as we may eaſily cõclude that euery chaſtiſement is a ſummons to repentance. But doubteleſſe the Prophet meant to expreſſe ſomewhat more, to wit, that in deſpiſing the holie admonitions which were ſent vnto them, they were not aſhamed to riſe vp as it were euen againſt *God himſelfe*, who after a fatherlie maner beckned them vnto him. There is yet greater weight in that he ſaith, it was *in the day* of affliction, wherein the danger preſſed hard vpon them: for they were admoniſhed both by *words* and *blowes*. The ſignes of Gods anger appeared, the Prophets cryed without ceaſing, and yet they became neuer the better.

Euery chaſtiſement a ſummons to repentance.

In that he names *ſackcloth*, and *plucking of their haire*, he notes our repentance by the *ſignes* of it: for it conſiſts neither in *ſackcloth*, in aſhes, nor in any externall thing, but it conſiſts in the heart. Thoſe who repent in good earneſt, and are diſpleaſed with themſelues, they hate their ſinnes, and are touched to the quick with ſuch a ſenſe and feeling of ſorrow, that they abhorre and deteſt themſelues and their life paſt: but becauſe this can not be done vnleſſe therewithall they confeſſe the ſame before men, therefore he names the *outward ſignes*, whereby wee giue teſtimonie of our conuerſion: now the Iewes vſed ſuch geſtures and cuſtomes at that time when they meant to ſhew ſignes of repentance. *Iſaiah* meanes then that they were called to repentance, to the end they ſhould firſt humble themſelues before God, and then that they ſhould therewithall ſhew teſtimonies of that diſpleaſure they had conceiued in themſelues before men. The ſignes indeed alone are nothing, ſeeing conuerſion begins at the heart: and to this purpoſe *Ioel* ſaith, *Rent your hearts, and not your clothes*: not that he would haue theſe ſignes neglected; but he ſhewes that they were not ſufficient nor acceptable vnto God of themſelues. Let vs hence gather what is our dutie when the ſignes of Gods anger appeare vnto vs, namely, that our repentance ought not only to be knowne vnto God, but alſo to men.

Repentance conſiſts not in outward Ceremonies, but in the heart.

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These outward teſtimonies of repentance are not acceptable vnto God in themſelues.

The ceremonies indeed are indifferent; neither haue we any commandement to put on *ſackcloth* nor to pluck off our haire, but we ought willinglie and in good earneſt to put the truth of theſe ſignes in practiſe: to wit, an vnfeined diſpleaſure in our ſelues that wee haue ſo diſpleaſed God: a confeſſion of our offences; a broken heart, and a new life. For if wee iudge not our ſelues worthy of puniſhment, we cannot come into fauour with God. To be ſhort, euen as the poore malefactor bowes downe his face, and clothes himſelfe in vile arayment; to bow the heart of the Iudges, ſo ought we to runne in all humilitie to Gods mercy in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, with vnfeined teſtimonies of our inward repentance.

Wherein the truth of theſe ſignes conſiſts.

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Yet are we by the way, to note the profit of theſe outward ſignes of repentance, to wit, that they ſerue as goades to pricke vs forward to the acknowledgement of our guiltineſſe, and to the lothing and deteſting of our ſinne. And thus as they are ſpurres to quicken vs to this dutie, they may be called *cauſes* of repentance: and as they are ſignes, they may be called *effects*. For the tokens of our condemnation that wee beare vpon vs, prouoke vs to a more thorow acknowledgement that we are ſinners and guiltie perſons: and they are alſo effects; becauſe if repentance went not before, wee ſhould neuer be brought to vſe them of a ſincere affection.

How farforth theſe outward teſtimonies ar profitable.

Verſ. 13. *And behold ioy and gladneſſe, ſlaying oxen, and killing ſheepe, eating fleſh and drinking wine, eating and drinking, for to morrow we ſhall die.*

THe Prophet condemnes not *ioy* ſimply: for wee ſee that Saint *Paul* himſelfe exhorts the faithfull to *reioyce* with a true ioy; to wit, *in the Lord*: Phil. 4. 4. But hee here reproues that *ioy* which is contrarie to that ſorrow which proceedes of repentance; whereof alſo the ſame Apoſtle ſpeakes in the ſeuenth Chapter of the ſecond Epiſtle to the Corinthians: for indeede, none can bee touched with repentance, nor with the true feeling of Gods wrath; but being ſorrowfull, he willingly afflicts himſelfe. The *ioy* then oppoſite to this ſorrow, is naught; becauſe it proceeds from a brutiſh blockiſhneſſe, and is iuſtly reproued, becauſe the Lord accurſeth it.

Luk. 6. 25. Ioel 1. 14. & 2. 12.

Hence it appeareth then ſufficiently wherefore the Lord vpbraides them with the *killing of oxen, and butchering of ſheepe*: for this is not euill in it ſelfe, neither doth it diſpleaſe God: but becauſe faſting is a ſolemne part of repentance which wee ſhew before men; it is therefore a ſigne of obſtinacie and contempt of God, to kill beaſts, and to make great merriments when we ought rather to faſt. Thus do men deſpiſe Gods threatnings, and flatter themſelues in their vices: and this is the ſum of *Iſaiahs* ſpeech.

But the Papiſts are worthily reputed ridiculous, who thinke this place warrants abſtinence frõ *fleſh*. Why did they not aſwell forbid *wine* alſo, ſeeing the Prophet ſpeakes of that too? But they are ſo far from abſtaining from wine, that contrariwiſe they eaſilie permit men for want of fleſh, to recompence the ſame with taking in of their liquor. But let theſe toyes paſſe. For *Iſaiah* condemns neither the vſe of fleſh nor wine ſimply, but the abuſe;

Papiſts ridiculous.

Iſaiah condemneth not the vſe of meates and drinks but the abuſe.

abuse; the dissolution and pride also whereby men so harden themselues, that with an obstinate heart they reiect al Gods threatnings, and iudge whatsoeuer the Prophets say to be but fables.

Wee are to obserue this point diligently: for albeit we put not on sackcloth, nor couer our selues alwaies with ashes; yet if true repentance be wrought in vs, we shall manifest the same by such fruits as it necessarily brings forth in them that haue it. In a word, as hee had described repentance by the signes, so hee now sets forth their inward obstinacie and hardnesse of heart, by the outward testimonies of it. For euen as we witnesse our sorrow for sinne by abstinence and other exercises; so by our dissolutiõs & superfluities, we shew euident signes of a stiffe neck, by which we prouoke Gods wrath more and more against vs: as we reade they did in the daies of *Noah*, Gen. 6.5. Luke 17.27. Therefore after the Prophet had taxed the excesse and intemperancie of the people in generall; he names *eating* and *drinking*, as the speciall: wherein the Iews wholly ouerflowed: as if by this meanes they had been able to giue God the repulse, and to tread his threatnings vnder foote.

For to morrow wee shall die.] This particle sheweth sufficiently why the Prophet so sharpely rebuked them for drinking wine, and eating of flesh; to wit, because they scoffed and turned all the Prophets threats into iests and matter of derision. Some thinke that S. *Paul* in alleadging almost the very same words in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, Chap. 15. had respect to this place: but I am not of their opinion. For he there recites the phrase of speech which Epicures vsed; who holding it as a principle to spend their time in iollitie whilest it lasted, neuer thought of life eternall: and therefore they said; we must be merry, and take our pleasure whilest life indureth. But *Isaiah* in this place brings in the wicked, who proudly contemned the Prophets menacings; neither could they indure that any should forewarne them of afflictions, banishments, slaughters, and ruines. For in scorne they tooke vp the Prophets words, and at their banquets would say in derision; Ho, *we shall die to morrow*: These Prophets foretell a speedie destruction that is readie to ouertake vs: well, let vs yet reioyce and make good cheere one day more.

Thus obstinate mindes cannot be touched with any remorse at all, but rather lift vp themselues against God & his Prophets, & so much the more ouerflow in all dissolutions and disorders. Truely it was a monstrous furie in them, thus to vomit forth these blasphemies in disdaine, indignation, and despight, which ought not onely to haue rent their hearts, but to haue shaken euen heauen and earth also. But it were to be wished, we at this day had not many such examples: for God no sooner threatens, but the most part spew out their poison, or else scoffe at all things which proceed out of Gods sacred and blessed mouth.

Vers. 14. *And it was declared in the eares of the Lord of hostes: *Surely this iniquitie shall not bee purged from you till yee die, saith the Lord of hostes.*

*Or, if this iniquitie shall be purdoned.

AS if he should say; Doe you thinke to play the bedlems, and not bee punished for it, seeing God by this meanes seekes to draw you to repentance? But some may imagine that the Prophet onely repeates the same thing he had said before: for doubtlesse all things are naked and manifest in his sight. But hee addes this as an alarum to awaken the blockishnes of ỹ wicked, who neuer durst aduance themselues thus proudly against God, but that they thinke they can beguile him: for whosoeuer knowes he hath God for a witnesse of his doings, ought of necessitie therewithall to confesse that the same God must be his Iudge. It followes therefore, that the wicked in their cups, doe quite and clean bereaue God of his power. What maruell is it then, if they be summoned to appeare before his tribunall seate, to the end they may know that there they must giue an account.

It is a terrible threatning when hee saith that this *wickednesse shall neuer bee pardoned*. Now the particle conditionall, If, containes a negatiue in the Hebrew tongue: as if the Lord should say; Thinke me not to be true, thinke me not to be God, if I be not auenged of so execrable an impietie. The cause why the Hebrewes conceale something in their othes, is to accustome vs to be modest and sober in this behalfe: for we therein craue that God would iudge and be auenged of vs, if we lie. Wee had neede of some bridle therefore to restraine vs from making othes rashly. The summe of the Prophets speech is to teach vs, that nothing is more displeasing vnto God then obstinacy, whereby wee treasure vp wrath against the day of wrath, as the Apostle saith, Rom. 2.5. and depriue our selues of all hope of perdition.

Othes must be vsed with feare and trembling.

Vers. 15. *Thus saith the Lord God of hostes; Goe get thee to the treasurer, to Shebna the steward of the house*, and say.

THis propheſie is particularly addressed against one man. For hauing spoken to all the people before, hee now turnes his speech to *Shebna*, whom hee will mention againe in the 37. Chapter. The Prophet giues him two titles, to wit, of Scribe, or Chancellour; and *steward of the house*: and whereas hee giues the title of *steward* here, he will call him by the name of Chancellour in the other place. And therefore some are of opinion touching these words, that he was put from his office of stewardship, and that *Eliakim* was put in his roome. But this is vncertaine: yet we may coniecture by the Prophets words, that Shebna was so carried away with enuie, that he indeuoured to supplant Eliakim. It is no lesse probable that this propheeie was written

Shebna.

written after Ieruſalem was miraculouſly deliuered, and *Senacheribs* hoſt diſcomfited. In the meane while, many things doubtleſſe happened that are vnknowne to vs: and not vnlike but this perfidious wretch being in ſome credit, did his worſt to ſuppreſſe Eliakim. For it appeares by the hiſtorie of the ſecond booke of Kings, Chap. 19. 2. that *Shebna* was one of the principall Secretaries, whom we now call Chancellour. But there is yet a little more difficultie in the word *Socen*: for ſome thinke it ſignifies a Treaſurer, becauſe the verbe *Sacan* ſignifies to locke: but ſeeing he calles him Chancellour in an other place, I thinke he was not Treaſurer. Beſides, the Prophet doth ſufficiently witneſſe, that this man had ſuch cammand in his hands, that others in compariſon of him were little eſteemed. Now this authoritie and dignitie could not well agree to a Treaſurer: and therefore as I take it, the Prophet meant ſome thing elſe. For ſeeing this verbe ſignifies ſome times to entertaine, and to watne; it ſeemes the foreſaid word is taken for one that ſuſtaineth and vpholdeth, whom wee in our common ſpeech call an entertainer.

It is alſo certaine that this Shebna had intelligence with the enemie. In a word, he was a treacherous and ſubtile fellow: for he held ſecret amitie with the Egyptians and Aſſyrians, & complotted miſchieuouſly with them, to the end hee might make ſure on all ſides, for vpholding his owne authoritie. Others thinke it was a name of ſome of his predeceſſours, and that he was called Socnite, becauſe of the Citie wherein he was borne: for they ſay he was an Egyptian. I reiect not this opinion, but the other pleaſeth me better; the reaſon is, becauſe he plaid the Ambodexter in pleaſing both parts; thinking by this fetch to hold his owne, whatſoeuer ſhould fall out.

It may be cleerely diſcerned, that the particle *Harzeh*, is put for contempt: as if hee ſhould ſay; Goe to that ſame cunning and ſubtile fellow that workes vpon the vantage, holding with the hare, and running with the hounds, as they ſay. This word *Socen*, is taken in that ſenſe which I haue touched before in the firſt booke of the Kings, Chap. 1. 2. where there is ſpeech of a young virgin that ſhould bee brought to the King to cheriſh him. Notwithſtanding, if any had rather take it for a man that hurts and wrongs men, I miſlike it not, becauſe the verbe alſo ſignifies to impouerith.

You ſhall finde this verſe further expounded in the 17. verſe.

Verſ. 16. *What haſt thou to doe here? and whom haſt thou here, that thou ſhouldeſt here hew thee out a ſepulchre, as he that heweth out a ſepulchre in an high place, or that graueth an habitation for himſelfe in a rocke?*

THis *Shebna* cauſed a ſepulchre to be built in Ieruſalem, as if there he muſt of neceſſitie alwaies liue, and there bee buried alſo. The Prophet therefore askes *to what purpoſe he had prepared himſelfe ſuch and ſumptuous a toombe in ſo high a place aboue others*, as thoſe are wont to doe, which meane to eternize their remembrance in this world. Now hee ſeemes to taxe the ambition of a ſtranger, and one vnknowne, for deſiring to be thus honourably buried out of his owne country: and yet in the meane while, complotted with the enemie to deſtroy Iudea. What greater follie could be imagined, then to erect a ſepulchre in that land, whoſe ruine and deſtruction he practiſed? And therefore hee addes,

Verſ. 17. *Behold the Lord will carrie thee away with a great captiuitie, and will ſurely couer thee,*

*Or, a notable ſhaking. *Or, thou ſhalt be wholly couered.

AS if he ſhould ſay; Thou ſhalt be driuen hence out of this place into a far Country, where thou ſhalt die ignominiouſly. It is better to tranſlate the Hebrew word *Gaber*, in the genitiue; namely, thou ſhalt be driuen hence with the caſting out of a man. Now becauſe this word alſo ſignifies a valiant and ſtrong man; ſome expound, Thou ſhalt bee driuen hence with a ſure and ſtrong ſhaking. Others take it in the vocative, O man; as if he ſhould ſay to Shebna by way of deriſion, O glorious fellow, that braggeſt ſo much of thy greatneſſe, it cannot be but thou taheſt thy ſelfe for ſome petty God! But the firſt reading fits beſt. And yet the expoſitours conſent not in this behalfe: for beſides mirie expoſition, they haue brought an other; to wit, That men ſhall be carried away further off, then the women. But I rather thinke he alludes to Shebnaes pride, who purpoſed to build ſo ſumptuous a ſepulchre, that after his death hee might be thought ſome excellent and worthy perſonage. As if hee ſhould ſay; Thou wilt bee taken for a noble man after thou art dead; but I will ennoble thee after another manner: I will *carrie thee* hence with a *notable* captiuitie into a farre Country, where thou ſhalt bee ſtrangely buried.

But firſt let vs note in this word, Intertainer, how much a double heart and a deceiuer, is diſpleaſing vnto God, who aboue all things recommends ſimplicitie and plaine dealing vnto vs. Shebna was called the Prouoſt, becauſe the glorie of his proſperous eſtate did dazle his eyes, in regard he was aduanced aboue others: which often befalles them, who being proud and puffed vp with their greatneſſe, feare no aduerſitie at all; as if they were exempt out of the common order of men. But the Lord ſhewes vs, that hee will be the Iudge of ſuch fellowes.

We muſt alſo conſider that *Iſaiah* could not publiſh this prophecy without incurring great ill will; eſpecially in regard he directs it to a mā ſo proud, & in ſo high place. Yet durſt he not refuſe this charge, neither made hee any difficultie to tell this man his owne, and to threaten him as God had bidden him.

As touching a *ſepulchre*, wee know that the

A care ought to be had touching our buriall.

care of burying the dead is not vtterly to be condemned: and albeit to be depriued of buriall, be a matter of no great consequence, as one saith; yet it is an honest thing to be interred, neither ought it to be despised. It was not the Prophets meaning then to reproue Shebna for his care to be honestly buried; but his ambition, in making himselfe so sumptuous a tombe; and herein he taxeth his desire and affectation of vaine glory.

There is yet one thing more to bee obserued in Shebna: for in as much as he was minded to deliuer the Citie into the Assyrians hands by treason, hee thought to raigne for euer: hoping by that meanes to receiue the gouernement of the Kingdome of the enemies, as a reward of his treacherie; if they became the stronger; and if it happened they had the repulse, he yet notwithstanding looked to continue in his dignitie and authority alwaies.

Shebnaes politike plot.

But this will be the better vnderstood by the words themselues; *What hast thou to doe here?* For he was a stranger borne. I deny not but he might well haue obtained fellowship with the people of God; yet in regard he was both a traitor and a stranger, he had no part nor portion in this region nor Citie, which God had specially assigned vnto his chosen. The Prophet askes him then; Whence art thou? Thou art linked with the people of God neither by blood nor affinitie; and yet thou wilt not onely raigne in this Country whilest thou liuest, but thou art also plotting how to stablish thy seat here, after thy death. Thou wilt deliuer vs into the hands of the Assyrians, and meanest to turne out the true Lords: so as thy selfe, which art but a stranger, mindest to enioy this land, in which thou hast not right to one pike of dust. Hence we may gather, that this ambition is exceedingly odious vnto God, when men are not content with the honours wherewith they were glutted whilest they liued; but they must build them perpetuall monuments of their name in the world when they are gone. For they couet to bee exalted after their death, and to liue againe as it were in the mouthes of men: and albeit things by death are abolished; yet are they besotted notwithstanding with this fooliih hope, that their memorie shall indure for euer. But the Lord auengeth himselfe of their pride and presumption, causing that which they erected for a witnesse and remembrance of their glorie, to turne to their dishonour and ignominie. For their very name is so accursed, that men can neither heare nor see any mention thereof, but it is with detestation. Nay, it sometimes falles out, that the Lord suffers them not to be buried in their tombes, but sends them to the gallowes, and to the rauens; of which wee haue many examples in the histories: neither want we some spectacles hereof euen in our owne times.

Shebna a stranger and a traitor to God and his Church.

Ambition a thing exceeding odious vnto God.

Hest.7.10.

But as often as I reade this place, a like example vnto this comes to my mind, and is the neerest in affinitie to it of all others; to wit, of one *Thomas Moore*, who had such an office as this Shebna had. For (as it is well knowne) he was Chancellor to the King of England: he was a sworne enemie of the Gospell, and persecuted the faithfull with fire and faggot. This man also meant to get himselfe a name, and to set vp a monument of his crueltie and impietie. To which end he caused the praises of his vertues, to be ingrauen in a faire sepulchre which was built in most stately manner. Then he sent his Epitaph, which himselfe had made, to *Erasmus*, to Basil, to get it printed; and withall, sent him a palfrey for a present. So couetous was he of glory, that hee meant to taste the renowne and the praises in his life time, which hee thought should haue lasted when hee was dead. Amongst other praises, this was the chiefest; that he had been a great persecutor of the Lutherans: that is to say, of Gods children. But what became of him? He is first of all accused of treason, then condemned, and lastly beheaded: and thus in stead of a tombe, hee had a scaffold. Would we desire a more manifest iudgement of God then these, by which hee punisheth the pride of the wicked; their insatiable desire of vaine glory; their brags that are so full of blasphemies? Truely wee ought no lesse to acknowledge and reuerence the admirable prouidence of God, in this cruell enemy of his people: then in Shebna, of whom the Prophet heere speaketh. This circumstance also that Shebna was a stranger, is to be obserued: for hence we may see, that all tyrants and enemies of Gods children, would with al their hearts roote out the right heires from off the earth, themselues being but strangers; that so they might raigne as Lords and Kings ouer the whole world. But the Lord in the end will chase them out, and depriue them of all possession: so as they shall not haue one foote of ground to be buried in. An infinite number of such examples are extant euerie where in histories. I grant it falles not out thus alwaies, but such examples as the Lord sets before vs, ought to draw our thoughts further off, to the end we may consider of his iudgements against tyrants and infidels; who when they thinke to exalt themselues to the highest estate of honour, are made famous by some notable kinde of death, that so their infamie may be admirable to posteritie. He then opposeth as it were vnder hand, that shame which was to follow, to that glory of this sumptuous tombe which Shebna caused to be made.

of England, and a sworn enemy of the Gospell.

Erasmus.

Moore a great persecuter of the Lutherans.

1
2
3

How God is wont to meet with the proud enemies of his Church.

Thomas Moore Lord Chancellor

Vers. 18. *Hee will surely roll and turne thee like a ball in a large Country: there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy Lords house.*

Isaiah continues the verie same speech still, in which he derided the pride of Shebna, who had been at such cost in building his sepulchre. For this verse depends vpon the first member of the verse before going, and as he said there, *the Lord shall carue thee hence with a mightie shaking*: so also he saith now, he *will cast thee as a bowle in a plaine place*. By this similitude

ſimilitude his meaning is, that nothing ſhall hinder the Lord to carry Shebna away into a *farre Country*, how ſteadie ſoeuer he takes his ſtrength to be. And in as much as he had bin ſo carefull of his toombe, and had appointed it out; as if hee had been moſt certaine of the manner of his death, *Iſaiah* telles him, that hee ſhall not die in Ieruſalem, but in a *ſtrange Countrie*, whither hee ſhall bee driuen.

By the word *chariot*, hee comprehends all the glory and dignitie of Shebna: as if hee ſhould ſay; This ignominie ſhall bee famous among ſtrangers. Thus the Lord ſcornes the furious pride of thoſe which thinke onely of the world, iudgeing of their happineſſe according to the glory of things earthly and tranſitorie. Hee alſo calles it *the ſhame of thy Kings houſe*, either becauſe he had polluted that holy place, which was as the ſanctuarie of God; or elſe becauſe *Ezechias* had been vnaduiſed in promoting him ſo highly. And to the end the outward appearance of his dignitie might not obſcure this prophecie, *Iſaiah* expreſly noteth, that the *place which Shebna occupied*, augmenteth and makes his wickedneſſe the more deteſtable. And therefore Princes had neede to be carefull how they eſtabliſh officers, vnleſſe they meane to make themſelues and their houſes, matter of deriſion and ſcorne.

Princes muſt beware who they aduace.

Verſ. 19. *And I will driue thee from thy* [b]*ſtation: and out of thy dwelling will he deſtroy thee.*

[b] Or, eſtate.

HE pronounceth no new thing here, but concludes the former prophecie, albeit hee will mention Shebna againe in the laſt verſe: but now hee comprehends that in a briefe ſumme, which he had ſaid heretofore. Now Shebna thought nothing leſſe, then not to haue a ſure abode in Ieruſalem; euen as if it had been vnpoſſible for him to be driuen thence, whatſoeuer had happened: but the Lord telles him, that he will thruſt and driue him thence into a farre Country. And thus is the Lord wont to ouerthrow the thoughts of the wicked; who thinking to reſt vpon their policies and ſubtile wits, order the Commonwealth at their pleaſures. The change of the perſon, ſhewes that the Prophet ſpeakes ſometimes in the perſon of God, and another while in his owne.

And I will, &c.

Verſ. 20. *And in that day will I call my ſeruant Eliakim, the ſonne of Hilkiah.*

Eliakim.

IT is not certainely knowne in what time Eliakim was put into Shebnaes place: for in the 37. Chapter, verſe 2. we ſhall ſee that Eliakim was the ſteward of the Kings houſe, at that time when Shebna was Chancellor. Now it is hard to affirme certainly, whether anie change happened during this time. Yet it is moſt likely, as I haue touched heretofore, that *Eliakim* was depoſed from his eſtate, by the cunning dealing of this wicked Shebna, whoſe incklings were then diſcloſed and puniſhed when he made his triumphs: and being baniſhed Iudea, he fled to the Aſſyrians, and there receiued the reward of his treacherie. Which vſually befalles thoſe that are traiterous; who when they are vnable to performe that which they haue promiſed, become hatefull and odious to them whom they haue deceiued. For as they haue been raſh and bold in promiſing, ſo is it of neceſſitie that they bee found falſe and perfidious. The Iewes ſay, that in the end he was quartered for his treaſon: but this is not approued by any hiſtorie. But to let that hang in ſuſpence, it is certaine notwithſtanding, that he was baniſhed & expulſed into a forren Country, and there died ſhamefully; and not in Ieruſalem. Now it is very likely that after his baniſhment, Eliakim was placed in his roome.

I will call.] It is moſt certaine that all Princes and Magiſtrates are called by the Lord: yea, euen ſuch as are heathen and vnbeleeuing; for all power, as Saint *Paul* ſaith, is of God: Rom. 13. 1. But the Prophet ſpeakes here of a particular vocation, whereby the Lord manifeſts his goodneſſe towards his people, when he giues them ſuch gouernours; as this people might acknowledge that God himſelfe meant to bee ruler ouer them by their miniſterie: who alſo for their parts ought to be well aſſured, that the end wherefore God hath put them in that place, is to execute that office faithfully, which is committed vnto them. Shebna *was called* indeed for a time, but as he was Gods rod: becauſe he thought nothing leſſe then to ſerue God in that place. But it was farre otherwiſe with Eliakim: for he acknowledged himſelfe the *ſeruant* of God, and willingly obeyed his holy *calling*. So that, *I will call him* then, ſignifies as much as if hee ſhould haue ſaid; I will giue a ſigne to my *ſeruant*, whereby hee ſhall know that it is I who haue put him into this eſtate of honor. There is here then a particular relation betweene the *Lord* and the *ſeruant*; which at no hand belongs to the vnbeleeuers, becauſe they ſerue their owne imaginations and wicked luſts: but Eliakim acknowledged the *Lord*, and *ſerued him truely*. To be ſhort, this marke puts a difference betweene the true ſeruant of God, and the froward and hypocriticall, who climbes to honour by euill practiſes.

All Magiſtrates ordained of God.

Rulers ought to execute the charge which God hath committed vnto them with all faithfulneſſe.

Note this difference.

A particular relation betweene the Lord and the ſeruant.

Verſ. 21. *And with thy garments will I clothe him, and with thy girdle will I ſtrengthen him: thy power alſo will I commit into his hand, and he ſhall be a father of the inhabitants of Ieruſalem, and of the houſe of Iudah.*

HEe now more plainely expounds that which hee had ſet downe briefly in the former verſe; to wit, that *Shebna* ſhall be depoſed by Gods iuſt iudgement, to the end *Eliakim* may *ſucceede him*. Doubtleſſe God by his

prouidence diſpoſeth of all the changes which happen in the world: for as *Iob* ſaith, he *girdes the loynes of Kings with a girdle, and looſeth it againe* when it pleaſeth him: Iob 12. 18. It was pleaſantly ſaid in old time of the Emperours of Rome; That it was the tragedie of Kings: for as players that repreſent ſome great perſonage vpon the ſtage, hauing ended their part, in ſtead of Kings become poore ſnakes, as they were before: ſo theſe being deiected from their high eſtate, are now and then led to ſhamefull deaths. And yet is it moſt certaine, that things were not then thus confuſed by hap hazard, neither yet by mens deuices onely, nor by the violence of men of warre; but by the counſell of God which ouerruleth all. The Prophet affirmes then, that men ſhal ſee a ſpecial note of Gods
1 iudgement in the baniſhment of this ſame
2 Shebna: and on the other ſide a right forme of gouernement in the reſtoring of Eliakim.

By the *garments* and *girdle*, are vnderſtood part of that attire which belong to Magiſtrates. The *girdle* was a kingly ornament: and no doubt but the chiefe gouernours ware it by a ſpeciall priuiledge of honour. But in Rome the Pretors vſed ſuch a kinde of ornament ordinarilie. Iob alſo ſaith (as wee alleadged before) that God looſeth off the girdle from Kings, when they are ſtripped out of their dignities. Now the Prophet foretold this, to the end euerie one might not onely behold the admirable counſell and prouidence of God in this example; but to the end they might alſo know, that this wretched fellow, who was thus aduanced by vnlawfull meanes, was iuſtly depoſed.

Hoſe. 1 3. 11 *And he ſhall be a father.*] No doubt but heathen Magiſtrates are eſtabliſhed by God; but ſo, as it is in his wrath: that is to ſay, when we are vnworthy he himſelfe ſhould beare rule
1 ouer vs. For hee giues the raines to Tyrants and Pagans; thereby auenging himſelfe vpon our vnthankfulneſſe: as if he reiected vs, and regarded not how nor by whom wee are
2 gouerned. Contrariwiſe when as good Magiſtrates beare rule, wee therein ſee God comming neere vnto vs, commanding vs that by them which himſelfe hath ordained. This is that which the Prophet meant now to ſay; to wit, that Eliakim will ſhew himſelfe a *father*, becauſe he ſhall be indued with the Spirit of God. In the meane while he admoniſheth all the faithfull, that it was their duties to ſigh earneſtly after the aduancement of Eliakim, in regard his preferment ſhould tend to the common good of the Church. By the name of *father*, he teacheth what is the dutie of a good Magiſtrate: and the verie profane authors haue affirmed as much; to wit, that a good King is in ſtead of a father. And when they would flatter tyrants which oppreſſed the Commonwealth, nature it ſelfe put this title of honour into their mouthes, to call them fathers of the Country. So likewiſe when the Philoſophers ſay that a familie is an image of a kingdome, they meane that a King ought to be a father to his ſubiects. The ancient titles alſo which they gaue kings wit-

Good Magiſtrates ought to be fathers of the Country.

neſſeth the ſame: as for example, *Abimelec*: that is to ſay, My father the King: and ſuch other like. Whereby is ſhewed, that the kingly power cannot bee ſeparated from the affection of a father. Let them then which would be eſteemed true and lawfull Princes, and would bee taken for Gods *ſeruants*, let them, I ſay, ſhew themſelues *fathers* of the people. *Gen.* 20. 2.

Verſ. 22. *And the key of the houſe of Dauid will I lay vpon his ſhoulder: ſo hee ſhall open, and no man ſhall ſhut, and hee ſhall ſhut, and no man ſhall open.*

THis is a figuratiue kinde of ſpeech; and therefore we ſhall not neede to ſeeke out an allegoricall ſenſe of it, as many do: for this phraſe is taken from the vſuall dealings of men. The *keyes of the houſe* are giuen to ſuch as are appointed the diſtributers of neceſſarie things; ſo as they open and ſhut at their pleaſure. The *houſe of Dauid*, ſignifies the kingly houſe: and this was a common ſpeech among the people, becauſe a promiſe was made to *Dauid*, that his kingdome ſhould laſt for euer: this is the reaſon why it was vſually called the *houſe of Dauid*. The word *key* is put in the ſingular number for many keyes. Now albeit they were wont to beare the keyes in their hands; yet it is ſaid here, that they were *laid vpon his ſhoulder*; becauſe he was to vndergoe an heauie burthen. And yet he meanes nothing elſe, but that the tuition and gouernement of the houſe is committed into Eliakims hands, to order it as he thinkes beſt. Wee alſo know, that to giue the keyes, ſignifies as much as to put one into poſſeſſion. Some referre this vnto Chriſt, but with what reaſon I ſee not: for the Prophet here compares two men together; namely, Shebna and Eliakim. Shebna was baniſhed, and Eliakim was placed in his roome: wherein doth this concerne Ieſus Chriſt? For Eliakim was no figure of him; neither doth the Prophet deſcribe ſome hidden myſterie here, but borrowes a ſimilitude from the dealings of men; as if one ſhould giue the keyes to ſome ſteward placed ouer his houſe, (as hath beene ſaid.) There is alſo the ſame reaſon to be giuen of it, where Chriſt calles the office of teaching, The keyes of the Kingdome of heauen: thoſe therefore that wearie themſelues to finde out ſome ſecret and hidden myſterie in this place, which is ſo plaine and manifeſt, ſhew themſelues but too ſottiſh and ridiculous, ſeeing there is no neede at all of any ſuch deuices. Why ſo? Becauſe the Miniſters open heauen by the preaching of the word, and bring men to Chriſt, who is the onely way. He takes the *keyes* in this place therefore, for the gouernment of the Kings houſe, in regard the chiefe truſt of it was committed to Eliakim in his time. *2. Sam.* 7. 12. *Pſal.* 132. 11. *Mat.* 16. 19

Verſ. 23. *And I will faſten him as a naile in a ſure place, and he ſhall bee for*

for the throne of glorie to his fathers houſe.

WEe muſt ſupply a particle of ſimilitude here, and therefore I haue put this word *As*, in the text. By *faithfull*, he means a ſure and firme place; for this word is deriued of the word Trueth, which is alwaies accompanied with ſtedfaſtneſſe and aſſurance. And for that cauſe the Hebrewes take Truth for a thing ſure and certaine. The Prophet vſeth an elegant ſimilitude, out of which the faithfull Magiſtrates (who are but a few) ought to gather a ſingular conſolation. For thus they may conclude with themſelues, that they are not onely raiſed by the Lord to this degree of honour, but that they are confirmed and faſtened in it, as if they were fixed thereunto by his immediate hand. And to ſay the trueth, looke where the feare of God beares ſway, there muſt needes be *ſtedfaſtneſſe*. For the power and thrones of Kings, is eſtabliſhed by iuſtice; as *Salomon* ſaith, Pro. 16.16. Neither doth it ſerue to comfort Princes onely, to the end they may bee able to paſſe thorow all dangers with a reſolute mind: but alſo that they may execute their office conſtantly, and without diſtraction, ſo as they neede not quaile nor faint for anie cauſe, nor to feare any danger.

But alas how few are there that taſte this doctrine truely? All are almoſt like *Ieroboam*, thinking that religion ought to ſtoope to them, which they like and allow of no further then they ſee it to be for their benefit: nay they ſticke not at all to diſguiſe and alter it at their pleaſure: as for God and his true religion, they ſet the care thereof in the laſt place. What wonder is it then that they are alwaies in feare of themſelues in their affaires, being neuer at peace and quiet: for they ſeldome or neuer ſet any time apart to thinke vpon him, from whom proceedes all ſtrength and power. Thence come treaſons, thence ariſe cruelties, auarice, violence, and all manner of fraudes and oppreſſions, wherein Princes now ouerflowe more impudently then anie other.

The cauſe of treaſons.

Yet are there ſome, in whom wee may perceiue that which is ſaid heere touching Eliakim: the Lord keepes, maintaines, and bleſſeth the duties of equitie and iuſtice, wherewith he hath adorned them. For if he ſuffer the very tyrants to raigne for a time, in regard they obſerue ſome forme of gouernement: how much more will he bleſſe Princes, when with a good and vpright heart they maintaine trueth and equitie, and promote Gods true worſhip and ſeruice? He that is the perpetuall maintainer of iuſtice, will hee not defend and eſtabliſh ſuch a Prince more and more?

If God ſeem to bleſſe tyrants in ſuffering them to floriſh for a time, much more ſuch as are nurſing fathers to his Church.

Verſ. 24. *And they ſhall hang vpon him all the glorie of his fathers houſe,* euen *of the nephewes and poſteritie; of ſmall veſſels, from the veſſels of the cups, euen to all the inſtruments of muſicke.*

THis is as much as if hee ſaid, that Eliakim ſhall diſcharge his dutie in good ſort, ſo as he ſhall not deale negligently in it. Whence we gather, that God aduanceth not Princes vnto honour, to the end they ſhould bee idle, and giue the reines to their luſtes and affections. For dominion and authoritie is a burden of great waight and labour, if ſo be men performe their duties as they ought to doe: farre from the practiſe of theſe dumbe idolles, who thinke God hath lifted them vp into the ſeate of honour, to no other end but to fare deliciouſly, and to wallow themſelues at their eaſe in all manner of pleaſures. But if a Prince will execute his office aright, hee muſt prepare himſelfe to vndergo much turmoile. Neither muſt we thinke that this ſimilitude of the *naile*, ſhould not ſute well in regard of gouernment: for hereby is ſignified, a burthen full of buſineſſes and troubles. I alſo know well enough, that ſimilitudes agree not alwaies in euery thing, but in the ſpeciall drift whereat they aime.

Princes are not aduanced to liue idly.

Dominion an heauie burden if men performe their duties.

Gouernment a burden full of buſineſſe.

Now in that hee ſpeakes of the *houſe of his father*; doubtleſſe Eliakim was of the royall blood. And therefore by *ſucceſſours*, I not onely vnderſtand his next kinſfolkes; but the whole familie of *Dauid*. He then ſhall haue the charge of all that ſhall bee in the Kings houſe. When he addes the *childrens childrens*, he therewithall teacheth, that this gouernement ſhall be of long continuance; ſo as it ſhall not laſt one mans life onely, but it ſhall be extended to thoſe that ſhall come a long time after. For good Princes not onely profit the Church and Commonwealth for their owne time, but thoſe alſo which come after them, to whom they leaue ſuch wholeſome lawes, ordinances, ſtatutes, and markes of good and iuſt gouernment; that the ſucceſſors dare not (albeit they be wicked) breake out into all licentiouſneſſe at the firſt; yea they are compelled in deſpight of them, to retaine ſomething that is good for modeſties ſake. This hee ſhewes ſhall come to paſſe in Eliakim, whoſe gouernment ſhall be ſo vpright, that his very *ſucceſſors* ſhall feele ſome fruit of it.

Princes ſhould not onely care for the welfare of the Church for their owne times, but for the poſteritie after them.

From the ſmaleſt veſſels.] Vnder a figure he ſhewes that iuſtice ſhall be adminiſtred with equitie, and the right aduanced: and it is as much as if he had ſaid, that Eliakim ſhall not onely deale well with the great ones; but that he ſhall haue reſpect to the *meaneſt* alſo. But becauſe this is very rare in a Prince, he is much more worthy of praiſe, then if he ſhould onely fauour the rich and mightie. For the rich haue meanes enough to keepe themſelues frō hurt, but the weakeſt are put to the walles, as they ſay; and the poore are a pray and ſpoile to others: and who is it almoſt that will defend the innocencie of their cauſe? By *veſſels*, the Hebrewes vnderſtand all manner of inſtruments: and this ſignification extends very far. When he mentiōs **inſtruments of muſicke*, he explaines that which he had ſaid in a word: for this ſerues to the expoſition of

*Or, bagpipes.

the word *small* or *little*: as if hee should say, There is nothing so little or contemptible, which he will not haue care of.

Vers. 25. *And in that day, saith the Lord of hostes, shall the nayle that is fastened in the sure place depart, and shall be broken and fall: and the burden that was vpon it shall be cut off; for the Lord hath spoken it.*

THis might seeme to contradict that which hath been said heretofore: but he speakes no longer now of Eliakim, but returnes againe to Shebna, who should be put out of his office; as *Isaiah* had foretold. Otherwise what way or meanes were there left for Eliakim to come to this honour, vnlesse Shebna were put out? But he had laid his plot in such exquisite manner, that he neuer imagined any man whatsoeuer should bee able to supplant him. Thus when hee tooke himselfe to bee in best case, and furnished with manie meanes, so as it seemed he was furthest out of danger; euen then must hee be turned out of all, and Eliakim must succeed him. In that he calles it a *faithfull* or *sure place*, it must bee vnderstood as in regard of men; who thinke that things fortified on euerie side, must needes continue alwaies: but God with his onely blast ouerthrowes all these munitions. Hee speakes then by way of granting, when hee saith, that this was a sure and stable place. Whence we are to gather, how fondly such glorie and trust in their greatnesse, who are aduanced into high places of honour, seeing they may be stripped out of all, and abased in the twinckling of an eye.

It followeth, *And the burden.*] When the wicked begin once to fall, then those who were vpheld by their authoritie, must needes fall together with them. For is it not good reason that such as were brethren in euill with them, and had furthered this wretch as farre as they could, that they should also partake with him in his punishment? Verie hard it is for them then, who shrowd themselues vnder the protection of the wicked, and imploying all their meanes for their seruice; that such should not also therewithall be guiltie of their wicked courses: and be it they should be guiltlesse, (which yet falles out very seldome, or rather indeedd neuer) yet notwithstanding they are iustly punished, because they haue placed their hopes in the wicked, as in a sure fortresse, and haue wholly relied vpon their command and authoritie.

It is not safe to serue such masters as are not Gods seruants.

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *The burden of Tyre. Howle ye shippes of Tarshish: for it is destroyed, so that there is none house: none shall come from the land of Chittim: it is reuealed vnto them.*

TYre was a verie rich Citie, and greatly renowned in regard of the traffique which all nations had with it, as also in regard of the townes of warre and Cities habitable which it built: as Carthage, which imitated the Roman Empire; Vtique, Leptis, Gades, and other Cities, who all sent their presents to *Tyre*; hereby protesting, that they acknowledged this to be the mother Citie. But *Isaiah* threatens it with destruction, because it wronged the people of God; as we may gather out of Ezechiel, 26. 2. For we are chiefly to consider the cause of this destruction, in regard it is the Prophets meaning to reueale Gods fatherly loue to his elect and chosen people, who meant to set himselfe against all their enemies. Some thinke that this should be referred to the siege of *Alexander*, who tooke Tyre with great difficultie. But this supposition is too weake, because *Isaiah* mentions Chittim, vnder which name the Hebrewes not onely comprehend the Macedonians, but other nations also, as the Greekes, and all those which are beyond the seas. Now King *Nebuchadnezzer* vsed the helpe not onely of the souldiers of his owne Country in this siege, but other strangers also which he had called from among the Greekes and other places. Besides, the Greekes are spoken of for another respect, as we shall see by and by after; namely, because in time to come, they should not bring their ships any more to Tyre, to trade there. Yet the end of this Chapter giues me occasion to be of a contrary opinion, because *Isaiah* speakes there of the restauration of Tyre, which was neuer repaired after *Alexander* the Great tooke it by force. Moreouer, when I conferre *Ezechiels* words with these, me thinkes they make but one prophecie. He speakes not then of *Alexander*, but of *Nebuchadnezzer*; and so doubtlesse it is to be expounded. Adde hereunto, that in the time of *Ezechiel* and *Isaiah*, this Citie was vnder the command of a king: but when *Alexander* took it, the histories say, it was brought into the forme of a Commonwealth. And if we shall consider the end of the prophecie, wee shall be sufficiently confirmed in this opinion: for his purpose was to comfort the Iewes, by threatning an inuitable punishment to the Tyrians, of whom they had been afflicted. For it had been a thing verie vnreasonable, for the Lord to haue chastised other nations, and that these in the meane while which had been no lesse enemies, should haue escaped scotfree, or should haue bin smitten fiue hundred yeeres after. All these coniectures then lead vs to expound this place of *Nebuchadnezzer*.

The cause of this prophecie.

Alexander.

Howle.]

Howle.] He inricheth the declaration of the ruine of this Citie with diuers figures: and it is his cuſtome ſo to ſpeake, that he might get the more authoritie to his prophecie. For to deliuer ſuch a thing in a plaine ſpeech, would haue been but cold; neither would it haue been ſufficiently effectuall to comfort the hearts of thoſe, who a long time had been weake and faint: and therefore he ſets it forth before them, as it were in freſh and liuely colours. And firſt he ſhewes that the deſtruction ſhall be very great, in regard that euen the regions farre off ſhal feele it: and he commands the ſhips to *howle*, becauſe they ſhall haue no imployment when Tyre ſhall be deſtroyed. Now he eſpecially names the ſhips of the Cilicians, becauſe they being neighbours, vſed to traffique much and often with the Tyrians: and the Hebrewes call Cilicia, Tarſhiſh. Neither could it poſſibly be, but the deſtruction of Tyre, muſt bring great detriment to this Country; not onely in that the vſuall traffiques ceaſed for a time, but alſo in regard that the Merchants goods, together with their bookes of accounts, were carried away, and ſcattered here and there; as it vſually falles out when the houſes of rich men are rifled.

Where I haue tranſlated, *they ſhall come no more*; others expound it, There ſhall bee no houſe remaining, by which you may enter: but I take it I haue faithfully rendred the Prophets meaning: not as if he thought that all paſſage ſhould be taken from the Cilicians and Greekes; but he meant rather to ſay, that they ſhall goe no more to *Tyre*, as they were wont in times paſt, becauſe the mart there ſhould ceaſe. Thoſe who thinke the Prophet ſpeakes of the diſcomfiture made by *Alexander*, diuide the clauſe of the verſe, *From the land Cittim*, and conioyne it thus, This was reuealed vnto them from the land of Chittim. But I rather render it thus; They ſhall come no more from the land of Chittim: that is to ſay, that the Greekes might neither goe nor come, as they were wont. For by Chittim, the Hebrewes vnderſtand the Greekes and Eaſterne people: and it is as if hee ſhould haue ſaid; The traffique of the Greekes ſhall ceaſe, ſo as their ſhips ſhall no more arriue there. And vnder it, he alſo comprehends the Egyptians, Cilicians, Italians, and other nations.

When he ſaith; *This was reuealed vnto them*: wee may fitly vnderſtand it as well of the
1 Greekes, as of the Tyrians. If it be referred to the Greekes, the ſenſe will bee, that as ſoone as newes ſhall come of the deſtruction of Tyre, they ſhall then ſaile no more thither as they were wont: for they ſhall flee this port with as much feare as if it were a rocke. And this ſenſe I doe more willingly receiue: notwithſtanding I reiect not the o-
2 ther, to wit, that the Prophet confirmes his prophecie: as when wee ordinarily ſpeake of a thing that ſhall ſurely come to paſſe, wee ſay; Looke to it, for this appertaines to thee.

Verſ. 2. *Be ſtill, yee that dwell in the Iles: the Merchants of Zidon, and ſuch as paſſe ouer the ſea, haue repleniſhed thee.*

HEe ſets forth the ruine of Tyre more at large. Now there is here a change touching the number, in the word *Iles*; for albeit he ſpeakes in the ſingular number, yet he vnderſtands thereby ỹ Iles of the Mediterraneũ ſea, & the people ỹ dwell beyond the ſea; but chiefly the borderers which ſailed often to Tyre, and vſually traded there. He commands them to hold their peace; and to *be ſtill*, becauſe they ſhall no more trauaile thither. His meaning is, that they ſhould *be ſtill, as men confounded*; in regard of the great calamity which ſhould befall thẽ, in ſuch wiſe, as they ſhould not dare to vtter one word. For it could not bee but thoſe nations which traded there, muſt loſe much, when a Citie ſo repleniſhed with marchandiſe was ſacked. As for example; if Venice or Antwerp ſhould bee now deſtroyed, would it not redound to the great of many nations?

The Prophet makes ſpeciall mention of the *Sidonians*; not onely becauſe they were neighbours, but becauſe theſe two cities had both one beginning. *Zidon* was greatly renowned; but yet it was much leſſe in quantitie then Tyre. It ſtoode vpon the edge of the ſea, and was two hundred *ſtades in diſtance from it. Now they ſeemed ſo neere one to an other, and ſo linked together in merchandiſe, that the Poets often take the one for the other. Wee neede not doubt then but the Zidonians gained much more then others, in ſelling and exchanging their commodities: firſt in regard they were neighbours: and ſecondly, becauſe of their continuall trading. For the wealth of the Tyrians ſo flowed in vpon them, that they were caried vpon their wings, after the common prouerbe. Thence is it therefore that their loſſe muſt be much greater then any others, in this deſtruction of Tyre. And that is the cauſe why the Prophet bids Zidon to bee aſhamed in the fourth verſe. He addes, *which repleniſhed thee*: ſpeaking either of all in generall, or becauſe it was filled with the glut and multitude of men, in regard that ſtrangers came thither from diuers Countries farre remote from them, or elſe becauſe thoſe which trauailed for gaine, did therewithall inrich the Citie.

The cauſe why the Prophet mentions the Sidonians.

*A Stade containes the meaſure of fixe ſcore and fiue paces, which was the length of a race, when they ranne for a price or wages.

Verſ. 3. *The ſeede of Nilus growing by the abundance of waters, and the harueſt of the riuer was her reuenues: and ſhe was a mart of the nations.*

THe Prophets meaning is, that the riches of Tyre ſhall not deliuer it from deſtruction. He therefore ſets forth the rich eſtate thereof ſo highly, to the end euery one might know, firſt Gods iudgement; and ſecondly, 1
that this was no ſmall plague that was light 2
vpon her. And in the third place, the worke 3
of God did appeare to be ſo much the more

manifeſt, in regard that her deſtruction came ſuddenly, when ſhe thought on no ſuch matter. Moreouer, he deſcribes the wealthineſſe of Tyre elegantly: for becauſe *Nilus* furniſhed her with corne and other neceſſary proviſions, and that great quantitie of wheat was ſent thither out of Egypt; the Prophet ſaith, ſhee had her fieldes as it were, and her *ſeede* growing *in the ſtreame of Nilus*. The Venetians vſe to ſay; Their reuenue is in the ſea; becauſe nothing growes vpon the land: but they get all prouiſion of victuals by their trade of merchandiſe. And the Prophet ſaith the ſame of the Tyrians: for it was almoſt vnpoſſible they ſhould want food, becauſe Nilus furniſhed them therewith in great abundance. But he takes this prop away from them as a vaine hope; for they ſhall deſtitute them vtterly. *Iſaiah* therefore, as hath been ſaide, deſcribes theſe things, that all might the better perceiue the vengeance and wrath of God fallen vpon her.

A prouerbe of the Venetians.

Verſ. 4. *Bee aſhamed thou Zidon: for the ſea hath ſpoken, euen the ſtrength of the ſea, ſaying; I haue not trauailed nor brought forth children, neither nouriſhed young men*, nor *brought vp virgins.*

THis verſe is added by way of amplification. We haue told you the cauſe why he ſpake of Zidon thus in particular before. Now calles Tyre, *Sea*, by way of excellencie, as if ſhe alone raigned in the middeſt it. That which is by and by added, *I haue not conceiued*, is ſpoken in the perſon of Tyre: and thus he pleaſantly derides Tyre, who bragged of her Townes: for Tyre *begat* or built other Cities very renowned. She was in olde time much ſpoken of (ſaith *Plinie*) for the Cities which ſhe built; to wit, Leptis, Vtique, and this Carthage, the imitatrix of the Roman Empire; meaning to rule ouer all the world; and Gades alſo, which was built vpon the ſea. Now all her wealth conſiſted in purple and ſcarlet. The Prophet then brings in the Citie of Tyre, lamenting her ancient glorie and excellencie: Alas, I am now no longer a mother; and what hath it profited me that I haue nouriſhed ſo many children, and brought forth ſo many Cities? For Carthage was wont to ſend preſents to Tyre euerie yeere, by way of homage: and therein acknowledged her for her *mother*. Thus it ſeemes that Tyrus ſurmounted all other Cities in dignitie, ſeeing Carthage, which was the ſecond after the Roman Empire, did in ſome ſort ſubmit it ſelfe vnto her. But the Lord tooke all theſe ornaments from her in a moment, in ſuch wiſe, that ſhe *laments*, as if ſhee had neuer had children.

See verſ. 2.

Plin. lib. 5. cap. 19.

Carthage.

Verſ. 5. *When the fame comes to the Egyptians, they ſhall be ſorie concerning the rumor of Tyrus.*

BY this verſe hee ſignifies, that this fall of Tyrus ſhall touch the Egyptians alſo: and thus the expoſition which wee follow, is confirmed; to wit, that theſe things ought to bee referred to the firſt ſacking of it. For thoſe of Tyre were in league with the Egyptians, and both of them had their King: not as in the time of *Alexander*, at what time Tyre was a free Citie, and liued vnder her owne lawes. Now hee could no way better expreſſe the ſocietie that was betweene them of Tyre and the Egyptians: and the reaſon why he ſhewes that the Egyptians ſhall haue their part in this deſtruction is, becauſe they had ſolicited the Iewes to rebell, and had turned them away from truſting in God. Thoſe were open enemies: theſe vnder pretence of friendſhip, entertained poiſonfull hatreds. Both of them are iuſtly puniſhed.

God will puniſh as well the ſecret as the open enemies of his Church.

Verſ. 6. *Goe yee ouer to Tarſhiſh: howle ye that dwell in the Iles.*

HE ſpeakes not onely to the Tyrians, but alſo to the ſtrangers who were in league with them, in regard of their commerce: now hee commands that they get them to ſome other place, and to ſeeke out other hauens. And he names Cilicia, which was oppoſite to Tyre: as if hee ſhould ſay, This port which hath been ſo much frequented, ſhall hereafter be ſo forſaken, that the ſhips ſhall ſaile into an other quarter, quite an other way. For when Merchants ſee a port broken, or a mart aboliſhed, they are wont to ſeeke out others. He puts one Ile for many, as we haue expounded before; becauſe the change of the number is a thing common among the Hebrewes: and againſt theſe Iles he threatens, that they ſhall *howle*; becauſe their maintenance depended vpon this trade of merchandiſe. Beſides, their bookes of reckonings and accounts were mingled here and there.

Verſ. 7. *Is not this that your glorious* Citie? *her antiquitie is of ancient daies: her owne feete ſhall leade her a far off to be a ſoiourner.*

THe Prophet aduanceth his ſtile, and inſults yet further againſt Tyre. Hee diſdaines her pride, in that ſhee gloried in the *antiquitie* of her name: he is bold thé we ſee to confirme his ſpeech, which to any mans reaſon might ſeeme incredible. For who doubts but that this prophecie was ſcorned: firſt, the power and ſtrength of Tyre was inuincible, and her wealth as a wall of braſſe. Well, *Iſaiah* is ſo much the more bold and confident, and denounceth a certaine deſtruction to befall her: and albeit ſhee was the moſt ancient amongſt other Cities, and in regard thereof, euerie one applauded her: yet all this ſhould not preuent her certaine ruine and downefall.

No ſtrength able to match the power of the Almightie.

Now profane hiſtories doe fetch the originall

ginall of Tyre, from time almoſt out of mind, and that ſo darkely and obſcurely indeede, that a man can ſcarcely vnderſtand their meaning: yet they ſay, that the *Phenicians* built it: ſo as they which glorie of antiquitie, may call themſelues children of the earth. But the Prophet to this *antiquitie* oppoſeth *baniſhment*; ſhewing that when the Lord is purpoſed to correct this people, they muſt needs ſtoope. For to *goe whither the feete leades one*, ſignifies nothing elſe but to wander and runne hither and thither. Although his meaning alſo is, that they ſhall wander thus deſtitute of their riches alſo; and in their exile, ſhall be in want of all things: ſo as they ſhall not haue ſo much as an horſe or wagon to carrie themſelues, or any thing of theirs vpon. Now when pouertie is ioyned with baniſhment, it is a very wofull condition: for a man will eaſilie beare his baniſhment, if hee haue wherewith to liue, and maintaine his eſtate: but to dwell in a ſtrange Countrie as vnknowne, with pouertie, is a miſerie of miſeries. And that hee may heape vp her afflictions to the full, hee addes, that ſhee muſt goe into a *farre Countrie*: now the further one is exiled, the harder the baniſhment is.

Phenicians.

Pouerty ioyned with baniſhment, muſt needes be dolorous.

Queſt.

Verſ. 8. *Who hath decreed this againſt Tyrus, (that crownes* men) *whoſe Merchants are Princes, *whoſe Chapmen are the noble of the world?*

*Or, crowning.

*Or, whoſe factors.

THe Prophet adornes this Citie with this title, who inriched many; as we may eaſilie gather from the drift of the text. For when he calles her Merchants *Kings*, he ſufficiently ſhewes, that by the word *crowning*, vnder a ſimilitude he meanes *the magnificence of Kings*. And thus their opinon is refuted, who refer this prophecie to other Cities. The ſumme is, that Tyrus inriched her Citizens, as if ſhe created euerie one of them Kings and Princes. Some thinke this verſe is to be added thus; as if the Prophet ſhould repreſent the perſon of a man aſtoniſhed with the deſtruction of Tyre, to make others afraid: as if he ſhould ſay; Is it poſſible that Tyre ſhould be ſo ſoone brought low, where there is ſuch abundance of riches, ſuch might, meanes, munitions; yea where there is ſo great glorie and maieſtie? And that he ſhould then at an inſtant pauſe a while, as men are wont to doe in things vnlooked for. But it is better to ioyne the verſe following to this, which takes away all difficultie; ſeeing the Prophet himſelfe forthwith anſwers this queſtion, by which he meant to ſtirre vp his auditors to the better attention. For he might plainely haue ſaid; Theſe things are done by the counſell of the Lord: but in regard wee are drowſie, ſecure, and ſenſeleſſe hearts would eaſilie haue ouerſlipped this without obſeruation: therefore hee awakens their ſpirits by this *interrogation*; to the end all might know that hee ſpeakes of no common thing, that therewithall they might take the matter the more to heart. And indeed, by how much the more the iudgements of God are aboue the reach of common ſenſe, ſo much the more are they worthy to be admired.

He ſpake to Egypt before, Chap. 19. in the ſame termes, ſhewing that her deſtruction ſhould not be ſorted with common and ordinarie changes. Now becauſe it was incredible that Tyre could bee ruinated by men; therefore the Prophet well concludes, that *God himſelfe* ſhall bee the author of it. And therefore hee calles it the mother and nurſe of *Kings*; that he might cauſe Gods iudgement to ſhine ſo much the more cleerely: for had it beene a Citie vnrenowned, fewer words would haue ſufficed touching the deſtruction of it: but being adorned with ſo high titles, who could imagine that this could otherwiſe come to paſſe, but by the *counſell* and decree of God? Hee calles the Merchants *Princes*: as at this day the Merchants of Venice thinke themſelues to ſurmount Princes in dignitie, Kings onely excepted: yea, and the *factors* alſo take themſelues for no leſſe then good Gentlemen. I haue heard alſo that there are *factors* at Antwerpe, who feare not to ſpend more then the richeſt Gentlemens ſubſtance can beare. Now we are wont to *aske queſtions*, when nothing can be anſwered, but what we pleaſe: which alſo is a ſigne of courage and boldneſſe.

See verſ. 9.

Merchants of Venice.

Factors of Antwerpe.

Anſ.

Verſ. 9. *The Lord of hoſtes hath decreed this, to *ſtaine the pride of all glory, and to bring to contempt, all them that be glorious in the earth.*

*Or, profane

The pride.] Or, the haughtineſſe: for we may reade it both waies, becauſe haughtineſſe begets pride; for it is very rare to finde humilitie of ſpirit in a haughtie minde. Notwithſtanding it is better to reade it *pride*, which is enough of it ſelfe to prouoke God to take vengeance, when men vnder pretence of their excellencie, aduance themſelues aboue meaſure. *To profane*, and diſhonour, are taken for one and the ſame thing: becauſe thoſe who are exalted to honour, ſeeme to bee as men conſecrate and ſet apart, conceiting I wot not what greatneſſe of themſelues; as if they were now quite exempt out of the common ranke of men. But God no ſooner ſtrips ſuch of their dignity, and brings them down, but hee forthwith makes them vile and contemptible. Let vs therefore learne from this place, ſo to conſider of Gods prouidence, that we giue that praiſe to his infinite power, which belongs vnto it for his ſo iuſt a gouernement. So then, albeit the iuſtice whereby it pleaſeth God to moderate his actions alwaies appeares not vnto vs; yet ought wee not therefore to ſeparate his power from his iuſtice. In the meane while, for as much as the Scriptures plainely ſhew, and often ſet before vs the end why God doth this or that; we ought to bee wiſe in obſeruing the cauſes of his works.

A rare thing to finde an humble heart in an haughtie minde.

Note.

Now this inuention of Gods abſolute power, which the Schoolemen haue forged, is a moſt execrable blaſphemie: for it is all one as if

Gods abſolute power.

if they should say, that God were a Tyrant, doing and appointing to bee done what himselfe liketh; and not that which is according to right and equitie. Their schooles are full of such blasphemies, and therein they imitate the Pagans, who say, that God sports himselfe in turning things vpside downe here below. But in the schoole of Christ wee are taught, that Gods iustice shines in all his workes, of what kind soeuer they be; that so all mouthes may be stopped, and glory may be giuen to him alone. The Prophet shewes then that the causes of such an horrible desolation shall be most iust; to the end wee should not thinke that God doth any thing without reason: for those of Tyre were proud, haughtie, couetous, vncleane in life, and dissolute. Riches and abundance of all things, vsually brings in these vices with them: and the Cities which stand vpō the trade of merchandise, are easily stained herewith. Therefore he teacheth, that God was so prouoked by these sinnes; that all others might learne by this example to look about them betimes, and not to abuse the blessiings of God in excesse and riot. And this is the fruit indeede which we are to gather of this; that so we may not imagine the Prophet sets a naked and bare historie here before vs. But will one say, Doth God hate the greatnes of Princes and Lords? Why he himselfe aduanceth them to that dignitie: by him great Lords and Nobles beare rule; and it is he that establisheth all the orders of Magistrates and superiours: how then can it be said he should hate them? I answere, that the dignitie whereunto Princes and great men are aduanced, is not hated of God, but accidentally, as they say; to wit, because being thus aduanced, they despise others, & thinke themselues to be no longer men, but some petty gods as it were. And thus pride alwaies for the most part, accompanies greatnesse; and that is it which God detests: must hee not then confound and ouerthrow that, whereof he professeth himselfe to be an vtter enemy?

Blasphemies rise among the schoolemen.

What sinnes vsually ouerflow in cities, which are maintained by the trade of merchandising.

Obiect.

Prou. 8.

Answ.

Vers. 10. *Passe thorowe thy land like a flood to the daughter of Tarshish: there is no more* *strength.

*Or, girdle.

Some translate the word *Mezach*, Girdle; others, Strength. Those which turne it, Girdle, say; that Tyre shall be so spoiled, that there shall not be left so much as a girdle: and thus hee should allude to the great heape of merchandise: for the baseste of them sold of these girdles. But I thinke rather the Prophet had respect to the situation of the citie, which was fenced on all sides, and inuironed with ditches, ramparts, walles, & with the sea also.

Vers. 11. *He stretched out his hand vpon the sea: hee shooke the Kingdomes: the Lord hath giuen a commandement concerning the place of merchandise, to destroy the power thereof.*

Some thinke this prophecie of *Isaiah* touching the destruction of Tyre, should now be confirmed by examples, to wit, that the Lord hath shewed so many testimonies of his power in ouerthrowing great kingdomes, that it is no wonder if he now vtterlie roote out this Citie of Tyre, how florishing or rich soeuer it be. And this maner of teaching is often found in the Scriptures, because men acknowledge not the power of God, vnlesse it appeares by manifest examples and by the effects. Thus they thinke then that the Prophet heere calles to minde the deliuerance out of Egypt, when the Lord diuided the sea, and afterward hauing driuen out seuen Kings, he caused his people to enter into the land of Canaan. But viewing the Prophets words with mature iudgement, I had rather expound them as an appendance of that which went before; and that because hee speakes of Tyre heere (a coast towne) whose riches occupied all the sea. Exod. 14. 21.

Hee addes the *kingdomes*, in regard that it could not perish alone, but therewithall must needs pull ruin vpon many kingdomes besides. And thus this change was as it were the change of the whole world, as it appeeres by histories. Last of all, the Prophet concludes that it is *God* himselfe who hath giuen *commandement* touching the marring of these markets, as they say. The word *Cheraam* hath caused the expositors to thinke that the Prophet speakes heere of the Canaanites, as if he alledged the example of Gods vengeance against them. But this their supposition is too weake; for this word is often taken appellatiuely, as was the word Factors in the eight verse. For the riches of Tyre consisting in traffique and merchandise, *Isaiah* calles it by the name which it chiefly deserued. Now by the verb *to decree*, he sets out the prouidence of God, to the end the Iewes might know that whatsoeuer seemes of some continuance in this world, yet stands or falles at Gods pleasure, so as he needs no great engins of warre to ouerthrow any strong place, for the least signe he makes with his finger will suffice.

Vers. 12. *And he said, Thou shalt no more reioyce (when thou art oppressed, o virgin daughter of Zidon: rise vp, goe ouer to Chittim: yet there thou shalt haue no rest.*

*Or, he shall come no more at thee to make thee glad.

All these things tend to one and the same end: for if the Prophet had seene it fit to haue concluded the matter with a bare description, he would not haue confirmed this propheste with so many words. It was a thing almost incredible that so rich and strong a Citie, so well appointed and fortified, and confederate with so many nations, could haue euer been ouerthrowne and ruinated. When he saith *he shall come no more at thee*, his meaning is not to forestall them of the hope of restauration which he giues them hereafter, vers. 18. for this threatning ought to be restrained to the destruction of Tyre, as if he should say, Thou shalt not be such a wanton hereafter as thou wast wont to be in times past.

He

He calles her a *virgin* by way of ſimilitude, becauſe none had medled with the riches of Tyrus before this time; neither had ſhee yet ſuſtained any loſſe. He praiſeth not her chaſtitie then but he eloquently ſhewes, that the riches which had been hid ſo cloſe, ſhould be digged vp: as if he ſhould ſay; Thou reioicedſt heretofore as *young virgins* in the flower of their youth; but thy ioy ſhall come to an end when thou haſt been once deflowred. It is all one therefore for the ſenſe, as one ſhould call Venice a virgin Citie, becauſe it was neuer taken by force ſince it was built.

In what ſenſe this word Virgin is here to be taken.

Daughter of Zidon. He ſpeakes ſtill of Tyre; but he calles it ſo, becauſe the *Zidonians* had built it, albeit now the daughter was waxen richer then the mother, as it often falles out in worldly things. Now the commoditie and ſituation of the place, was the cauſe that the Tyrians grew the ſtronger: ſo as Zidon now depended vpon them. It appeares ſufficiently by the holy hiſtorie, that the Monarchy of Tyrus was very famous: but the Prophet in this place onely reſpects her beginning. In that he afterwards commands them to *paſſe ouer to Chittim*, he not onely driues them into Cilicia, but into the Countries further off: for vnder this word, he comprehends Greece, Italy, and other regions: as if he ſhould haue ſaid; When by baniſhment thou ſhalt be forced to change thy habitation, thou ſhalt *finde no reſt* among thy neighbours neere hand, but thou muſt wander vp & downe thorow-out the world; thou ſhalt bee brought into places vnknowne, neither yet ſhalt thou find reſt there. To be ſhort, his meaning is, that this deſtruction ſhall bee ſo fearefull and miſerable, that they ſhall finde reſt neither amongſt neighbours, nor yet amongſt ſtrangers, when they ſhall haue paſſed the ſeas.

1. *King.* 5. 1.

Verſ. 13. *Behold the land of the Caldeans: this was no people: Aſſur founded it by the inhabitants of the wilderneſſe: they ſet vp the towers thereof: they raiſed the palaces thereof,* and *hee brought it to ruine.*

NOw hee confirmes that which hee hath prophecied againſt Tyre by an example. For it could hardly ſinke into any mans head, (eſpecially into the Tyrians) that their Citie could bee ſurpriſed, they being ſecure and dreampt of no ſuch matter. I know this place is expounded diuerſly: but I will not now ſtand to confute other mens opinions: it ſhall ſuffice mee to lay forth the Prophets meaning, ſo farre forth as I can diſcerne. *The people of the Caldeans were not.* That is to ſay, had no name: for if wee ſearch for the originall, they deſcended from the Aſſyrians, as we may iudge by the 10 Chapter of Geneſis, verſe 11. Hee truely affirmes then that it was no people in the beginning; becauſe it was couered vnder the name of another: ſo as it was not a bodie at all of any Commonweale.

Whereas we haue tranſlated, *The inhabitants of the wilderneſſe*, others tranſlate Ships: but me thinks this expoſition is conſtrained. The firſt which I haue ſet downe, agrees better; to wit, that the Aſſyrians had eſtabliſhed and ſet vp a certaine eſtate among the Caldeans, who before wandred thorow the deſerts vnder tents of skinnes: but the Aſſyrians gathered them into Cities, and brought them to a better forme and manner of humane ſocietie. This hé ſhewes by the verbe *Orru*, to wit, that they edified and built Cities: for whereas ſome tranſlate, They threw downe: it cannot ſtand. What befell then? *They brought Aſſur vnto deſolation*, as the common prouerbe is, the daughter deuoured the mother: for the Caldeans deſtroyed the Monarchy of the Aſſyrians, albeit it was the moſt flouriſhing and the moſt mightie of all others. But what of all this? What doe theſe things appertaine to Tyre, will ſome ſay? Much; becauſe it ſhould be deſtroyed by the Aſſyrians and Caldeans. Seeing then that the Caldeans, which were nothing in times paſt, were able to bring downe and ſubdue the Aſſyrians; is it any wonder if theſe two nations being ioyned together, ſhould ſubdue Tyre? If the Lord hath ſhewed ſuch an example of his power in the Aſſyrians; why ſhould Tyrus truſt in her riches? Doubtleſſe ſhe alſo ſhall feele the hand of the Lord, and her power ſhall no way bee able to reſiſt.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Verſ. 14. *Howle yee ſhips of Tarſhiſh, for your ſtrength is deſtroyed.*

HEe repeates that which hee ſaid before, verſ 1. for the Cilicians ordinarily vſed traffique with the Tyrians, becauſe they were borderers. He commands their *ſhips to howle*; becauſe when this hauen was ſhut vp, the Merchants ſhould ſtand amaſed, in regard they ſhould neither goe nor come any more as they were wont. Now he calles this port to which they vſually came, *their ſtrength*; not onely becauſe the harbour and abode there was ſafe, but alſo becauſe the voyages by ſea could bring no profite vnto them without it.

Verſ. 15. *And in that day ſhall Tyrus be forgotten ſeuentie yeeres, (according to the yeeres of one King) at the end of ſeuentie yeeres ſhall Tyrus ſing as an harlot.*

THe Prophet hauing ſpoken of the ſurpriſing of Tyre, now therewithall ſhewes how long their calamitie ſhould indure. For it may come to paſſe, that ruinated Cities may be ſoone repaired and brought to their firſt eſtate: but the Prophet teſtifies that this Citie ſhall remaine deſolate without inhabitant, the ſpace of *ſeuentie yeeres*. When hee ſaith, it *ſhall be forgotten*; his meaning is, that traffique ſhall ceaſe, and that Merchants ſhall haue no ordinarie concourſe to and fro, as they were wont. Now, whereas ſome referre

the dayes of a king to *Dauid*, it is too friuolous, for he takes it for the age of a man, as the Pſalmiſt ſhewes: The age of a man, ſaith he, is often limited to threeſcore yeares and ten, Pſal. 90. 10. But why mentions he a *king* rather then ſome other man? It is becauſe Tyre had a king, and therefore he counts the yeres by his life. This ſerued much therefore to confirme the certentie of this propheſie, for the Prophet could not know theſe things by any humane coniectures. By the *ſong of the harlot*, he vnder a fit ſimilitude meants merchandize, not that merchandizing is to be condemned in it ſelfe, for it is profitable and neceſſarie for a Common wealth: but he taxeth the deceits and guile wherewith it aboundeth, ſo as it may very well be compared to the art of harlotrie.

Verſ. 16. *Take an harp, and go about the Citie (thou harlot that haſt been forgotten) make ſweet melodie, ſing mo ſongs that thou mayſt be remembred.*

HE compares Tyre to an harlot, who hauing paſſed all her youth in whoredomes and filthines, at laſt becomming old (by reaſon whereof all forſake and deſpiſe her) yet can ſhe not forget her firſt gaine, nor her wicked prancks, but deſires to reuiue and refreſh her old ſpirits. And that ſhe may the better draw men out of all parts of the Citie vnto her, ſhe goes *ſinging*, and *playing vpon Inſtruments*, to delight her companions. For ſuch whores become mad as it were when they ſee themſelues deſpiſed becauſe of their age: we ſee alſo that the Poet *Horace* flouts an harlot called *Lydia* for the ſame cauſe. So Tyre, being deſtroyed and as it were buried in oblition, ſhall againe pluck vp her courage, vſing all her wits and deuiſes to recouer her firſt eſtate.

Horace. Lydia, an harlot.

By the *harp and the ſweete melodie* he vnderſtands the deceits, craft, entiſements and flatteries which are vſed in merchandiſe, by which Merchants ſerue their turnes to inueigle men, and to ſnare them in their nets. In a word, he ſhewes by what meanes the Cities which conſiſt of merchandiſe become rich, to wit, by craftie and vnlawfull ſhifts. For this cauſe it is that the Prophet ſaith, Tyre ſhall tickle mens eares with her ſweete melodie.

He further bids her to *double her ſongs*, as if he ſhould ſay, adde deceit to deceit, and flatterie to flatterie, till thou haſt drawne euery one vnto thee: ſteale into mens minds againe, and recouer thy firſt fame. To be ſhort, euen as an old harlot deuiſeth meanes how ſhe may get into fauour againe with men by painting, trimming, and decking her ſelfe in fine apparrell; alſo with muſicall Inſtruments and loue-ſongs: ſo Tyre ſhall riſe and inrich her ſelfe againe by the ſame meanes wherewith ſhe gat wealth before: not that he counſels or giues Tyre licéce by theſe words to enrich her ſelfe this way, but continues on his propheſie.

Verſ. 17. *And at the end of ſeuentie yeares ſhall the Lord viſit Tyrus,* * *and ſhe ſhall returne to her wages, and ſhall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the earth* that are *in the world.*

* Or, but.

ALthough Tyrus ſhall ſeeme to be vtterlie deſtroyed when God ſhall afflict her, yet the Prophet ſhewes that ſhe ſhall obteine mercie, for after her calamities ſhe ſhall be reſtored to her firſt glorie. But it is rightlie ſaid that ſuch a reſtauration ſhall be brought to paſſe by the worke of *the Lord*, for otherwiſe Tyre muſt of neceſſitie feele that which *Malachie* pronounceth againſt the Idumeans, to wit, that the Lord would ouerthrow and caſt downe all that which they built and ſet vp, Mala. 1. 4. They had neuer recouered their firſt eſtate then vnleſſe the Lord himſelfe had been the author of it.

Now frō hence we may gather a very profitable doctrine, to wit, ỹ albeit God be a iuſt & ſeuere Iudge againſt ỹ wicked, yet he giues place to his mercie, and is neuer ſo ſharp in making the wound, but he is as gentle in aſſwaging ỹ ſmart of it, and in the end takes it cleane away. Now if he be ſuch a one towards the godleſſe & reprobates, what a one will he be to thoſe whom he hath adopted in Chriſt Ieſus for his children, vpō whom he wil powre out his goodnes? When Kingdomes then are reſtored, when Cities are peopled afreſh, and that men recouer their liberties, all comes to paſſe by the only prouidence of God, who caſts downe the higheſt things when it pleaſeth him, and on a ſudden ſets vp and plants that which he had caſt downe.

That which followes, to wit, *and ſhe ſhall returne*, ſhould be read, But ſhe ſhall returne: for the meaning is, that Tyrus ſhall not become the better nor the wiſer by ſuch a tedious chaſtiſement, but ſhall by and by returne to her old bias againe, for in theſe words he taxeth her ingratitude. We euery day behold ſuch examples, for there is almoſt no corner in the world in which the Lord hath not ſet the print of his iudgements. Sometimes he giues thoſe whom he hath corrected a breathing time; but doe they become euer the better? No, the Prophet ſaith then that *Tyre* ſhall be ſuch a one, ſhe ſhall be neuer awhit reformed, but ſhall rather *returne* to her vomit againe; ſhe ſhall play the harlot as ſhe was wont to doe. It is not to be doubted but he ſpeakes of her merchandizing, but he continues on his ſimilitude which he had taken vp before, not meaning thereby vtterlie to cōdemne the trade of Merchants, as we haue ſaid, but becauſe amongſt ſo many corruptions as men haue mingled therewith, it very fitlie reſembles the prancks of harlots, for it is repleniſhed with ſo much cunning, ſecret packing, and ſuch ſubtle conueyances (as wee may now ſee in the world) that it ſeemes it was only deuiſed to ſnare and beguile the ſimple. How many new and vnknowne practiſes doe they inuent euery day to gaine and take vp on Vſurie? which yet none can perceiue vnleſſe of long time he hath frequented the Schooles of the Merchants. Wee neede not marueil then if the

Subtle conueiances among Merchants.

Vſurie.

Prophet

Prophet hath taken vp ſuch a ſimilitude; whereby he meant to ſhew, that Tyrus ſhould be no leſſe deceitful in the trade of merchandiſe, then ſhe was before.

[a] Or, but in the end.

Verſ. 18. *[a] Yet her occupying and her wages ſhall be holy vnto the Lord: it ſhall not be laid vp nor kept in ſtore; but her merchandiſe ſhall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eate ſufficiently, and to haue durable clothing.*

THis was an other fauour of God towards Tyre. After ſhe was reſtored, ſhe yet conuerted not to the Lord, but went on in her ſubtile dealings: for which ſhee deſerued vtterly to periſh. And indeede ſhe was miſerably puniſhed when *Alexander* tooke her by force: yet notwithſtanding the kingdome of Ieſus Chriſt was ſet vp there, as S. *Luke* witneſſeth, Acts 21.4. This verſe then muſt bee oppoſed to the former: as if he ſhould ſay, Yet ſhall the merchandiſe of Tyre be conſecrated to the Lord. Here we haue a wonderfull example of Gods goodneſſe, which ſtined euen into this vile brothelhouſe, and as you would ſay, euen into hell. This reſtauration of Tyre then muſt be attributed to the bountie of the Lord: but this firſt benefit was nothing in compariſon of the ſecond, when the Lord ſanctified and ſet it a part for himſelfe. But

Obiect. will ſome ſay, might that bee offered vnto God in ſacrifice, which the Tyrians had

Gen.17.1. ſcraped together by polling and vnlawfull ſhifts? For the Lord deteſts ſuch offerings; becauſe hee requires a pure conſcience, and innocent hands: Pſal.24.4. Now in regard of this queſtion, many trouble themſelues about the expoſition of this place, but to ſmall

Anſ. purpoſe: for it is not the Prophets meaning that the merchandiſe of Tyre ſhall be conſecrated vnto God whileſt ſhe continues in her whoredoms, but notes *the time to come*; namely, after her repentance and conuerſion. Shee ſhall not then gather treaſures, and heape vp wealth by hooke and by crooke, but ſhall imploy them in the ſeruice of God, and lay out the profit of her trading, for the comfort of the faithfull in their neede. Now albeit hee hath vſed an vnſeemely word, it is in regard of the time: ſignifying thar ſhe ſhall forget her wicked practiſes, and ſhall change her old cuſtomes.

They ſhall not be laid vp.] Thus in few words hee deſcribes the repentance of Tyre, which although in times paſt, was addicted to couetouſneſſe; yet being conuerted to Chriſt, ſhe ſhall not ſtudie to hoord vp riches, but ſhall imploy them for the reliefe of the poore and other good vſes. This ought to be the fruit of repentance, as S. *Paul* admoniſheth; Let him that ſtole, ſteale no more; but let him rather labour with his hands the thing that is good, that he may be able to giue to him that needeth: Eph.4.28. Whereas the Tyrians then in times paſt deuoured riches on all ſides, with an inſatiable deſire: *Iſaiah* ſaith, that now they ſhall bee readie to giue as faſt out, becauſe their inordinate deſire of gaine ſhall ceaſe. This is then a note of charitie to helpe 1
our poore brethren: contraiwiſe, of cruelty, if 2
we ſuffer them to want; eſpecially when God lades vs with plentie.

He addes the right way of doing good, to wit, they ſhall *beſtow their goods vpon the ſeruants of God.* Now albeit he comprehends all the faithfull, yet hath he a ſpeciall reſpect to the Prieſts and Leuites, of whom, ſome ſacrificed, ſome made readie the beaſts that were to be ſacrificed, & others watched: in a word, all were readie to doe their office; and for that cauſe it is ſaid, that they *dwelt before the Lord.* The like, by as good right, is to be ſaid of all the Miniſters of the Church. Moreouer, in as much as all the faithfull, of what condition ſoeuer they be, belong vnto the ſanctuarie of the Lord, and are made one royall Prieſthood by Chriſt, to dwell before him: I willingly referre theſe words to all the houſhold of faith, of whom wee ought to be moſt carefull: for S. *Paul* giues vs ſo in charge, and would haue them relieued before any other: Gal.6.10. For if the common bond of nature ought to moue vs to hold an eſtimation of our owne fleſh, how much more ſhould the *Chap. 58.7.*
vnion of Chriſts members which is much more holy and ſtraight, then all the bonds of nature, mooue and prouoke vs thereunto?

We ought alſo to obſerue in this phraſe of ſpeech, *to dwell before the Lord*, an other point: for albeit we haue not now the Arke of the couenant, yet by the benefit of Chriſt, we aproch neerer vnto God then the Leuites in old time did. And therefore we are commanded to walke before him no otherwiſe then if he looked vpon vs; to the end we may in all good conſcience giue our ſelues to holineſſe and righteouſneſſe; for wee are charged to walke alwaies as in his ſight, and to behold him as one that viewes all our waies, that ſo we may keepe iuſtice and iudgement.

That they may eat their fill.] The Prophet meanes, that wee ought to ſuſtaine our brethren much more largely and liberally then men are wont to doe: becauſe wee are wonderfull niggards and pinchpennies, when we are moued to relieue the poore. There are verie few that will venture their almes for nothing, and giue with a franke and willing heart: for they thinke that that which they giue to others, is loſt, and is but a leſſening of their ſtocke. The Lord therefore greatly commends a cheerefull heart, Rom. 12. 8. the rather to correct this vice of niggardlineſſe: and albeit the place in the Romans be chiefly directed to the Deacons, yet it ought to be applied to all. An other ſentence alſo muſt be kept in minde, which teſtifieth that God loues a cheerefull giuer: 2.Cor.9.7. Let vs alſo note that the Prophet affirmes, that whatſoeuer is giuen to the poore, is *conſecrated* vnto God: which the holy Ghoſt alſo in an other place teacheth; With ſuch ſacrifices God is pleaſed: Heb.13.10. For he neuer commanded men to offer ſacrifices, as if they benefit him; no, he needed them not; but he only appointed them theſe exerciſes of pietie vnder the

law: now, vnder the Gospell he commands vs to distribute something to our neighbours of that we possesse; testifying that whatsoeuer wee employ for the reliefe of our brethren, is to him a sacrifice of a sweete smell. And it ought greatlie to kindle the loue of bountie and liberalitie in vs, when we heare that our almes are so highlie commended, and that our hands together with our gifts are consecrated vnto God.

THE XXIIII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Behold, the Lord maketh the earth emptie, and he maketh it waste: he turneth it vpside downe, and scattereth the Inhabitants thereof.*

THis propheſie as I take it, is as it were ſ shutting vp of all thoſe things which haue bin deſcribed frō the thirteenth Chapter vnto this, wherein *Iſaiah* hath not onely foretold the ruine of the Iewes and Iſraelites, but alſo of the Moabites, Aſſyrians, Egyptians, and others. In a word, he heere comprehends all in a ſhort ſumme, as if he had viewed all the neighbour countries that were knowne to the Iewes. Some referre this to the Iſraelites, others to the Iewes, thinking the Prophet ſpeakes of their deſtruction: but ſeeing he makes mention of the *world*, I can not be drawne to take this place in any other ſenſe, but that he now in a few words comprehends all that which he hath ſaid of many particulars, and thoſe belonging to diuers times. Whereas he in the next verſe makes mention of the Prieſt, it contradicts this that I ſay nothing at all, although it might thereby ſeeme that theſe things ſhould only appertaine vnto the people of God: for albeit he ſpeakes of all nations, yet the Iewes alwaies deſeruing to be preferred in the firſt place, *Iſaiah* was to regard them chiefflie and principallie, becauſe it was theirs by right. For he ſpeakes of others accidentallie as you would ſay: no maruell then if hauing touched them, he mentions his owne people in a particular maner.

Others vnderſtand this place of the whole world in generall; yet ſo as they referre it to the laſt day: which me thinks is too ſtrict: for the Prophet hauing threatned the Iewes and other nations, in the end addes a conſolation, to wit, that the Lord will once againe raiſe vp his Church, making her to flouriſh more then euer it did: now how can this agree to the laſt Iudgement? By the word *earth*, I thinke the Prophet meanes not the whole world, but thoſe regions which were well knowne to the Iewes: as for example, if we at this day ſhould ſpeake of things which happen in the world, we ſhould hardly paſſe beyond Europe, much leſſe ſhould we thinke of that which is done in India, becauſe the parts on this ſide is our world as it were. In the ſame ſenſe *Iſaiah* ſpeakes of the *earth*, and of the Inhabitants of the Countries adioyning, which he, and thoſe to whom he ſpake, knew. To conclude, we may limit this *world* whereof the Prophet ſpeakes in this place, within the confines or bounds of the Aſſyrians, Egyptians, Moabites, and other nations, as if he ſhould ſay, Hitherunto I haue ſpoken of diuers calamities which then were like to fall vpon many people, and do yet threaten many others in particular: but now behold the concluſion, The Lord will ſpoile and ouerthrow the *face of the earth*, with all the beautie of it.

Others expound the verb *Bokak*, he opens the earth, that the enemies may the more eaſily enter into it: but I had rather expound it, He vncouers the earth, becauſe they vſe to ſay, The earth is couered or clothed all the while great multitudes of people inhabit it; as alſo whē it abounds with beaſts and fruits: contrarywiſe, it is ſaid to be vncouered and made bare when it hath loſt her inhabitants, for ſo ſhe is ſtripped of her garment, euen as if a man ſhould be ſtripped out of his coates and other apparell. Now this was to happen to the Aſſyrians, Egyptians, and other nations which he mentioned before, as well as to the Iewes, and therefore he wraps them vp altogether in one iudgement.

Vers. 2. **And there ſhall be like people, like prieſt, and like ſeruant, like maſter, like maid, like miſtris, like buyer, like ſeller, like lender, like borower,* **like giuer, like taker to vſurie.*

* Or, and the prieſt ſhalbe like the people, &c.

* Or, the borower, like the lender.

AND there ſhall be like prieſt.] By theſe words he ſignifies an vtter ruine, where all order, gouernment, and policie ſhall ceaſe: for whileſt any Commonwealth flouriſheth, there is alwaies a certaine difference betweene the people and the *prieſts*: well then, he notes an horrible confuſion. Now vnder this word *prieſt*, he puts the particular for the generall, taking a part for the whole, which is a thing very vſuall in the Scriptures: although we may take the word *Cohenim* for thoſe which are placed in any dignitie whatſoeuer: becauſe the Hebrues ſometimes giue this name to Princes, but ſpeciallie to ſuch as are of the blood Royall: notwithſtanding I willinglie receiue the figure Synecdoche before mentioned. Now ſithence the Prophet puts this confuſion of eſtates among the catalogue of Gods curſes, ſhewing that when they be thus turned topſie turuie, it proceeds from his fearefull indignation: we ought on the contrarie to gather how well-pleaſing policie, and the well ordering of all things is vnto God; as alſo what a great fauour we receiue from him when ſuch good order is preſerued

Good order in a Commonwealth, a ſinguler teſtimonie of Gods fauor.

and

and continued amongſt vs. For it being gone, our life differs nothing from that of brute beaſts. Wee are therefore not onely to acknowledge it to be an heauie hand of God vpon vs, but alſo to confeſſe our owne ſinnes to be the cauſe, when hee confounds eſtates, depriues vs of the word, and of iudgement ſeates: which being once put downe, the comfort of our life therewithall is fallen to the ground.

1

2 Our ſinnes the cauſe of all diſorders in Commonwealths.

We may alſo obſerue hence, that the Lord in executing his iudgements, ſpares not mens perſons, of what calling ſoeuer they be. What an holy calling was the *prieſthood* which the Lord had conſecrated to himſelfe, and adorned after a glorious manner? How much did the people alſo glorie in it; as if the continuance thereof had been vnchangeable, and to haue indured for euer? Yet notwithſtanding euen this honourable order of men, is wrapped in amongſt the iudgements of God; becauſe he reſpects no perſons. Nay, the more fauours wee haue receiued from him, and the greater our aduancement is, the more ſeuerely will hee correct vs, if wee proue vnthankfull, and abuſe his benefits.

To this appertaines that which is here added touching *maſters* and *ſeruants*, *buyers* and *ſellers*: for wee know that theſe callings are lawfull, and are not iumbled together, vnleſſe it bee when God ſmites his people in iuſtice; as we haue ſaid before: for in a State well managed, men put a difference betweene the *maſter* and the *ſeruant*. Neither can a Commonwealth long ſtand without *buying* and *ſelling*: now to make the poore equall with the rich, what is it elſe but to ouerthrow all humane ſocietie? We haue the Prophets meaning then, as if he ſhould ſay; All policie ſhall be aboliſhed, becauſe in theſe ruines, the *rich* ſhould be brought into extreme pouertie. To conclude, he here ſets forth an horrible deſtruction, after which ſhall enſue a wonderfull change.

The confuſiõ of eſtates in a kingdome, a forerunner of very ſtrange alterations.

Verſ. 3. *The earth ſhall bee cleane emptied and vtterly ſpoiled: for the Lord hath ſpoken this word.*

HE confirmes that which hee ſaid before: and withall admoniſheth them, that theſe changes ſhall not fall out by haphazard, as they ſay; but that it ſhall come to paſſe by the prouidence and worke of the Lord. He ſaid expreſly in the firſt verſe, that the Lord was determined to *empiie the earth*: now he tels thẽ, that it ſhall ſo come to paſſe, adding a reaſon of it; to wit, becauſe *God had ſpoken the word*: and therefore it could not be called backe againe.

Verſ. 4. *The earth lamenteth and fadeth away, the world is feebled and decayed; the *proud people of the world are weakened.*

*Or, high.

THe Prophet holds on his ſpeech ſtill: for all theſe words ſerue to lay forth the manner of the ruine of the whole earth, that is to ſay, ſo much as was knowne to the Iewes. Now hee ſets out this iudgement of God, vnder borrowed ſpeeches more familiarly, that he might awaken the drowſie; as hee is wont to doe.

By the *high people*, we may vnderſtand thoſe which were more excellent then others: for that was a matter of greater wonder, then if ſome people of a baſe condition had been deſtroyed. Notwithſtanding, if any be pleaſed to expound it particularly of the Iewes, I will not gaineſay them: for albeit the Aſſyrians and Egyptians exceeded them in riches and power; yet notwithſtanding the Iewes were higher then they, in regard that God had adopted them for his owne. Yet the other expoſition pleaſeth mee better: for ſo his meaning is; that God will not onely puniſh them of meane eſtate, but thoſe alſo that are aduanced to honour and dignitie aboue others.

Verſ. 5. *The earth alſo deceiueth, becauſe of the inhabitants thereof: for they tranſgreſſed the lawes, they changed the ordinances, and brake the euerlaſting couenant.*

OThers tranſlate, The earth is polluted; becauſe the verbe *Caneph*, ſignifies to be wicked: both ſenſes may agree, but the verſe following requires that wee expound it; *The earth deceiueth*. For hee ſeemes to amplifie it further by and by after; when hee ſaith, *Verſ. 6.* that the curſe hath deuoured the earth. There is no great hardneſſe in the word *Tacah*, whether we tranſlate it Vnder, or, Becauſe of her inhabitants. Now there is a mutuall traffique, as it were, betweene the earth, and thoſe that labour in it: ſo as ſhe ought to render thẽ that which ſhe hath receiued into her bowels, with vſurie; for otherwiſe ſhee *deceiues* them: but ſhe yeelds a reaſon why ſhe deceiues, when ſhee laies the blame vpon *the inhabitants*: for themſelues haue made her barren by their *wickedneſſe*. Our ſinne is the cauſe why the earth ſuſtaines vs not, nor brings forth her increaſe as God hath ordained by the courſe of nature. His will is, that ſhee ſhould be a mother vnto vs, to the end ſhe may yeeld vs food: now if ſhe change her nature and courſe, or degenerates from her fruitfulneſſe; let vs impute that to our owne *wickedneſſes*, becauſe we our ſelues ouerthrow that order which God hath ſet: for otherwiſe the earth would neuer *deceiue*, but would alwaies render vs that which ſhe ought. The cauſe is by and by added, why the earth is become vnfaithfull and deceiues her inhabitants: for is it not good reaſon they ſhould be defrauded of their prouiſion of food, that will defraud God, their Father and ſuſtainer of his honour? Now he taxeth the reuolt of his nation heere in a particular manner: for their fault was much more heinous, and leſſe excuſable, then all the ſinnes of thoſe which were neuer taught in God his ſchoole.

Mens ſinnes the cauſe of the earths barreaneſſe.

1 The word *Thorah* is transferred to the law, becauſe it ſignifies doctrine: but it is heere put in the plurall number, and ſignifies all the doctrine that is comprehended in the law. Now becauſe the *Law* conſiſts as well in Commandements as promiſes, the Prophet addes two other words or parts of it, to make his meaning the more plaine.

2 The word *Chok*, ſignifies an *Ordinance*, and by it ſome vnderſtand the Ceremonies, others Maners. Wee may tranſlate it Inſtructions: for I take it not only for Ceremonies, but for all things that belong to the rules of good life. Thirdly, he puts the word *Berith*, which ſignifies a bargaine or couenant. This word is to be reſtrained to the couenants whereby the Lord adopting his people, promiſed to be their God. He reprocheth their vnthankfulnes then, becauſe that albeit the Lord had manifeſted himſelfe vnto them diuers waies, and had giuen them ſingular teſtimonies of his loue, yet were they rebellious and wanton, *tranſgreſſing his lawes*, and *violating his holy couenant*.

Queſt. Anſ. But why directs he his ſpeech to the Iewes? Becauſe he knew that he was ſent vnto them as their Prophet to teach them. Hence wee

1 The rule of a well ordered life deſcribed. may gather what the rule of a well ordered life is: for it is conteined in the Law, which we muſt preciſely follow if we will approue our doings vnto God, if we turne from it to the right hand or to the left, we are guiltie of

2 *tranſgreſſion*. Wee may alſo obſerue that God would not only haue vs to thinke vpon his Lawes and Commandements in his word, but alſo vpon his *Couenant*: for the principall part of the word conſiſts in the promiſes by which hee adopts and receiues vs for his people. Now it is not to be doubted but in theſe varietie of words the Prophet meant to amplifie the matter: as if he ſhould ſay, You are wholly corrupt, nothing remaines ſound amongſt you.

The principall part of the word conſiſts in the promiſes.

Why he calls it an euerlaſting couenant. He calles it the *euerlaſting couenant*, becauſe it ought to be perpetuall, inuiolable, and to indure for euer, for it ought to continue alwaies from the father to the ſonne, that the memorie of it might neuer be loſt, but might be preſerued ſtedfaſt in all ages. He laies forth their diſloyaltie then and malice, in that they durſt violate the *Couenant* made betweene God and them, and ouerthrow the things which the Lord would haue kept ſure and ſtedfaſt. This was odious: no maruell then if the *earth* auenge her ſelfe of ſuch an impietie, by denying men their ſuſtenance.

Verſ. 6. *Therefore hath the curſe deuoured the earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are deſolate: Wherefore the Inhabitants thereof are burned vp, and few men are left.*

OThers tranſlate Forſwearing: but becauſe this word alſo ſignifieth to curſe, I doubt not but it is taken here for *curſing*, the Prophet hauing an eye to thoſe *curſes* which *Moſes* denounceth in the Law againſt the wicked that tranſgreſſe it: *Iſaiah* teſtifies then

Leuit. 26. 16 *Deut.* 28. 15.

that all the calamities which ſhould come to paſſe, proceeded from the curſe of God. We know that the earth was curſed becauſe of the tranſgreſſion of the firſt man, ſo as it brought forth thiſtles and briers in ſtead of good fruites, Gen. 3. 17. 18. and yet notwithſtanding the Lord hath ſo moderated this curſe, that it ceaſeth not to yeeld men foode, although in regard of their vnthankfulnes they be vnworthie of it. If we then ceaſe not to offend God, adding ſinne vnto ſinne; is it not good reaſon that wee ſhould feele this *curſe* to prick vs to the quick, and that the earth ſhould waxe barren and vnfruitfull?

The cauſe why the earth is curſed.

I thinke the verb *Aſham*, ſhould rather be taken to *deſolate*, then to tranſgreſſe; and the ſcope of ỹ text alſo leades vs vnto it, therfore I haue tranſlated, *they are deſolate*: vnleſſe any had rather take the coniunction for a particle of ſhewing the cauſe, in this ſenſe, The earth being curſed of God, is withered, becauſe the inhabitants thereof are wicked. The verb *Charn* may be take by way of ſimilitude, which I approue beſt of, to wit, that thoſe whom the wrath of God hath deuoured, were *burned*, for deſtruction is often compared to the burning of fire.

Now whereas in the end he addes, that *a few men ſhall be left*, thence we may perceiue, that this propheſie can not be expounded of the laſt Iudgement: for the Prophet rather foretels and confirmes the certentie of thoſe calamities which he had threatned to befall ſundrie nations, that by this meanes the faithfull being now readie to indure many afflictions, might feare, and be drawne to repentance.

Verſ. 7. *The wine faileth, the vine hath no might: all that were of merry heart, do mourne.*

8. *The mirth of tabrets ceaſeth: the noyſe of them that reioyce endeth: the ioy of the harp ceaſeth.*

HE continues on the ſame matter ſtill, but in a more particular maner, foretelling the deſolation that ſhould happen to the land of Iudea. Now he vſeth a large deſcription, that he might touch them the neerer to the quick, and wound them with the ſenſe of Gods iudgement. He alſo taxeth their exceſſe, intemperancie, and wantonnes, becauſe that in ſo great abundance of all things they rebelled againſt God.

But this ingratitude is not the ſinne of the Iewes only, nor of that age alone, but it may be ſeene euery where, that the more men are glutted with the bleſſings of God, the more proudlie they aduance themſelues againſt him, and giue themſelues the raines too much. For this cauſe the Prophet reproues thē, as if he ſhould ſay, Hitherunto you haue plunged your ſelues in *delights and pleaſures*, but the Lord is determined to *cut you ſhort*. Now *Iſaiah* ſpeakes *of the thing to come, as if it were alreadie preſent*, the better to paint it out as it were before their eyes.

Wofull effects proceeding from ſo gracious a cauſe.

Verſ.

Verſ. 9. *They ſhall not drinke wine with mirth: ſtrong drinke ſhall be bitter to them that drinke it.*

*Or, with ſongs.

IT is not a thing euill in it ſelfe to *drinke wine*; for God hath ordained it for mans vſe: but the Prophet here deſcribes the banquets of drunkards, in which nothing is to be ſeene but exceſſe, diſſolutions, and diſhoneſt *ſongs*. Moreouer, becauſe they had abuſed their abundance, hee threatens them with want; which men draw into their houſes, when they abuſe Gods bountie by their riot. He addes further, that if they ſhall *drinke ſtrong drinke*, it ſhall be *bitter vnto them*: for ſorrow makes vs feele no taſte either in meate or drinke. The ſumme is, that God will depriue them of the vſe of wine, notwithſtanding they haue plentie; becauſe the ſorrow wherewith they ſhall be ouerwhelmed, will cauſe them to loſe all taſte and ſauour therein. Strong drinke ſhall be *bitter*: that is to ſay, you ſhall not inioy theſe pleaſures and delights, in which you haue ſoaked your ſelues, any longer.

Abuſe of Gods benefits pulles want into our houſes.

Sorrow cauſeth ſweete things to become bitter to our taſte.

Verſ. 10. *The Citie of vanitie is broken downe: euery houſe is ſhut vp.*

I Willingly agree, that this be particularly referred to the deſtruction of Ieruſalem; although from the ſcope of the text wee may gather, that it alſo extends it ſelfe to other *Cities*; becauſe he will by and by ſummon the nations in the plurall number, to appeare before the iudgement ſeate of God. But in regard that *Iſaiah* principally reſpected his Citizens; wee may well take it, that this *Citie of vanitie* is *Ieruſalem*: either becauſe there was no true vertue in it, or becauſe it was deſtroyed.

Wee may referre the word *Tohu*, to the deſtruction it ſelfe, or to the ſinnes by which they had prouoked the wrath of God againſt them. If we referre it to their iniquities; his 1 meaning is, a *Citie* wherein there is nothing but diſorder: & this ſenſe pleaſeth me beſt, al- 2 beit it may alſo be referred to the deſtructiō. For as I take it, he ſhewes the cauſe of the ruine wherewith he threatens the Citie; to wit, becauſe iuſtice and equitie were baniſhed out of it. *The houſes ſhut vp*, ſignifie that there ſhall bee great ſolitarineſſe: for this is added onely to exemplifie the deſolation of this Citie.

Verſ. 11. *There is a crying for wine in the ſtreetes: all ioy is darkened; the mirth of the world is gone away.*

HIs meaning is, there ſhall be great ſcarcitie of *wine*. Now where want and famine is, there are innumerable complaints; not onely in corners, but in publike places alſo. He expreſſeth theſe complaints and lamentations then; but withall he taxeth their exceſſe and intemperancie, in that they contented not themſelues with things neceſſarie, but ſoked themſelues in an ouerflowing of drunkenneſſe and all voluptuouſneſſe. For wee ſhould ſupply an antitheſis that is wanting here; to wit, You hitherunto abounded in wine and good cheere, through which you haue taken occaſion to waxe wanton and proud againſt God: you ſhall therefore bee iuſtly depriued of them, ſo that in ſtead of your *rioting*, ſhall bee heard *cries* and *ſighings*.

Wee muſt alſo note a ſimilitude in this ſecond member: for as we are wont to ſay, Ioy then ſhineth in her brighteſt colours, when we haue matter of ioy: the Prophet therefore ſaith, that it is *darkened*; becauſe ſorrow is as a cloud put betweene. To reioyce, is a thing lawfull in it ſelfe, as alſo to drinke: neither doth the Prophet reproue it; onely that immoderate and inordinate ioy: for men ſeldome keepe compaſſe, by reaſon of that lawleſneſſe which is in them. For as much as the Iewes then had proudly giuen vp themſelues to all diſſoluteneſſe of life, he ſets Gods iuſt iudgement before them: for *ioy* is then iuſtly cut off from vs, when we know not how to entertaine the benefits of God with thankfulneſſe, nor know not how to reioyce in him. Hee is inforced then to take our delights and pleaſures from vs, and then to compell vs to mourne and ſigh.

A prouerbe.

When ioy is iuſtly cut off from vs.

Verſ. 12. *In the citie is left deſolation, and the gate is ſmitten with deſtruction.*

BY an elegant manner of ſpeech hee deſcribeth the deſtruction of Ieruſalē, or of many other Cities together. The beautie and perfection of Cities, conſiſts in the multitude of inhabitants: they are therefore called *deſerts*, when none are left to dwell in them. Now the Prophet tauntingly ſaith, that deſtruction ſhall dwell in the Citie. True it is that ſome tranſlate the word *Shaamah*, Deſolation: but both the words come all to one ſenſe. He makes mention of the *gate*, becauſe a man might perceiue by them, whether the Citie were full of people or no; for thither they all came, and there iuſtice was adminiſtred. Firſt then he ſpeakes of the whole Citie in generall; and then notes one particular for amplifications ſake: for albeit Cities be deſtitute of inhabitants, yet ſome may bee ſeene at the *gates*: but if they be emptie, the deſolation muſt needes be great thorowout the Citie.

The beautie of Cities.

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Verſ. 13. *Surely thus ſhall it bee in the middeſt of the earth among the people, as the ſhaking of an Oline tree, and as the grapes when the vintage is ended.*

Chap. 17. 6.

IN as much as this ſentence comes in betweene the threatnings and the conſolation, it ſeemes hee ſhould onely ſpeake to the elect, and not to all the people indifferently:

vnleſſe we will ſay that he deſcribes that ſcattering whereby the Iewes were diuided as it were into many nations. But becauſe this ſhould be too ſtrict and harſh, I expound it ſimplie, that ſome hope is left to the other forelorne nations. And trulie this propheſie doth indeede properlie belong to Chriſt, through whom it is no maruel if the Gentiles haue ſome part of the promiſe of ſaluation. The Prophet hath alreadie vſed this ſimilitude, Chapter 17.6. but there he only mentioned the church of the Iewes, telling them that a ſmall remnant ſhould ſtill remaine of the holy ſeed, leſt the faithfull might thinke the Church vtterlie rooted out. For as when an *olive tree* is ſhaken there will alwaies be ſome left heere and there, and likewiſe *grapes* vpon the vine, ſo ſhould there remaine an after gathering as it were of the faithfull in that great deſtruction wherewith the Church ſhould be oppreſſed. But in this place he extends this promiſe vnto other parts of the world, according as they ſhould partake in the ſame grace, by the meanes of Chriſt. Yet he therewithall addes a menace or threatning, as if he ſhould ſay, the earth ſhall be *left bare of her Inhabitants*, euen as trees and vines are of their fruit.

God is wrath remembers mercie.

Verſ. 14. *They ſhall lift vp their voice: they ſhall ſhout for the magnificence of the Lord: they ſhall reioyce from the ſea.*

HE now goes on and amplifies the conſolation which he touched before: for as he ſaid in the tenth Chapter, verſ. 22. that of this great multitude there ſhould remaine a little handfull which ſhould couer the whole earth; ſo now he ſhewes that this ſmall number of the faithfull which ſhall be left of this great vintage, ſhall *reioyce* notwithſtanding, and *ſound* the ſame ſo loude, that it ſhould be heard vnto the furtheſt regions. This is done by the preaching of the Goſpell: for as touching the eſtate of Iudea, it ſeemed to be ouerthrowne, in regard that the politique gouernment was aboliſhed: warres without, and ſeditions within, had ſo waſted it, that it was vnpoſſible euer to be recouered. The reſt of the world alſo was no leſſe dumb in vttring theſe praiſes of God, then deafe in hearing the ſound thereof. Now becauſe the Iewes were the firſt fruits of ỹ beleeuers, I willingly grant that they be placed in the firſt rank.

A Conſolation, fitting the times of the Churches deſolation.

Hence we gather a ſingular Conſolation, to wit, that the Lord in a moment can reſtore his Church vnto a moſt floriſhing eſtate, yea and create it of nothing; for out of death he drawes life euen as often as it pleaſeth him. But is it not a wonder and aboue the order of nature that ſo ſmall a remnant in *lifting vp their voyce*, ſhould be heard ſo farre off? for where few are, there is ſilence; and great noiſe is wont to be where great multitudes are gathered together. This then is the worke of God which farre ſurmounts nature, and whatſoeuer faculrie elſe is in man: otherwiſe it ſeemes the Prophet ſhould contradict himſelfe; to wit, that all Iudea ſhould be waſted, and all the world brought to nothing, and yet that their *crie* ſhould be heard euery where. This in it ſelfe is incredible, or rather ridiculous, if we meaſure the thing by carnall ſenſe: it is therefore, as we haue ſaid, to be aſcribed wholly to the admirable power and worke of God.

See verſ. 16.

By their *crie* he not only meanes the voyce of gladnes which is expreſſed by mirth and reioycing, but he alſo comprehends vnder it truſt and confidence, becauſe they ſhall freelie, boldlie, and with a loud voyce publiſh the praiſes of the Lord. Now herewithall he admoniſheth the faithfull that it is their dutie to cauſe Gods graces in them to be magnified, and not their owne. By the *Sea*, it is well enough knowne that the Iewes meane the regions farre off, which lie beyond the ſame.

Faith the ground of true ioy.

Gods mercies muſt not be concealed.

Verſ. 15. *Wherefore praiſe ye the Lord in the valleys*, euen *the name of the Lord God of Iſrael, in the yles of the ſea.*

GOds benefits ought to prouoke vs to giue him thanks, which we then teſtifie, when we vtter forth his *praiſes*. What thanks ſhall I render vnto the Lord, ſaith *Dauid*, for all the benefits he hath beſtowed vpon me? I will euen take the cup of thankſgiuing for his ſaluation, and call vpon his name. This order the Prophet keeps in this place: for hauing ſpoken of the reſtauration of the Church, he forthwith exhorts vs to offer the ſacrifice of prayſe. By the *valleys*, he meanes thoſe Countries that are ſcattered and diuided as it were from the reſt: for thoſe which are inuironed with mountaines, are diſtinct and ſeuerall naturallie. Thence it is that the inhabitants of the *valleys* are rude and barbarous, becauſe they ſeldome conuerſe with others. It is then as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid, There is no corner of the world be it neuer ſo obſcure and intangled, but the *praiſes of God ſhall be heard there*.

Pſal.116.

He hath expreſſed the God of *Iſrael*, to ſignifie that all nations ſhould call vpon the name of the true God. For though all men haue a certaine knowledge of God, and that ſome ſeede of religion be rooted in their hearts, yet when the queſtion is of worſhipping the true God in a right maner, it either vaniſheth to nothing, or elſe they eaſilie fall to Idolatrie and ſuperſtitions. Now the Prophet heere ſpeakes of the true religion which ſhould be ſpread thorow the world: whence yet againe it appeares, that he propheſieth of the kingdome of Chriſt, vnder whoſe reigne the ſincere truth was reuealed to forreine and profane nations.

Verſ. 16. *From the vttermoſt part of the earth we haue heard praiſes*, euen *glory to the iuſt. And I ſaid, My leannes, my leannes, woe is me: the tranſgreſſors haue offended: yea, the tranſgreſſors haue grieuouſlie offended.*

THis verſe containes two ſentences, which in appearance ſeeme to croſſe one another: for the firſt conteines a ioyfull argument

ment of Gods praiſes; & preſently he breaks out into lamentations: wherein he bewailes the diſloyall behauiour of the wicked, who made ſhipwracke of all religion and godlineſſe. As touching the praiſes of God, wee haue alreadie ſaid, that hee can neither bee praiſed nor called vpon, till hee haue made himſelfe knowne vnto vs by giuing vs ſome taſte of his goodneſſe, whereby we may conceiue good hope and aſſurance of ſaluation. From thence come theſe ſentences of *Dauid*, Lord, who ſhall praiſe thee in the graue? In death who ſhall confeſſe thee? For as long as we onely feele the wrath of God, we cannot vtter his praiſes: and therefore when the Prophet ſaith, they ſhall be *heard*; he giues vs to vnderſtand, that the Goſpell ſhall be publiſhed thorowout the world, to the end men may acknowledge God for their Father, and wholly giue ouer themſelues to ſet forth his praiſes.

Pſal.6.6.

It is to be noted that he ſaith from *the ends of the earth*; becauſe the praiſes of God were then bounded within Iudea, and were not heard farre off: but afterward, they ſounded euerie where. When he addes, *glorie to the iuſt*: ſome take it as belonging to the perſon of all the faithfull in generall; as if the meaning were, that God ſhall be glorified, becauſe of his iuſtice. Others reade it together thus; We haue heard glory giuen to the iuſt God. Thoſe who thinke the Heralds of theſe praiſes are called *iuſt*, doe gather a good ſenſe; but they conſider not the word *glorie*: or at the leaſt they are conſtrained to put the word Reioycing, in the ſtead of it. Whereas he puts the verbe, *we haue heard*, in the preter-perfect tence, and not in the future; I make no doubt but he meant to reuiue the hearts of the faithful by this conſolation; to wit, We ſhall againe heare the praiſes of God: for it imports more then if he had ſaid, The praiſes of God ſhall be heard. He alſo ſpeakes in the firſt perſon, that hee might comprehend the whole body of the Church, and ſo drawes the faithfull to a more diligent attention. We often finde the epithite *iuſt*, in the Scripture, which he here applies vnto God: but it belongs vnto him after another ſort then it doth vnto men; who are called *iuſt*, in regard of that righteouſneſſe which is communicated vnto them: for God is called *iuſt*, by the effects; becauſe he is the fountaine of it. Let vs now ſee then the ſubſtance of this congratulation and thankſgiuing; to wit, we praiſe this iuſt God, becauſe we haue life and ſaluation, by the imputation of this iuſtice vnto vs. Where the iuſtice of God is felt then, there muſt praiſes and thankes needes follow.

Where the imputation of Chriſts righteouſneſs is felt, there muſt the praiſes of God needes ſound forth.

But how incredible did theſe things ſeeme when the Prophet foretold them? for the Lord was only knowne and praiſed in Iudea. Their deſtruction is denounced, and then followes the publiſhing of Gods word and praiſes, which ſhould ſound thorowout the world. Now how could theſe things come to paſſe, when the people of God were deſtroyed? Surely we may well conclude, that few at that time beleeued theſe prophecies. But now that theſe things are come to paſſe, is it not our duties to admire ſo great a miracle? The Iewes were not onely ſcattered, but almoſt brought to nothing; yet notwithſtanding one ſmall ſparkle hath been ſufficient to giue light to the whole world: ſo as whoſoeuer hath been truely inlightened therewith, hath made bold and conſtant profeſſion of the trueth.

My bowels.] This place is diuerſly expounded: for ſome tranſlate the word *Rezi*, Secret, others tranſlate, Leanneſſe. Thoſe who turne it, Secret, thinke the Prophet meant that a double ſecret was reuealed to him; to wit, that the Lord was purpoſed to reward the good, and to be auenged on the wicked. For whileſt men looke to the outward appearance, and ſee the wicked haue all they can wiſh, and the godly ouerwhelmed with miſeries; they are troubled and doubt in themſelues, whether the matters of this preſent life are gouerned by the hand of God, or whether all things are guided by Fortune. But ſuch thoughts are nothing but the ſeedes of impietie; as *Salomon* ſhewes, Eccleſ.8.11. This therefore made the Pſalmiſt enter in the ſanctuarie of God, to conſider of this thing, rather then to conſult with fleſh and blood about it: Pſal.73.17. Now if we follow this interpretation, the ſenſe will bee; Although the iuſt ſeeme to haue loſt all their labour: yet this ſecret doe I retaine in my breaſt, that it ſhal be well with them notwithſtanding in the latter end: and albeit the wicked thinke to eſcape, yet am I aſſured they ſhall not goe ſcotfree. But in regard this ſubtiltie ſeemes farre fetched, I had rather expound it more ſimply: and ſeeing the particle of expreſſing anguiſh, is alſo by and by added; who ſhould let me to thinke, but that *Iſaiah* ſpeakes here of the iuſt, or of their reward?

Others expound it Leanneſſe; as if hee ſhould ſay; I languiſh and am euen dried vp with ſorrow: for as the proſperitie and floriſhing eſtate of the people, did as it were baſton him; ſo their miſerable and wofull eſtate was his *leanneſſe*. For the Prophet here ſuſtaines & repreſents the perſon of the whole ſtocke of the Iewes: and becauſe the Lord had cut it off, hee had iuſt cauſe to bewaile the *leanneſſe* of it. This interpretation hath ſome probabilitie, as I haue ſaid; becauſe *Iſaiah* had good cauſe to lament the diminiſhing of his people, which he ſaw was at hand. And wee know, that when the grace of God beganne to be publiſhed in all places, then the Iewes decreaſed; yea the ſucceſſors of *Abraham* were as good as extinguiſhed.

But let vs ſee whether the Prophet hath not a further drift then to the reiection of his owne nation, ſo as he rather bewailes the inward euils wherewith he foreſaw y Church ſhould be afflicted. For we may well affirme that the Hebrew word which others haue tranſlated Secret, ſignifies alſo whatſoeuer is within the bodie. And thus it is an exclamation, to wit, my inward parts, or my *bowels paine me*: neither is it any abſurditie to ſuplie a verb, in a paſſionate and vehement

speech. When the Lord plants his Church it seemes to florish and to be out of all perill: but when her owne bowels, that is to say, her children trouble her, then is she the most grieued: hypocrits aduance thémselues, which toucheth her neerer then all the malice of those that are without. To this appertaines these complaints, Alas, Alas! for that doubtlesse was the Prophets meaning, to the end the faithfull might not thinke their felicitie consisted in the things of this life, but might rather know that they were to susteine continuall combates; yea euen then when they imagined nothing could hinder them from inioying most sweet peace and tranquillitie. His meaning is then to expresse an extreame passion of sorrow wherwith ỹ Church should be inwardlie touched, that is to say, euen in her *bowels*: and so much the more cause had she to lament, because she could not auoid it. For as one saith, The Church can not flee from her home enemies, neither can she rid her selfe of them. This is the cause why the Prophet wants words to expresse his miserie.

A true saying.

When he speakes in the next place of the *disloyall*, it is a sufficient confirmation of this exposition. We haue too much experience, and shall feele more and more euery day how great and wofull this calamitie is. Whence came Poperie and all the filthie puddle, but from this inward plague? It is an impostume bred in the *bowels* of the Church, which at length hath broken forth and annoyed vs with the corruption and stinch of it. Whence is it also ỹ in these beginnings of ỹ Church, which is but now in the swadling clouts as it were, we see the true doctrine corrupted, the discipline adulterated, not only by the common people, but by them also which from their good example ought to be guides vnto others? Is it not because the Church hath alwaies been subiect to this euill?

The bane of the Church bred within her owne bowels.

Discipline.

Verſ. 17. *Feare, and the pit, and the snare are vpon thee, ô Inhabitant of the earth.*

18. *And he that fleeth from the noyse of the feare shall fall into the pit, and he that commeth vp out of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windowes from an high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.*

See verse 14. 15. 16.

THe Prophet heere expostulates with the people because of their sinnes. Before he said, that not one, but many nations farre remote, should haue cause to sing; now hee comes to doctrine: for I thinke this should be seuered from the former, because *Isaiah* threatens the wicked againe, to the end they might know that in the greatest felicitie of the Church they should continue to be accursed. For such are wont falsly to challenge vnto themselues the promises of God, when as they appertaine nothing at all vnto them: this is the cause why the Prophets are wont to mingle threatnings with consolations. It may be for ought we know that the Prophet made this sermon apart, vpon some other occasion. For neither did the Prophets themselues, nor other learned men for them distinguish the Chapters: we haue diuers times seene sundrie sentéces ioined together which should be separate; & many separated which should be ioined. What was the cause thereof but ignorance? Be it as you will; the Prophet directs his speech againe to the wicked, and threatens them with an horrible iudgement.

Now this description of *feare, pit*, and *snare*, is set before them to worke vpon their affections: for had he in one word told them that destruction was at hand, they would haue bin little moued with it. But the doubt is whether he speakes to the Iewes only, or no? for mine owne part, I meane not to contend much about it; and yet it is most likely vnto me, that it appertaines also to other nations, yea euen to the whole earth, whereof he had prophesied before. By the *earth*, wee vnderstand those regions which were knowne to the Iewes, as we touched in another place. The sense then is, Thou shalt be pressed with so many miseries, that thou shalt not know which way to turne thee: as also is is written in *Amos*, He which flies for feare of the Lion, shall meete a Beare, Amos 5. 19. And if he go into his house, when he leanes against the wall, a serpent shall bite him. And in the 15. Chapter of this booke *Isaiah* told vs, that Lions should be sent against those Moabites that escaped the warre. For God hath a store-house of infinite plagues wherewith to punish the wicked. It is as much therefore as if the Prophet had said, Be it knowne vnto you, that you can no way winde your selues out of Gods hands: for he hath mo wayes then one to auenge himselfe vpon you for your iniquities; and hath skill enough to *snare* them that thinke by subtletie to steale away in the darke from him. He that scapes the *sword* shall be vexed with *famine*, and if he die not of that, he shall be pressed with some other, euen as if nets were euery where spread to catch you.

See verſ. 1. 6.

Verſ. 1.

The sense of this place.

God hath a store-house of infinite plagues wherewith to punish the wicked.

The reason which is added in the latter end of the 18. verse confirmes this exposition, to wit, that they can no way preuent Gods vengeance. Why so? for all things are at his beck from the *highest heauens*, to the *lowest depths* of the earth. Some are of opinion that the Prophet alludes to the deluge; but as I thinke the very meaning is, that Gods wrath shall be reuealed both from aboue, and below; as if he should say, The Lord will arme *heauen* and *earth* on his side to execute his wrath vpon the sonnes of men, that which way soeuer they turne their eyes, they may see nothing but ruine and destruction.

Verſ. 19. *The earth is vtterlie broken downe: the earth is cleane dissolued: the earth is moued exceedinglie.*

20. *The earth shall reele to and fro like a drunken man, and shall be removed as a tent, and the iniquitie thereof shall be heauie*

heauie vpon it; ſo that it ſhall fall, and riſe no more.

1 HE amplifies theſe puniſhments by diuers phraſes of ſpeech. Now in the 20 verſe he will ſhew the cauſe of this calamitie; to wit, that men haue pulled it vpon their owne heads by their ſinnes: in all the reſt of the 2 words he ſhewes, that the miſchiefe is deſperate and incurable. We haue ſaid before, that the Prophet vtters one and the ſame thing in diuers manners of ſpeech, to the end hee might awaken and wound the hearts of the people, which naturally were too ſecure. For there is a careleſneſſe in our fleſh, which begets a contempt of God; and of this, euerie one of vs hath too woefull experience, both in himſelfe and in others. That the Prophet then might rouſe vp thoſe that were drowſie and rocked aſleepe in their ſinnes, he garniſheth his words, (not as one affecting eloquence, to procure credit vnto himſelfe) but to gaine attention of his hearers, & to cauſe the ſame to ſink the deeper into their hearts. Thence proceedes all theſe alluſions wherewith theſe verſes are repleniſhed: thence 1 2 flowes this deckingof his ſpeech with figures: 3 thence is it that theſe threatnings and terrours are ſet forth in ſuch varietie of words, namely, euen to awaken the dull and dead hearts of his auditors.

A careleſnes rooted in our fleſh, which begets a contempt of God.

Now this doctrine ought to be reſtrained to the wicked; not that the faithfull were exempt from theſe calamities, for they often ſuffer with others: but hauing their recourſe vnto God, and reſting themſelues wholly vpon him, they are not ſo appalled, but they get the victorie ouer all aſſaults whatſoeuer. But the wicked, which deſpiſe the iudgements of God, and take a raging libertie of ſinning to themſelues, ſhall alwaies be vexed and terrified without any eaſe or reſt.

Where he ſaith, the earth *ſhall be ſhaken*; it is not meant, as though it ſhould be carried out of one place into ſome other: but this, as we haue ſaid, is to be referred vnto men: and it is as if he had ſaid; There ſhall be neither kingdome nor gouernement. In a word, his meaning is, to ſet forth thoſe changes whereof he ſpake in the tenth Chapter.

Now it is not without cauſe that he ſaith, the earth is *laden with iniquitie*; for thereby we perceiue, that God is neuer diſpleaſed with men, but wee our ſelues are the authors and cauſes of all the euill we indure. God is naturally inclined to pitie and compaſſion, and loues vs with a fatherly affection: our ſinnes are the cauſe why hee deales roughly with vs, and we haue no reaſon at all to accuſe him that ſmites vs. The Prophet againe tels them that there is *no recouerie*: and ſome are of opinion, that this was ſpoken to the Iewes, whoſe commonwealth was vtterly aboliſhed; ſo as being ſcattered here and there, they were ſcacely reputed or held for men of like condition with others. But I extend it further; to wit, that the calamities ſhall be ſo great in the world, that it ſhould neuer bee reſtored to his firſt beautie: for men labour tooth and naile to reſiſt aduerſities, and are foolehardy vpon a falſe confidence. When they haue indured ſome corrections, they thinke leaue ſhall bee giuen them to take breath; feeding themſelues with a vaine aſſurance, which the Prophet labours to depriue them of; to the end their fond hopes might not beguile them. It is alſo to be noted, that this generall ſentence takes not away the exception which *Iſaiah* ſpake of before, verſ. 13.

Our ſelues the authors of our owne euils.

Men are readie enough to feede themſelues with vaine hopes.

1 3

Verſ. 21. *And in that day ſhall the Lord viſit the hoſte aboue, that is on high heuen the Kings of the world that are vpon the earth.*

THis place hath troubled many mens heads; ſo as euery one hath deſcanted vpon it druerſly. Some thinke it to be meant of the Sunne and ſtarres: others, of the diuels, which ſhould be puniſhed with the wicked: others referre it to the Iewes, whom God had beautified with a ſpecial priuiledge: but I can receiue none of theſe interpretations. The true and naturall ſenſe as I take it is, that there are no powers ſo high, that ſhall be able to free themſelues from theſe ſcourges of God; for let them ſoare aboue the cloudes, yet euen there ſhall the hand of God reach them, as it is ſaid in the Pſalme; Whither ſhall I goe from thy preſence? whither ſhall I flee from thy Spirit? if I goe vp into heauen thou art there: if I take the wings of the morning, and flie to the vttermoſt parts of the ſea, yet thither wilt thou purſue mee. *Pſal. 139.*

1 2 3

For *Iſaiah* calles Kings and Princes, the *hoſt from aboue*, by way of ſimilitude; and himſelfe ſo expounds it cleerely, when he addes, Vpon the *kings of the earth*. For I am not of the mind that the words ſhould bee ſeuered, as if hee ſpake of diuers things; but it is rather the repetition of the ſame thing againe, ſo as the latter expounds the former: vnleſſe any had rather expound it thus; He will come in viſitation vpon the kingdomes of the earth; yea, euen vpon them which ſeeme the higheſt exalted aboue the common condition of men. Some are ſo aduanced aboue others, that they ſeeme petty Gods rather then men. Now the word *viſit*, muſt bee referred to the puniſhment, as it appeares ſufficiently by the text.

Verſ. 22. *And they ſhall be gathered together as the priſoners in the pit: and they ſhall bee ſhut vp in the priſon; and after many daies ſhall they bee viſited.*

HEe continues on his purpoſe in the beginning of the verſe, vſing a phraſe of ſpeech by way of ſimilitude; for all were not *priſoners*: but the Lord brought them all into ſeruitude, as if one ſhould keepe his enemies in ſafe cuſtodie which he had ſubdued. The Prophet brings in the *Lord* then like a Conquerour, which holds his enemies in priſon.

For

For men are wont to lay them fast, whom they haue taken. We know that men flee the presence of God, & despise him all ỹ while he spares, or giues thé any truce: for this cause *Isaiah* saith, that they shall be *shut vp in prison by heapes*, that so their reioycing in their multitudes might cease.

Where he saith, they shall be *visited after many dayes*, we are not to take it simplie as a promise, but as a threatning also included vnder it; and that in this sense, O ye Iewes you haue a long time dallied with your God by your rebellion, and haue prolonged your trading in sinne too long; so, God will now prolong his chastisements till he haue in the end brought you (though very late) to a sight of your misdeeds. And this course we see the Iudges of the earth often take with malefactors with whom they are displeased: they admit thé not to their presence the first day, but humble them first by throwing them into stinking dungeons, and into miserie, that they may thereby breake the pride of their hearts.

Simile.

God is said to visit the world two waies.

But God is said to visit the world two waies, first, in punishing the wicked, secondly, when after some chastisements he shewes his elect some tokens of his fatherlie kindnes. The word *visit* in this place is taken, To behold: and thus the Prophet mitigates the rigor of his menace or threatning. For the hearts of the faithfull in these cases haue need of comfort, lest they should quaile, and be discouraged: in regard of them therefore it is that the Prophets are wont to mingle consolations after their denunciations of iudgements. Seeing these things serued then to cheere vp the faithfull, no doubt but they were specially directed to the Iewes, among whom faith had her speciall residence, in regard that it appeared in none but them. But yet we are once againe to obserue these words, *after many dayes*, for this is added to exercise the faith of Gods children: we often run headlong in our desires, and would haue God accomplish his promises by and by: we grudge that he delaies so long, and wax so impatient that we can no longer indure. But we must learne in humilitie to wait and looke long for the saluation and mercie of our God, and not be discontented how long soeuer he deferre, for certainly he will come, and he will not tarrie. But herewithall wee must note, that God speakes not heere of all, for as we haue seene in the 13. verse, he was determined to saue but a few: and this ought so much the more to whet our appetites, to the end after we haue been long exercised vnder sundrie calamities, we may meete the Lord that smites vs by vnfeined repentance.

The cause why the Prophets are wont so often to mingle consolations with their denunciatiõs.

Vers. 23. *Then the Moone shall be abashed, and the Sunne ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reigne in mount Zion, and in Ierusalem: and glorie shall be* * *before his ancient men.*

* Or, euen in the presence of his &c.

MAny thinke that the Prophet vseth this vehemencie against the Iewes, as if he said, The Sunne, Moone, and Starres are ashamed of your incredulitie, so that you are a detestation not to men only, but euen to the insensible creatures: but this seemes vterlie wide frõ the Prophets purpose. I make no doubt but he continues on that consolation which he touched in the former verse; as if he should say, When the Lord shall visit his people, and purge his Church, he will establish such a glorious kingdome, that it shal darken the light of the *Sunne* and *Starres*. And this maner of speech is very vsuall among the Prophets, we also haue seene it before in this prophesie. Now *Isaiah* speakes not here alone of the head, but also of the whole bodie of the Church: when the Lord then shall settle his kingdome vpon *mount Zion*, his glorie in the restauration of the people shall be so great, that that which seemes bright and glorious in mens eies, being compared with this, shall be but darkenes. And the better to expresse it, he names the greatest lights in the firmament.

Some improperlie draw the verb To *reigne*, to Gods vengeance: for albeit God reignes when he iudgeth the world, yet this maner of speech linked thus together, God shall reigne in Mount Zion, alwayes notes mercie and saluation. For he speakes of the restauration of the Church: whence we gather, that these things are not accomplished but in Christ.

In mentioning of the *Ancients* he vseth a figure called Synecdoche, a figure often vsed in scripture, taking the chiefe part of the Church for the whole bodie, and yet not without a speciall cause. The *ancient men*, are heere taken then not only for the Priests, but for those gouernors which haue the ouersight of maners and discipline, to wit, such as ought with wisdome and discretion to gouerne others. And vnder these names he comprehends all the people, not only because they represent the whole bodie, the common people being hid as it were vnder the shadow of their wings: but also that the faithfull might haue good hope of a future restoring, otherwise it were to little purpose that a scattered multitude should be left like a crased bodie, or a confused lump.

Priests, and gouerning Elders.

It is not without cause that the particle, *euen before his ancient men*, is added, to the end the Iewes might know that Gods power should be glorious: not that it can be comprehended with the eies of flesh, but by faith: for he so reignes, that we effectuallie feele his strength in our weakenes. And if we apprehend not this, we shall neuer receiue any comfort.

In stead of *glorie*, some reade gloriouslie, others glorious: I had rather take it in the substantiue, although it be not much materiall as touching the sense. For he shewes how great Gods glorie and magnificence should be when Christes kingdome shall be set vp: all glorie then must be turned into darknes, that his glorie alone may shine and surmount all things. Whence it followes, that God then inioyes that which belongs vnto him in ỹ middest of vs, and that honor which none ought to depriue him of, when all creatures are brought within compasse, and that he alone *shines*, and is the light of our eyes.

CHAP.

THE XXV. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *O Lord, thou art my God: I will exalt thee, I will praiſe thy name: for thou haſt done wonderfull things, according to the counſels of olde, with a ſtable trueth.*

HItherunto *Iſaiah* hath prophecied of Gods iudgements, which hung not ouer the head of one people alone, but almoſt of the whole world. Now it was impoſſible that the conſideration of ſo many calamities which hee foreſaw would fall vpon them, ſhould not worke great ſorrow and trouble of mind in him. For thoſe that are of an vpright heart, deſire that all the world might bee ſaued. And as they thirſt after Gods glory, ſo they cannot but loue all the works of his hands: by how much the more then a man is poſſeſſed with the true feare of God, the more neerely is hee touched to the quicke with the feeling of his iudgements. In the meane while, the wicked are beſotted when he manifeſts the ſame, and will not be moued for any terrours whatſoeuer: the godly on the contrary quake at the leaſt ſigne of his diſpleaſure. If wee haue experience of this, what thinke we the Prophet felt, who ſaw all theſe calamities which hee foretold, before his eyes as in a glaſſe? For the Miniſters of the word muſt needes bee much more effectually affected with the ſight of ſuch things, then the common ſort, that the ſame may be as it were a ſeale vnto them of the trueth of their doctrine.

The Lord then hauing ſet theſe horrible deſolations before the Prophet as in a table, it was neceſſarie, that being moued with ſorrow and griefe, he ſhould turne his eyes vnto the *Lord*; for otherwiſe hee might haue been intangled with confuſed paſſions, and great diſquietneſſe of minde. And therefore being aſſured that the Lord would prouide for his Church in the middeſt of theſe tempeſts, and that hee would gather in thoſe vnder the wings of his power, which before were ſcattered farre off, hee takes courage vnto him. Wee ſee then that *Iſaiah* continues conſtant in his vocation, without being daunted or any way diſcouraged: but rather relying alwaies vpon the aſſurance of obtaining mercy; and therefore hee continues to *celebrate the praiſes* of the Lord his God.

By this we may ſee, that this thankſgiuing depends vpon the former prophecies; and that *Iſaiah* reſpects not that which hee hath foretold alone, but alſo what end the Lord aimed at, in this execution: that is to ſay, why he afflicted ſo many nations with ſuch diuerſities of puniſhments; namely, that he might bring vnder thoſe which were before vnrulie, and ouerflowed in a brutiſh ſenſualtie; who as they had no feare of God before their eyes; ſo had they no ſenſe of religion or godlineſſe at all.

Thou art my God.] Being perplexed and confounded in himſelfe, he ſuddenly turnes his thoughts vnto God, as we haue ſaid. Whence we may gather a very profitable doctrine; to wit, that when our mindes are toſſed to and fro with diuers cogitations, in regard of the many miſeries and calamities which daily happen; that we by and by flee vnto God, reſting our ſelues vpon his onely prouidence: for we ſhall be at our wits end euen for the wagging of a ſtraw, if wee haue not this doctrine for our refuge, by ſuſtaining our hearts therewith. But the better to ſee the Prophets meaning, wee may well adde a particle aduerſatiue here, in this ſenſe; Although I be now oppreſſed with many temptations on euery ſide, yet will I ſtill acknowledge thee to be *my God*. And thus he voweth to giue vnto God that praiſe, which vnto him appertaineth; which none of vs can doe, vnleſſe an aſſured perſwaſion of Gods grace doe raigne and beare ſway in our hearts: from whence ſprings that ioy, which affords vs exceeding ample matter of praiſes, when being certaine of our ſaluation, we are aſſured that the Lord is our God. For all thoſe that are not caried with an affection to magnifie Gods goodnes in the middeſt of their ſorrowes, know not what faith is, neither yet did they euer taſte the ſweetneſſe of his mercy: for if wee haue a ſure confidence in God, we muſt of neceſſitie extoll his name with ioy and gladneſſe of heart.

What ought to be our refuge in time of deep diſtreſſes.

The aſſurace of Gods ſauour giues vs ample matter of ioy and reioicing, euen in the greateſt troubles.

A wonderfull thing.] The ſingular number is put for the plurall. Now the Prophet reſts not in the contemplation of preſent things, but rather lookes to the end of them: for you ſhall haue euen profane men that will be affected at the *wonderfull* euents of things which fall out in the gouernement of the world, and will ſtand amazed thereat; as no doubt the Tyrians, Sidonians, Babylonians, and Moabites did. But none could benefit themſelues by this ſight, but ſuch as therewithall had a taſte and feeling of Gods wiſdome and goodneſſe: for without that, men doe rather ſcorne and deſpiſe ſuch workes, then apprehend the excellencie of them: becauſe they looke not to the end that God aimeth at; to wit, that by drawing light out of darkneſſe, he is wont after a wonderfull manner, to raiſe vp and reuiue his Church in the middeſt of death; orders and diſpoſeth rightly and to good vſe, thoſe things which the wit of man conceiues to be exceedingly confuſed.

The faithfull may bee daunted for a time, but faith gets the victorie.

Who they are that profit by the view of Gods works.

1. Cor. 4. 6.

How God is wont to deale with his Church.

But the better to ſet forth the commendation of Gods prouidence, he addes, *The counſels ordained of old:* as if he ſhould ſay, Nothing falles

falles out ſuddenly, or at randome, in reſpect of God. And indeede, albeit to vs it often ſeemes he doth things vtterlie at vnawares, yet is it moſt certaine that he hath foreſeene and appointed all of thē ſo to come to paſſe before the creation of the world. By theſe words then the Prophet meant to ſay, that all the *wonders* which happen beyond the expectation of men, flow from the order of this moderation which God keeps in the gouernment and diſpoſition of all things from the beginning, vnto the end.

Now becauſe we are not able to attaine to his ſecret counſels, and that our wits can not mount ſo high, we muſt be brought to the manifeſtation of that which for the preſent is hidden from vs, and is aboue our reach, till ſuch time as the Lord diſcouer the ſame vnto vs by his word: by which he applies himſelfe to our weakenes, becauſe his ſecret counſell is incomprehenſible. *Iſaiah* therefore deſcends by and by from theſe hidden ordinances of God to the doctrine of the word and the promiſes therein cōtained, which doubtleſſe he comprehends vnder the word *Truth*. For this repetition ſhould be to little purpoſe vnleſſe he had had ſome relation in this word: for after God hath by it reuealed his counſell vnto vs, then he properlie appeares to be *true* if we beleeue and credit his ſayings. Thus then the Prophet commends the ſtablenes and certentie of the word when he calles it a *ſtable truth*, as if he ſhould ſay, All things which God pronounceth, and proceed from him, is ſtable and immoueable.

Iſaiah deſcends from Gods ſecret will to his reuealed will.

Verſ. 2. *For thou haſt made of a Citie an heape, of a ſtrong Citie a ruine: euen the palace of ſtrangers of a Citie, it ſhall neuer be built.*

SOme referre this to Ieruſalem: but I rather thinke it to be a change of the number only, which is a thing very vſuall among the Prophets: for *Iſaiah* ſpeakes not of one Citie alone, but of many, which he foretels ſhould be laid vpon *heapes*. Whereas others take it, that Ieruſalem ſerued for a palace to the Romanes, they come nothing nigh the Prophets meaning; which will plainely appeere if we call to mind what hath been ſaid before, to wit, that the Prophet buſies not himſelfe in thinking of the ſcourges wherwith God hath afflicted diuers nations, but rather aimes at the end and iſſue of them. For by them the Lord purpoſed to ſubdue and tame the pride and rebellion of men, whom he could neuer haue ſubdued vnto himſelfe, vnleſſe they had been ſmitten with diuers calamities. Moreouer, *Iſaiah* ſaith not only that ſtrangers ſhall inhabit the ſurprized Cities, out of which they were driuen that dwelt in them: for ſo that which he by and by addes would not agree, to wit, that the *palace ſhall be no more a Citie:* but his meaning is, that vagabonds who ſhould haue no place of abode at all, ſhall find ſufficient roome there, becauſe the inhabitants ſhal betake them to their heeles. Now becauſe *Armon* ſignifies goodly houſes, he ſaith by way of deriſion, that theeues ſhall dwell there as in Palaces, in regard of the great ſpace which ſhould lie waſte like vnto a deſert.

Verſ. 3. *Therefore ſhall the mightie people giue glorie vnto thee: the Citie of the ſtrong nations ſhall feare thee.*

SEe heere the end, whereof I haue ſpoken in the firſt verſe: for if the Lord ſhould deſtroy the world, no fruit would come of it, ſuch a deſolation could ingender nothing but horror; neither would it euer bring vs neeter vnto God to praiſe him: nay contrariwiſe we muſt needs remaine as blocks whē we only feele his wrath: for praiſes proceed from the feeling of his fauor and goodnes. It is all one then as if he had ſaid, Lord, thou wilt not only ſmite and afflict, but wilt alſo effect, that ỹ wounds which thou makeſt ſhall not be without fruit. For by them thou wilt beate downe the pride of men, to the end that thoſe which in times paſt were ſtrangers frō thee, may now ſtoope vnder thine obedience. Hence we learne how neceſſarie chaſtiſements be, for by them we are taught to glorifie God; whereas proſperitie puffs vs vp in ſuch wiſe that we diſhonor him, and thinke we may doe what we liſt: we alſo runne out and range ouer all the fields whē God deales louinglie with vs. The neceſſitie of afflictions.

The Prophet addes the word *feare*, to ſhew, that this praiſe conſiſts neither in words nor outward geſtures, but in the ſound and ſincere affection of the heart. Whence wee gather, that he heere ſpeakes of the whole worſhip of God. Now becauſe many thinke themſelues well diſcharged when they haue made confeſſion with their lips only, *Iſaiah* the better to expound his owne meaning addes, *The nations ſhall feare thee*. Now in calling them *ſtrong* and *mightie*, by ſuch epithites he meanes the pride and loftines of thoſe who are puffed vp with their proſperitie: for they exalt themſelues againſt God, ſo as they can not poſſiblie be humbled and brought downe, vnleſſe they be quite ſtripped of all things. You ſee now whether our thoughts are to retire in ỹ calamities which we ſee to fall out dayly: mens pride muſt needs be repreſſed and abated, that they may be prepared to imbrace holy doctrine, and to walke in ſound obedience. Whileſt they are beſotted with their riches and vaine hopes, they feare not to contemne the iudgements of God, and hold him out at the ſtaues end, as they ſay. We muſt reioyce in trembling, Pſal. 2. 11. & 5. 7.

Verſ. 4. *For thou haſt been a ſtrength to the poore,* euen *a ſtrength to the needie in his trouble, a refuge againſt the tempeſt, a ſhadow againſt the heate: for the blaſt of the mightie is like a ſtorme againſt the wall.*

BEhold here the fruit of conuerſion. How? The Lord raiſeth vs from death, deliuers vs from the graue, by ſtretching out his hand from heauen to pluck vs out of the iawes of hell,

Our firſt entrance vnto God.

hell. This is the firſt entrance he giues vs, for hee findes nothing but our miſerie for his mercy to worke vpon. Wee muſt therefore feele our ſelues poore and helpleſſe, before we can ſee what neede we haue of his power: yea, it is neceſſary that we be ſtripped of all confidence and ſelfe truſt, before he will reueale his ſtrength in vs. For this cauſe he firs and frames vs by rods and chaſtiſements, as by inſtruſtions, to come to the feeling of his fauour and aſſiſtance. It is not without good cauſe then that *Iſaiah* deckes this deſcription with ſo many ſimilitudes: for hee thereby meetes with many and great temptations, vnder which weake man would neuer be able to ſtand, were he not fortified and ſuſtained with ſuch props.

And therefore hee ſaith, that *God* will bee *ſtrength to the poore*, a refuge againſt the tempeſt, and a ſhadow againſt the heate: for what dangers ſoeuer befall vs, the Lord wil defend his owne againſt them, and will arme vs with all kinds of armour to reſiſt them. The *Spirit* in this place, as in many others, ſignifies winde, and it is taken for a violent ſtorme wherewith the wicked are carried to ruſh againſt the children of God: for they not onely threaten and terrifie, but alſo ſpit out fire it ſelfe, as to conſume them all. Hereunto appertaines that which is added of the *tempeſt*, or, *ouerflowing againſt the wall*: by which figure his meaning is, that the wicked runne with ſuch force, when they haue libertie to doe euill, that they ouerthrow whatſoeuer ſtands in their way: for it is a greater matter to breake downe and ouerthrow *walles*, then if water ſhould onely ſpread it ſelfe ouer the earth.

Gen.8.1.
Exod.15.10.
1.Kin.19.11.
2.King.7.

Verſ. 5. *Thou ſhalt bring downe the noiſe of the ſtrangers, as the heate in a dry place: he will bring downe the ſong of the mightie, as the heate in the ſhadow in a cloud.*

IF the Lord were not on our ſide, when violent men ſet themſelues againſt vs, wee ſhould be vtterly ſwallowed vp: for wee ſee how great the rage of the wicked is. Alas, if they be able to ouerturne *ſtout walles*, how can a poore man bee able to ſtand againſt them? This is added then to ſet forth the goodneſſe of almightie God, that we might know in what an ill caſe wee ſhould be in, if God did not ſuccour vs. The expoſitours take the ſimilitude two waies: ſome thinke that as the vehemēt heat burnes vp the fields, which of themſelues are dry and barren; ſo the wrath of God ſhall conſume and burne vp the wicked: others tranſlate, *As the heat*; and then the ſenſe is; Howſoeuer the wicked relie vpon their power, and therefore are thus boiſterous, the Lord notwithſtanding will bring them downe in a moment, as if they were ſurpriſed with *heat* in a dry place.

But I take the ſenſe to be otherwiſe: for hauing ſhewed how great the rage of the wicked is againſt the faithfull, he addes, Lord thou wilt humble them. But how? He alludes vnto the deluge; which ſimilitude he vſed before, Chap. 24. 18. Thou wilt bring downe their heat, ſaith hee, which otherwiſe muſt needes conſume vs: euen as the raine falling from heauen, cooles the heate which would burne vp the fields for want of moiſture. And thus the text hangs well together; whereas the other expoſition is conſtrained, and offers violence to the very letter, as they ſay.

The latter part of the verſe is expounded diuers waies: ſome tranſlate the word *Zemir*, Seede: others, a Roore: as if the Prophet had ſaid, The Lord will not onely cut off the wicked, but will plucke them vp by the verie rootes. This were probable, if the ſimilitude of heat would beare it: and therefore thoſe who turne it ſong, cry, or, waſte; in my iudgement, doe come neereſt the Prophets meaning, albeit they touch it not fully. Well, he confirmes the former ſentence; to wit, that the violence or cry of the wicked, who proudly exalt themſelues, ſhall ſuddenly fall, euen as the heat of the Sunne when anie raine followes: which is ſignified by the *ſhadow of the cloud*.

Verſ. 6. *And in this mountaine ſhall the Lord of hoſtes make vnto all the people a feaſt of fat things*, euen *a feaſt of* fined wines and *of fat things full of marowe, of* wines *fined* and *purified*.

THey alſo diuerſly interpret this place: for ſome thinke the Prophet threatens the Iewes, and that in ſuch ſort, as if he called diuers nations to the feaſt: which phraſe of ſpeech is often found in other places; becauſe it is ſaid, that the Lord feedes the wicked fat againſt the day of ſlaughter. They thinke then that the Gentiles are called to the banquet, the Iewes being made their pray: as if the Lord ſhould ſay; I haue prepared a goodly banquet for the Gentiles; to wit, the Romans ſhall ſacke and ſpoile the Iewes. But as I thinke, this ſenſe cannot ſtand, neither ſhall there neede any long refutation, when I ſhall haue acquainted you with the true meaning. Others expound it, as if *Iſaiah* ſhould ſpeake of Gods wrath thus; The Lord will make a feaſt to all people, he will make them drinke the cup of his wrath, till they be drunken therewith. But the Prophet meant nothing leſſe: for he goes on ſtill to ſet forth the grace of God, which ſhould be manifeſted at the comming of Chriſt. Vſing the verie ſame ſimilitude with that in the 22. Pſalme, verſ. 26. where *Dauid* deſcribes the Kingdome of Chriſt, ſaying; that the poore as well as the rich, ſhall partake of this banquet, and ſhall eate their fill: by which, hee ſignifies that no nation ſhall be exempt from hauing part in this benefit. At the firſt, it ſeemed that the Lord onely feaſted the Iewes, becauſe they alone were his adopted people, and entertained at this banquet as thoſe of his owne houſhold: but now

The Iewes were firſt feaſted alone.

But now the Gentiles are partakers thereof with them.

he accepts of the Gentiles alſo, and ſheds forth his graces vpon all nations. There is here then a cloſe oppoſition when he ſaith *to all people*, for formerlie he was knowne but to one nation.

The feaſt of *fat things* is to be vnderſtood of fat beaſts. Some tranſlate the word *Shemanim*, lees, or dregs, but very improperlie: for by this word he meanes old wines, which we commonlie call old ſtore, which are better then ordinarie, but ſpeciallie in ỹ Eaſt, where they beare their age beſt. He calles the liquors wherein no lees appeere, neate and *fined wines*. To be ſhort, it appeares ſufficientlie that neither Iewes nor Gentiles are threatned in this place, but that both of them rather are inuited to a goodly banket. This may the better be vnderſtood by the words of Chriſt himſelfe, where he compares *Math.* 22.2. the kingdome of heauen to a Mariage feaſt which the King prepared for his ſonne, vnto which all were indifferentlie called, becauſe they which were bidden before would not come. For mine owne part, I make no queſtion but *Iſaiah* ſpeakes here of the preaching of the Goſpell. Therefore in as much as the doctrine thereof came from the *mountaine* of Zion, he ſaith, that *all nations* ſhall come *to feaſt* there: for when God offred the heauenly food wherewith mens ſoules are fed, vnto all the world; it was as if he had erected a table for all commers.

The Lord now dayly inuiteth vs to fill and inrich our ſoules with all good things: and to that end he raiſeth vp faithfull teachers, 1 by whoſe miniſtrie he prepares his dainties 2 for vs, and withall giues force and power to his word, that we might be repleniſhed and ſatisfied. As touching the word *Mountaine*, albeit Gods meſſengers come not from Mount Zion to giue vs food, yet by this word we are to vnderſtand the Church, out of which none can partake of theſe benefits; for ſuch dainties are not to be found in the ſtreets nor hie waies; this table is not ſpread euery where, neither doth euery place afford vs this banket. The Church is the place then where we muſt come to keepe this feaſt. Now the Prophet notes this mountaine eſpeciallie, in regard God was there worſhipped, & no where elſe: yea both theſe reuelations, as alſo the Goſpell came from thence. Whereas he ſaith this banket ſhall be ſumptuous and royallie furniſhed, it appertaines to the praiſe of the doctrine of the Goſpell; for it is a ſpirituall food to nouriſh and refreſh our ſoules, yea, ſo wholeſome and excellent, that we neede ſeeke no further.

Verſ. 7. *And he will deſtroy in this mountaine the couering that couereth all people, and the vaile that is ſpread ouer all nations.*

THe interpreters alſo varie vpõ this place, for ſome by the word *couering* vnderſtand the ſhame wherewith the faithfull are ſo couered in this world, that the glorie of God ſeemes not to ſhine in them: as if he ſhould ſay, Albeit the faithfull be ouerwhelmed with many diſgraces, yet the Lord will deliuer them from them all, and make their eſtate glorious. I let paſſe other expoſitions: but the true meaning as I thinke is, that the Lord here promiſeth to take away that vaile which held them in ignorance and blindnes. Theſe obſcurities then were ſcattered and driuen away by the light of the Goſpel. Now he ſaith that this ſhall be done in the mountaine of Zion, whence the light of the word in very deede ſhined thorowout the world, as wee haue ſeene heretofore.

The light of the Goſpell ſcatters the darknes of ignorance.

Chap. 2.3.

This text then muſt be referred to the kingdome of Chriſt: for the light ſhined not vpon all men till Chriſt the ſunne of righteouſnes aroſe, who tooke away all vailes, couerings and wrappings. Here we haue then another commendation or praiſe of the Goſpell, to wit, that all darknes ſhall be diſperſed by the light thereof, yea and all vailes of error ſhall be taken from our eyes. Whence it followes that we are enwrapped and blinded with darknes of ignorance till we be inlightened with the doctrine of the Goſpell, which only is of force to giue both light and life, and perfectlie to frame vs new. This place alſo confirmes the calling of vs Gentiles: for the Iewes are not only bidden to this banquet, but all nations, who before were ouerwhelmed as it were in all maner of errors and ſuperſtitions.

Mal. 4.2. Chriſt the Sunne of righteouſnes.

We remaine in darknes and in the ſhadow of death till the light of the Goſpell ſhines vpon vs.

Verſ. 8. *He will deſtroy death for euer: and the Lord will wipe away the teares from all faces, and the rebuke of his people will he take away out of the earth: for the Lord hath ſpoken it.*

THe Prophet goes on ſtill with the matter in hand, for in ſumme, he promiſeth that there ſhal be perfect felicitie vnder the kingdome of Chriſt. And the better to expreſſe it, he vſeth many figures very fitting and agreeable for his preſent purpoſe. True felicitie ſtands not in earthlie nor tranſitorie things, but in that which can not be taken from vs by death: for in the chiefeſt delights the pleaſure thereof is much diminiſhed, becauſe they can not laſt always. He ioines two things together then which make happines full and compleate: firſt, that a man may *liue euer* (for it is a miſerable thing for them to die which otherwiſe were once happie for a time) ſecondly, that this life be ioined with ioy, for without that death ſeemes better then a life full of trouble & calamities. Further he adds, that all rebuke being taken away, this life ſhall be *glorious*: for otherwiſe the wofull oppreſſion of the people which they indured might haue ſeemed to contradict this propheſie. But ſome may aske to what time theſe promiſes ſhould be referred: for whilſt we are in this world we muſt fight againſt many aſſaults, and that without any intermiſſion: ſo as we are not deſtinate to die once only, but euery day. To which purpoſe S. *Paul* complaines, that he and the chiefe pillars of the Church in his time were gazing-ſtocks vnto

Wherein true happines conſiſts.

1

2

Queſt.

all

all the world ſuſtaining all ſorts of reproches, being eſteemed no better then the offcouring and refuſe of the ſame. In what time, or when are theſe things fulfilled then? No doubt they are to bee referred to the whole Kingdome of Chriſt: and I doe expreſly ſay to his *whole Kingdome*, becauſe we muſt not onely conſider the beginnings of it, but alſo the end and full accompliſhment thereof. So that we are to ſtretch theſe promiſes vnto the ſecond comming of Chriſt, which for this cauſe is called the day of redemption; and of reſtauration; in regard that thoſe things which as now ſeeme confuſed, ſhall then bee reſtored to full perfection, and ſhall put on a new forme.

Anſ.

These and the like promiſes muſt be applied not onely to the beginnings, but to the whole progreſſe of Chriſts kingdome. *Luk.* 21. 28. *Rom.* 8. 23. *Acts* 3. 21. *Eph.* 4. 10. *Pſa.* 126. 5.

I grant that it appertained alſo to the deliuerance from Babylon; but in as much as that was but the beginning and entrance into this, it is certaine that this promiſe muſt be prolonged till the laſt day. Let vs bend all our ſenſes and hopes vnto that then, and we may be well aſſured that the Lord in the end will perfect all things in vs, after we haue finiſhed our courſe. Be it that we *now* ſowe in teares, we ſhall *then* doubtleſſe reape with ioy and gladneſſe. Let vs not feare the ſcornes nor threats of the mightie ones; for God vſeth this as a meanes by which in the end he will bring vs vnto eternall glory. And ſeeing we haue here already taſted the beginnings of this felicitie and happineſſe, as ſoone as God adopteth vs, and that we begin to beare the image of Chriſt; let vs with conſtancy and patience wait the accompliſhment thereof till the laſt day.

As we haue taſted the beginnings of this happineſſe, ſo muſt our hope hold on till we ſee the accompliſhment thereof in the laſt day.

But in regard the matter might ſeeme incredible after ſo many horrible calamities, *Iſaiah* tels them that this proceeded not from man, but from *God*. For after the Temple was raced to the ground, Ieruſalem deſtroyed, the ſeruice of God aboliſhed, and the ſmall remnant of the people that remained were oppreſſed vnder tyrannie; who would euer haue beleeued that theſe things could haue been reſtored to their firſt perfection? Hee preuents this incredulitie therefore, vnto which men are ouermuch inclined, and confirmes, yea and ſeales vp theſe promiſes with this concluſion; Know ye for certaine, *that the Lord* is the author of this my meſſage: in him therefore repoſe all your thoghts, & not vpon me: reſt your faith on him, who neuer was, nor neuer will bee found falſe of his word: Tit. 1. 2.

The word of the Lord a ſolid foundation for our faith to reſt vpon.

Verſ. 9. And in that day ſhall men ſay; Loe, this is our God: wee haue waited for him, and hee will ſaue vs: This is the Lord, wee haue waited for him: wee will reioyce and bee glad in his ſalvation.

AND *they ſhall ſay.*] The verbe is indefinit, and ſhould be tranſlated, *He ſhall ſay:* but becauſe he ſpeakes of that which All, and not one or two, ſhould ſay: I had rather turne it, *Men ſhall ſay.* This is a very good concluſion, ſeeing thereby they ſhew that theſe benefits of God are not ſtinted nor ſcanted to a few, but that *men* both receiue and feele them by effect. His meaning is then, that God prepares not this banquet (mentioned verſ. 6.) in vaine; in regard men are ſatisfied therewith, and reioyce with an eternall ioy. For this gladſome voyce which he foretels ſhould be publike, is a reall ſigne and teſtimonie) as you would ſay) of Gods grace. This place ought to be diligently obſerued of vs; for the Prophet therein ſhewes, that there ſhall bee ſuch a manifeſtation, that it ſhal retaine mens mindes in the word of God, ſo as they ſhall wholly reſt in it, without any doubting at all.

But if theſe things appertaine to Chriſts Kingdome, as they doe indeed, wee receiue great fruit thereby. What? Chriſtians haue now that certaine trueth, in which they may boldly reſt; vnleſſe they forget themſelues, and reiect the grace of God. For it is manifeſted vnto all, & hath taken frō them all occaſion of doubting; ſo as they may ſafely boaſt, that they truely know what his will is: yea, we may ſay, and that truely, as Ieſus Chriſt ſaid to the woman of Samaria, We worſhip that which we know: Iohn 4. 22. Therefore, in as much as we are aſſured by the Goſpell, of that grace which is offered vs in Ieſus Chriſt, we wander not any more in vncertaine coniectures, as many doe, but we imbrace God and his pure ſeruice; ſo as we boldly bid adiew to all humane inuentions.

What vſe we are to make of this certeintie of trueth, now reuealed vnto vs in the Goſpell.

The oppoſition alſo is to bee noted betweene the little and obſcure knowledge which the Fathers had vnder the Law, and that fulneſſe of knowledge which ſhineth now in the Goſpell: for albeit God vouchſafed the people of old, the light of his heauenly truth; yet it did appeare more familiarly by Chriſt, as it is ſaid in the firſt of S. Iohn, verſ. 14. 18. The Prophet therefore now extols and ſets forth that aſſured confidence which the onely Sonne of God reuealing his Father, hath brought vnto vs at his comming. Beſides, as in this behalfe we haue a much greater prerogatiue then the ancient people had, in regard that the reconciliation made by Chriſt, ſets the Lord more at one with vs: ſo God cannot bee otherwiſe knowne but in Chriſt, who is his liuely image, and the ingrauen forme of his ſubſtance: Heb. 1. 3. He that knowes not the Sonne, the ſame knowes not the Father. Howſoeuer the Turkes, Iewes, and other infidels boaſt, that they worſhippe God the Creator of heauen and earth; yet in ſo doing, they worſhip nought but the deuice of their owne braine. And albeit they be obſtinate, yet they follow nothing but vncertaine and falſe opinions, in ſtead of the truth: they grope in darkeneſſe, and worſhip their owne imaginations in ſtead of God. In a word, all religion out of Chriſt is falſe and deceitfull; all ſeruices are deteſtable, & ought boldly to be condemned.

God cannot be knowne but in Chriſt *Ioh.* 14. 7.

Turkes and Iewes not acknowledging God in Chriſt, worſhip their owne imaginations in ſtead of God.

All religions out of Chriſt deteſtable.

But it is not without cauſe that the Prophet vſeth theſe two wordes, *Behold, this is*, &c. For therein he teſtifies, that God is ſurely preſent, and a little after, in mentioning

Note also, that the Prophet doubles his speech, This is our God, This is the Lord.

faith, and assurance, he sets forth the constancie of those who worship God in Christ. It is certaine that we can not comprehend the Lord in his Maiestie, for he dwels in light which no man can attaine vnto, the which would certainly ouerwhelme vs, if we should presume to aspire thereunto. And therefore he applies himselfe to our weaknes, communicating himselfe vnto vs in Iesus Christ, by whom he makes vs partakers of his wisdome, righteousnes, and all other his benefits.

This is also an excellent point, for in calling Christ the *God of the faithfull*, he giues him the title of The eternall: whence we gather, 1 that the true eternitie of God is comprehended in his person. Moreouer, seeing Christ is 2 thus manifested by the Gospell, it reproues the wicked vnthankfulnes of those who being discontented with this perfect manifestation of him, haue dared to adde vaine speculations of their owne, as we may see in the Papacie.

We haue waited for him.] Now hee expresseth that constancie and perseuerance which those should haue that haue once imbraced God in Christ: for this was not to be a temporarie knowledge, but such, as wherein we must stedfastlie perseuere vnto the end. Now *Esaiah* speakes in the person of the auncient Church which then had her proper seate only among the Iewes. And therefore contemning all other gods which were worshipped in other places, he confidentlie affirmes that he only which was manifested vnto *Abraham*, and published in the Law by the ministrie of *Moses*, is the true God: for other nations which were plunged in darknes and ignorance *waited* not for him: in regard that this *waiting* proceeds from faith, which is accompanied with patience; and faith is neuer separate from the word. He admonisheth the faithful then that their saluation hangs vpon expectation and *hope*, because the promises of God were somewhat deferred till Christes comming. Furthermore we haue also to consider what the condition of these times were, for it seemed that Gods promise was either disanulled; or that he had reiected the posteritie of *Abraham*. Truely, howsoeuer they beheld the promise a farre off, yet God did in no sort reueale himselfe vnto them at that time: it was needfull therefore that they should be endued with a wonderful patience, to sustaine so heauie afflictions and temptations. This is the cause why he commands them to *wait* patientlie for the comming of Christ, for then they should perfectlie feele how neere the Lord is to thé that serue him.

Gen. 15. 1. Exod. 20.

Now this very doctrine ought to quiet and calme our troubled spirits at this day, to the end we may wait for the Lord with a sure and inuincible hope; although our saluation be yet hidden, and that we say of him when he seemes to be far off, *Behold him*. Let vs learne also in the midst of the greatest confusions, to discerne him by this marke, *This is the Lord*. For the words thémselues, although he speakes in the time past, to wit, We haue reioiced, and are glad, yet the words import a continuall act: and a little before he spake in the time to come, He will saue vs. The summe is, that Christ will neuer disappoint those that are his, of their hope, prouided that they call vpon him with calme and quiet affections.

Christ neuer disappoints his of their hope, if with calme affections they call vpon him.

Vers. 10. *For in this mountaine shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be threshed vnder him, euen as straw is threshed in* * *Madmenah.*

* Or, In the dunghill.

I Doubt not but the Prophets intent in the beginning of this verse is to comfort the Iewes: who wanting this, might haue thought that God had vtterlie forsaken and cast them off. For whereas some expound it of the affliction which the Lord would bring vpon the Iewes, I see no reason of it at all. But it is rather as if the Prophet should say, The Lord will alwaies assist his Church. I know well that the *hand of the Lord* is also said to rest vpon the reprobate, when without ceasing he continues to presse them with his vengeance till he haue vtterlie ouerthrowne them: but *hand* in this place is rather taken for succor, then for corrections: for the verb, *shall rest*, signifies a perpetuall watch and defence.

Hence wee gather a very profitable doctrine, to wit, that albeit God do shed forth infinit store of his benefits ouer all the earth, so as the vnbeleeuers themselues haue their part of them, yet notwithstanding *his hand* helps not continuallie, neither doth it rest any where but vpon his holy *Mountaine*, that is to say, vpon his Church where he is serued and worshipped. We are also to obserue, that Ierusalem was brought vnder the rod before she felt these graces: for before he denounced the iudgements of God against her; and now he addes a consolation thereunto.

A doctrine of singular fruit.

Gods continuall help proper only to his Church.

The Prophets mingle consolatiõs with denuntiatiõs.

In the second part of the verse he redoubles this mercie of God as it were. Why? Because in correcting the enemies of his Church he testifies how deere and pretious the saluation thereof is vnto him. The Iewes had scarcely any greater enemies vnto them then the *Moabites*, as may be seene thorowout the bookes of the Prophets; notwithstanding there was some alliance betweene them. Now vnder the name of the *Moabites* he cõprehends all the enemies of ẏ Church, but speciallie those with whom they had any affinitie, which commonlie proue the worst of all. He shewes then, that albeit for a time they plaid rex, and oppressed the Church by tyrannie, yet themselues at last should be brought downe. His purpose in this is to preuent the worst, lest the faithfull should be discouraged in aduersitie, thinking their case miserable whilest the wicked euery way triumphed ouer them: for the *threshing* whereof he heere speakes, shall follow soone after. If we therefore at this day see the Church of God afflicted and troubled by those that in shew haue some acquaintance and league with vs, yea such as take vpon them the name and title of the Church, yet let vs susteine and comfort our hearts by this promise.

Whereas we haue turned the Hebrew word *Madmenah*, a Dunghill; some take it to be the name

name of a Citie; whereof *Ieremiah* makes mention, Chap. 48.2. But what if wee ſay, that the Prophet alludes to this Citie, which ſtood (as it is verie likely) in a fat and fertile ſoile, and that hee thus gaules and preſſeth the Moabites the more? as if hee ſhould ſay; *Euen as ſtraw is threſhed in their fields, ſo the Lord will threſh the Moabites.* I reiect not the other interpretations; yet I ſee no inconuenience if we ſay, that he had reſpect to the fruitfulneſſe of the land in which this Citie ſtood. And in reading it ſo, I haue not feared to follow the common conſent.

Verſ. 11. *And hee ſhall ſtretch out his hand in the middeſt of them, (as hee that ſwimmeth ſtretcheth them out to ſwimme) and with the ſtrength of his handes ſhall hee bring downe their pride.*

NOw the Prophet both expounds and confirmes the former ſentence; yet it is by way of another ſimilitude: whereby hee giues them to vnderſtand, that the Lord will *ſtretch out his hand* into the verie middeſt of *Moabs* Country, and will not lightly touch ſome corners or out places thereof. Some expound this ſimilitude thus; Euen as men ſtretch forth their armes in ſwimming, ſo the Lord will chaſtiſe the Moabites on this ſide and on that.

Others thinke he ſpeakes of inflicting manifold puniſhments vpon them: as if hee ſhould ſay; The Lord will not correct the Moabites once onely, but will bee reuenged on them the ſecond, yea the third time, for the crueltie which they exerciſed vpon his children. But we may expound this ſimilitude another way; They that ſwimme we know vſe not to caſt themſelues in violently, but they goe gently to worke, and ſpread out their armes very ſoftly; and yet in the meane while, they cut and paſſe thorow the water: So the Lord will not often vſe his greateſt forces to confound the wicked, but wil eaſilie, without weapõs or great tumults, bring thẽ to deſtruction, how valiant or well furniſhed ſoeuer they ſeemed to be. This expoſition of the ſimilitude pleaſeth me beſt, becauſe it doth in nothing depraue the former ſenſe, & giues vs to vnderſtand, that God oftentimes brings the wicked to nothing by his power, although he doe not euer and anon thunder from heauen in the ſight of all the world. Whereas he ſaith, he will doe this *in the middeſt* of it, he ſhewes that there is no corner ſo cloſe, into which this vengeance of God ſhall not pierce.

Verſ. 12. *The defence alſo of the height of thy walles ſhall he bring downe and lay low,* and *caſt them to the ground,* euen *to the duſt.*

NOw hee directs his ſpeech againſt the Country of Moab. Moab was well fortified and ſwelled with pride, in regard of their *walles* and bulwarkes: therefore he ſaith, that the high towers, and other ſtrong and impregnable places ſhould ſerue them to no purpoſe. They of old vſed another kinde of fortification then we doe now at this day, as is well knowne. It is not without cauſe that he here vſeth three words for the better expreſſing of his owne meaning; to wit, I will *bring downe, lay low, and caſt to the ground*: for it was needfull that this pride of the Moabites wherewith they were puffed vp, ſhould bee beaten downe, becauſe they were become intollerable; as we haue ſeene in the 15. Chapter, verſ. 6. The Prophet then derides them: as if he ſhould ſay; Oh, it ſeemes the Lord cannot bring downe this height of yours, in which you ſo much glory. The particle, *To the duſt*, is as much as if he had ſaid; He will not onely race to the ground, but will bring it to duſt, that there ſhall not remaine ſo much as any mention of the old ruines. This place A conſolatiõ. containes in it therefore an excellent and verie apt conſolation: for our enemies at this day are ſo bold, that they deſpiſe not men alone, but euen God himſelfe: they are ſo proud, and ſo puffed vp in regard of their power, that they thinke themſelues inuincible. But it is our parts to oppoſe this ſentence of the Prophet againſt them and all their forces and munitions; to wit, the Lord will eaſilie bring all theſe things to nought. In the meane while, wee muſt patiently beare the hurt that comes vnto vs by reaſon of their power and ſtrength, vntill the certaine and prefixed time of their ruine approcheth. Let Patience haue her perfect worke.

THE XXVI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *In that day ſhall this ſong be ſung in the land of Iudah: Wee haue a ſtrong Citie, ſaluation ſhall God ſet for the walles and bulwarks.*

THE Prophet begins againe in this place to ſhew, that God will hold the people in his protection, after their returne out of captiuitie, and that Ieruſalẽ ſhal be inſafetie vnder his cuſtodie, no leſſe then if it were cõpaſſed about with fortreſſes, tamparts, ditches, & double wals; ſo as the enemies ſhould enter no waies to hutt it. But the time is to be noted when this ſong was publiſhed. The Prophet had foretold what calamities ſhould fall vpon the Church, which as yet were nothing neere, but came to paſſe after his death. Doubtleſſe the people might haue deſpaired in their captiuitie, if theſe promiſes had not vpheld them. To the end the Iewes then might haue ſome aſſurance of their deliuerance, and in the middeſt of death might

espie life approching: the Prophet composed this song before the troubles happened: why? that they might learne betimes to beare their miseries patiently, and to hope for better things. For it was not penned onely (as I thinke) for a thanksgiuing which the Iewes should sing after their deliuerance; but also that in their captiuity it selfe, they might confirme their hearts with confidence of future comfort, and might teach their children to hope for it, leauing these promises as it were from hand to hand, to their posteritie, although for the present they seemed but dead men.

We haue told you in the 5. Chapter, why the Prophet composed these and the like songs in verse; to wit, that euery one might the better remember them by daily recording of them. Although they wept then in Babylon, and were almost ouerwhelmed with sorrow, as these words shew, How shall wee
Psal. 137.4. sing the Lords song in a strange land? yet they were to hope, that after their returne into Iudea, they should giue thanks to the Lord, and *sing* forth his praises. The Prophet therefore shewes them their deliuerance a farre off, that they might cheerefully wait for it.

A strong Citie.] By these words the Prophet promiseth an ample and full restauration of Ierusalem, and of the people. How so? God will not onely redeeme the captiues, and gather together the dispersed, but he will also keepe them safe and sound, after hee hath brought them home. But the faithfull notwithstanding forthwith saw the destruction
2. *Kin.* 25.9. both of the Citie and Temple: and being
2. *Chr.* 36.19. come home, they could perceiue nothing but
Chap. 22. those fearefull ruines which *Isaiah* had foretold. It was needfull then that they should behold this restauration of Ierusalem by the eye of faith, as from an high beacon or turret.

Now after these things, the Prophet shewes what the strength of this Citie shall bee; namely, *The protection of God* shall be in stead of walles, towers, ditches, and forts: as if hee should say; Let other Cities trust in their defences; God onely shall be the best defence that we can imagine. I reiect not their aduice who say we should reade; Hee hath set walles and bulwarkes for saluation: but in regard the Prophets wordes being simply vnderstood, containe in them a more ample and stable doctrine, what neede is there to wrest in a constrained exposition, when the true and naturall sense runnes very well; to wit, that Gods protection is more sufficient then all defences? according as it is said, Psal. 63. Thy goodnesse, Lord, is better then life: for as *Dauid* there confesseth, that he rests in greater securitie vnder the shadow of Gods wings, then if hee were furnished with all the succours the world could afford him: so in like manner *Isaiah* saith in this place, that there shall bee iust occasion of securitie, when God shall vndertake the *safegard* of his people.

Now in as much as this promise extends it selfe to the whole course of our redemption, we must here obserue also, that hee is at this day the protector of his Church: and that his defence therefore who keepes it, is stronger then if it were compassed about with humane helpes. If we therefore meane to rest safely, let vs dwell in the Church. And albeit we be destituted of outward munitions, yet let vs content our selues with the Lord and his vndoubted saluation, which is farre more excellent then all worldly fortresses.

Gods sole protection of his Church, stronger the all humane helpes.

Vers. 2. *Open yee the gates, that the righteous nation that keepeth the trueth, may enter in.*

NO doubt but many despised this song when *Isaiah* first published it: for in his time Ierusalem was full of bad companions, and the number of the godly were very few. But after the Prophets death, they were chastised for their impietie; for then they had some inckling that the Prophet had not foretold these things in vaine. For whilest the wicked are in prosperitie, they feare nothing, and beare themselues in hand, that they cannot be tamed. And thus the Iewes thought they could neuer be driuen out of Iudea, nor led captiues: nay, they imagined they should dwell there euer. It was needfull therefore that all occasion of swelling pride should be taken away from them: hereunto tend the Prophets words, when he saith, that the inhabitants of the new Citie shall be vnlike the first: for they shall bee faithfull and *iust*.

Moreouer, this promise might haue seemed ridiculous; because those which were banished and led into captiuitie, had no matter at all to reioyce of. Therefore after the destruction of the Temple and the Citie, and the ouerthrow of all estates, they might obiect, where are those *gates* which he commands vs to *open*? or where are those *people* that should *enter* in at them? And yet notwithstanding, we see these things came to passe; neither was there any thing foretold, which the Lord did not performe and accomplish. Wee ought therefore to set these antient histories before our eyes, to arme our selues with the examples contained in them, and in the middest of this confused estate in which we now see the Church to be, to hope notwithstanding that the Lord will restore it.

God is alwaies as good as his word, howsoeuer our passiõs boile within vs. What course we are to take when the Church is in a confused state.

When the Prophet mentions the *iust nation that keepes the trueth*; hee not onely shewes (as I haue said heeretofore) who they are to whom this promise appertaines; but therewithall, the fruit of that should come by this chastisement: for the Church being once purged from her filthinesses, her *righteousnesse* and holinesse should shine so much the more right. For when the Prophet wrote this song, the wicked reigned, and the good were verie thin sowen, and those also were mingled amongst the multitude, as the wheat in the chaffe. It was needfull therefore that this great troope, who had neither religion nor any feare of God should bee cut off: to the end the Lord might gather in the remnant of
Chap. 25.1.

his

his Church. See now how the Lord recompenced this ruine of Ieruſalem. For whereas her citizens were before defiled with impietie, now they were conſecrated anew vnto God; elſe it had been to little purpoſe for them to haue recouered a floriſhing outward eſtate, if newnes of life, pietie and vprightnes had not alſo floriſhed amongſt them. Now as the Prophet in theſe words ſets forth the grace of God, ſo he alſo exhorts theſe redeemed people therewithall to giue themſelues to integritie of life. In a word, he teſtifies that theſe promiſes ſhall ſtand hypocrits in no ſtead, for the *gates* ſhall not be ſet open for them, but only for the *iuſt* and holy.

The Church hath alwaies been like the corne floore. Math. 3.12.

I grant the Church hath alwaies been like the corne-floore, wherein there is chaffe mingled amongſt the good corne, or rather the wheat is couered with chaffe: yet it is not to be doubted but the Church was purged in better meaſure then it was before, when the Iewes returned home out of captiuitie. For it could not be but thoſe which came back againe were led with a good and zealous affection in regard the iorney was long and tedious, as alſo, that they were ſubiect to many inconueniences and dangers in the way: In the meane while many of their nation choſe rather to continue in bondage then to goe home, thinking their eſtate who remained in Babylon much more quiet and peaceable then theirs who returned into Iudea. It muſt needs be ſome ſeed of godlines then which forced them to come and take the inioying of thoſe promiſes that were made to their fathers. But albeit the Church was then ſtained with many imperfections, yet this which the Prophet here affirmes was true in part: for the moſt of the of-ſcouring, which were mingled with them before, came not back againe; and thoſe that remained had ſomewhat profited vnder Gods corrections.

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Some diſtinguiſh this ſentence thus, The iuſt nation before God, and the vpright before men. But I take it more ſimplie, to wit; After the Prophet hath mentioned the *righteous nation*, he by and by ſhewes that this iuſtice conſiſts in the integritie of that heart which is without fraud or guile: for nothing is more contrarie to iuſtice then hypocriſie. Now albeit the man can not be found who hath ſo well profited as to keepe iuſtice in euery reſpect perfectlie, yet we may ſay that Gods children, who aſpire vnto this vprightnes with their whole hearts, are notwithſtanding *keepers* of it. Vnleſſe any had rather vnderſtand it thus, that true iuſtice is here ſet forth vnder one of the parts by the figure Synecdoche, to wit, when men walke ſimplie and plainelie one with another, hauing firſt of all abandoned all naughtie and wicked practiſes.

They that aſpire to vprightnes of heart are keepers of iuſtice.

Obiect. Anſ.

But if any vpon this place ſhould go about to eſtabliſh the doctrine of merits, we ſhall eaſily anſwere them: for the Prophet ſpeakes not here of the cauſe of ſaluation, neither yet what men are by nature, but what God makes them to be by grace, and what *Citizens* he meant to haue in his Church; for of wolfes he can make lambs, as we haue ſeene in the 11. Chapter. But whileſt we liue in this world, we are alwaies farre off from that perfection which God requires, and therefore we ought dayly to aime ſtill vnto it: but the Lord eſteems vs only according to that good worke which he hath begun in vs, and accounts vs iuſt after he hath once brought vs into the paths of iuſtice. For when he hath begun to correct and change our hypocriſie, he doth therewithall call vs faithfull and vpright.

The Lord accounts of vs according to that which himſelfe hath wrought in vs.

Verſ. 3. * *By an aſſured purpoſe thou wilt preſerue perfit peace, becauſe they truſted in thee.*

* Or, It is an aſſured thought: thou wilt keepe peace, peace I ſay, for they truſted in thee.

BEcauſe the Hebrue word *Ieſer* ſignifies a thing made, created, or a thought, ſome tranſlate thus, Thou wilt keepe peace with an aſſured foundation: as if the Prophet meant, that thoſe who continue conſtant in the tempeſts of this world, becauſe they reſt vpon God, ſhall alwaies continue in ſafetie. Others turne it, Thou wilt keepe peace by an aſſured purpoſe, which comes almoſt to the ſame ſenſe, to wit, that thoſe who haue fixed their hearts vpon God alone ſhall be happie and bleſſed at the laſt. For God promiſeth not to be the protector of his Saincts further then they quietlie reſt vpon his good pleaſure, without wauering. But becauſe the Prophet in one word ſaith, It is a ſtable or ſtedfaſt decree, let the readers conſider, if this be not more fitlie applied vnto God: ſo as the ſenſe will be, The peace of the Church is built vpon the eternall and immutable counſell of God. For the very principall point is, that the faithfull ſtay themſelues vpon this heauenlie *decree*, leſt they ſhould be ſhaken by ſo many changes as dayly fall out in the world.

It is ſure that wee ought alwaies to hope ſtedfaſtlie in God, to the end wee may euermore feele his faithfulnes in keeping vs: it is requiſite alſo that the faithfull be neuer turned aſide for any doubtfull or perplexed accident, but ought to ſtick cloſe to God only: notwithſtanding the fitteſt ſenſe, and that which agrees beſt with the Prophets words is, that God hath purpoſed by an aſſured and immutable decree that all thoſe which hope in him ſhall enioy euerlaſting peace. For if this ſtedfaſt purpoſe ſhould be taken for the ſetled conſtancie of the faithfull, it were in vaine for the Prophet to adde that reaſon to his ſpeech which followeth, *for they truſted in thee*. Againe, both kinds of ſpeech would be improper, to ſay that a cõtinuall peace ſhould be forethought of in the conceit. But this agrees very well, that God will neuer deceiue vs of our hope when we truſt in him: Why? Becauſe he hath *decreed* to keepe vs for euer. Wence it followes, that ſeeing the Church depends not vpon the brittle eſtate of the world, it is not therefore ſhaken nor toſſed vp and downe by the ſundrie changes which fall out euery day; but is ſtayed vpon a rock firme and immoueable: to wit, the conſtant decree of God; ſo as it can neuer be moued.

A close opposition betweene Gods setled purpose, and our wauering thoghts.

And thus, as I take it, here is a close opposition betweene the setled purpose of God, and our vnsetled and wauering thoughts: for it happens euer and anon, that any new assault drines our thoughts hither and thither; yea there is not the least change which brings not his doubtings with it. It is good therefore wee should hold this principle; to wit, that we doe amisse to measure Gods immutable counsell by our tottering deuices: for it is said, as we shall see Chap. 55. That as farre as the heauens are higher then the earth, so much higher are my thoughts from yours, O yee house of Israel, saith the Lord.

Our saluatiō not subiect to change, because the counsell of God remains sure.

First then, let vs hold this for certaine, that our saluation is not subiect to change; because the counsell of God remaineth sure. Therefore it is the Prophet repeates it, *Thou wilt keepe peace, peace I say:* thereby shewing, that it shall continue and last for euer. Now by the word *peace*, he not onely meanes peace of conscience, but all kinde of felicitie: as if hee should say; Gods grace alone shall suffice to maintaine you in all happinesse and prosperitie.

By peace, is meant both inward and outward felicitie.

Vers. 4. *Trust in the Lord for euer: for in the Lord God is strength for euermore.*

SOme reade the second member of the verse; Hope in the strong God, Lord of the worlds: but in regard the word *Tsur*, is not alwaies put for an epithite, but signifies Strength, I reiect that exposition, because it is constrained; neither sutes it to the matter in hand, as we shall see anon. There is also as little stedfastnesse in their curiositie, who from hence would proue the Diuinitie of Christ: as if the Prophet should say; The Lord Iehouah is in the Lord Iah. For *Vsaiah* hath put the name of God twice, onely to amplifie his power. He therefore exhorts the people to repose themselues vpon God: first then he laid downe doctrine; and in this verse hee comes to exhortation. For it were in vaine to tell vs our peace is in the hand of God, and that he will faithfully keepe it, vnlesse after such instructions & doctrines, we were stirred vp and prouoked to haue our parts therein by exhortations.

Doctrine laid downe in the 3. vers. in this he comes to exhortation.

Doctrine & exhortation must goe together.

Now he not onely wils vs to hope, but to perseuere in it: this sentence therefore belongs properly to the faithfull, who haue alreadie learned what it is to hope in God. And yet they haue neede to be daily confirmed, because they are weake, and readie oftentimes to slip, according to the sundrie occasions of distrust with which they haue to fight.

We must not onely trust, but it must continue for euer.

Our faith ought to answer Gods power.

He commands vs not barely to trust in the Lord then, but that we perseuere constantly in hope and assurance *for euer*. The reason which he addes likewise is to be noted; to wit, that as Gods power, which is the obiect of faith, indures *for euer*; so our faith should still looke to this perpetuitie. For when the Prophet speakes of the power and strength of God, he meanes not any idle power, but such as is effectuall and operatiue: shewing and manifesting it selfe really in vs, following and bringing to a good end that which it hath begun. And yet this doctrine hath a further scope; to wit, it teacheth vs at all times to consider the nature of God. For as soone as wee doe but turne our eyes in the least measure aside, we can see nothing but that which is earthly and vanishing: and must wee not then be forthwith out of heart? Faith therefore ought to surmount the world with continuall increases: why? because the trueth, iustice, and goodnesse of God is not temporall and vanishing, but God alwaies continues like himselfe.

We must alwaies fixe the eyes of our faith vpon Gods nature.

Vers. 5. *For hee will bring downe them that dwell on high: the high Citie will hee abase*; euen *vnto the ground will hee cast it downe, and bring it vnto dust.*

6. *The foote shall treade it downe*, euen *the feete of the poore*, and *the steps of the needie.*

NOw he more fully shewes what this power of God is, whereof hee spake; to wit, euen that whereof we shall haue experience, and that for our good. These two sentences then depend one vpon another thus; to wit, That the proud are cast downe by the power of God, who stablisheth the humble and those that are despised, in their stead. For whereas in the first place hee teacheth that the proud shall be *brought downe*: it would not suffice for giuing a full and perfect consolation, vnlesse he had also added, that the *poore* and humble should bee exalted to haue the dominion ouer them. This we know by experience, that God is wont to worke powerfully for our saluation; and this giues vs matter and occasion of good hope. *Vers. 5.* *Vers. 6.*

By the *high places*, he meanes all manner of munitions & defences, (for in old time they were wont to build Cities in high places) as also their glorie and riches. His meaning is then, that there shal be no fortresse so strong, which shall let God to *abase* and *bring downe* the wicked. Towers and Castels are not displeasing vnto God in themselues; but because it often falles out, that the strong and mightie brag and glory in them: therefore this *dwelling on high*, is often taken for pride it selfe. Now it is not to bee doubted but hee speakes here of the wicked, who with their forces, wealth, and treasures, thinke themselues able to make their partie good against God. He also comforts the Iewes (as wee haue said) in regard they might bee terrified and despaire in themselues, by seeing Babylons power to bee inuincible, vnlesse God had vpheld them by this particular promise. As if hee should haue saide; You neede not feare eyther the greatnesse or power of the Babylonians: why? for it shall easilie bee brought downe, and shall not bee able to resist the power of the most high. *Chap. 13. 1.*

Vers. 7.

*Or, vprightneſſes are the path of the iuſt.

Verſ. 7. *The way of the iuſt is righteouſnes: thou wilt make equall the righteous path of the iuſt.*

HE praiſeth not the iuſtice of the faithfull here, as ſome haue falſlie imagined: but only teacheth that God by his ſingular bleſſing will giue them an happie and proſperous ſucceſſe thorowout the whole courſe of their liues. But becauſe in the beginning of the verſe he had ſaid only in a word, That the way of the iuſt is plaine and equall: in the ſecond part hee expounds himſelfe more clearely; attributing it vnto the grace of God that they perſeuere thus in their good courſe vnto the end, euen as it were thorow a ſmooth and plaine field. For in the verb, *to make equall*, there is a ſimilitude, namely, that God will poiſe as with iuſt and equall weights and ballance thoſe things which in themſelues were very vnequall.

There is ſome ambiguitie in the Hebrue word *Iaſhar*, becauſe it may be attributed as well to God, as to the way. Some therefore tranſlate, *Thou which art iuſt wilt make the way of the righteous equall*: and God is thus called in other places. The alluſion alſo would be very fitting to ſay, that the vprightneſſes of which he ſpeakes proceed from God, in regard that he only is vpright or iuſt: notwithſtanding the other reading ſeemes leſſe conſtreined.

Deut.32.4. Pſal.25.8.9.

In ſumme, the Prophet promiſeth that God will haue care of the iuſt, and that in ſuch wiſe, as he will *leade them* by the hand. For we often thinke that all things run confuſedlie together here below whileſt the vngodlie are at their eaſe, and the good in the meane time are oppreſſed. Yea and albeit the holy Scripture teacheth, and ſo often confirmes it vnto vs that God hath care of his Church, yet notwithſtanding it is an hard matter to keepe our thoughts ſteadie, but we by and by wauer whē we ſee all things which the wicked take in hand to proſper. And yet it is moſt certaine that God by his ballance poiſeth the waies of the iuſt how vneuen or ragged ſoeuer the ſame ſeeme to be: yea, he hath giuen his Angels charge to keepe thoſe that are his, that they ſhould not ſtumble or hurt their foot againſt a ſtone, Pſal.91.11. otherwiſe there is not the leaſt offence which would not eaſily ouerthrow them and make them quaile: much leſſe ſhould they be able to paſſe thorow ſo many briars and thornes; ſuch crooked by-waies; dangerous gulphs, and ſtreit paſſages, vnleſſe the Lord ſhould draw them out, and in the end deliuer them.

Let vs therefore learne to commend our ſafetie into the hands of God, and to follow him for our guide: and in thus doing we ſhall be well directed; yea we ſhall alwaies eſcape, although we were inuironed on euery ſide with ambuſhes, the cunning deuices and the innumerable dangerous plots either of Satan, or the wicked which are his inſtruments. And haue not wee ſufficient proofe of that which the Prophet here ſaith? Are not our waies made plaine and ſmooth in the midſt of the deepeſt gulphs, ſo as our courſe can not be ſtopped nor ſlacked by any hindrances whatſoeuer? Truly experience it ſelfe teacheth, that if we were not conducted and gouerned by Gods hand, it were but in vaine for vs to attempt to walke thorow ſuch vnknowne paſſages: for alas ſuch is our weakenes, that we would ſtumble at the leaſt ſtone we ſhould meet withall in the way. Satan and the wicked on the other ſide would not only intangle and intrap vs in many of their nets; neither would they thinke it ſufficient to caſt ſome ſmall ſtumbling-blocks in our way: but one while they would driue vs vpō the rocks, another while into bottomles depths of miſeries, out of which the whole world with all the power it hath could by no meanes eſcape.

Our help ſtands only in the name of God.

Let vs acknowledge then how neceſſarie it is for vs to looke for our direction from heauen: yea, let vs confeſſe with *Ieremiah*, O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himſelfe: and that it is not in man to walke, nor direct his owne ſteps, Iere.10.23. Let vs not be puffed vp then with vaine confidences as if we had the euents of things at our beck. Neither let vs boaſt that we will do this or that, like thoſe raſh heads who think themſelues able to accompliſh all their luſts: for if we haue not ſo much power as to moue our tongues to giue an anſwere; much leſſe can we of our ſelues bring greater enterpriſes to paſſe. It is in vaine for men then to purpoſe, determine, and to diſpoſe of their waies, vnleſſe God guide them by his hand.

Lam.4.13. Prou.16.1.

But this his hand he reacheth forth *to the iuſt*, and of them he hath a ſpeciall care. For if ſo be the prouidēce of God extends it ſelfe generallie ouer all creatures; and that he prouides for the neceſſities of the yong Rauens, Sparrowes, and the leaſt worme that creepes vpon the ground: much more hath he a fatherlie care of the faithfull to deliuer them out of the dangers and ſtreits into which they are plunged.

To whom God reacheth his directing hand.

Verſ. 8. *Alſo we O Lord haue waited for thee in the way of thy iudgements: the deſire of our ſoule is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.*

THis verſe conteines a moſt excellent doctrine, without which the former things might ſeeme to haue been ſpoken in vaine: for the Prophet hauing ſaid that God will be our leader all our liues long, ſo as we ſhall neuer erre nor ſtumble; and yet in the meane while we ſee our ſelues brought into ſo many extremities, that in our iudgements all theſe promiſes are meerely vaine: when (I ſay) he thus exerciſeth our patience, it ſtands vs vpon to wraſtle manfullie, and yet to hope in him notwithſtanding. Of this the Prophet here giues vs warning, namely, that although we alwaies ſee not this ſmooth and goodly plaine; and that the way is not made ſo euen vnder our feete but that we muſt preſſe thorow many ſtreits, yet muſt wee ſtill giue place vnto hope and patience.

Though Gods promiſed aſſiſtance comes not when we would, yet muſt we ſtill giue way vnto hope and patience.

By the *way of the iudgements*, he meanes aduerſities: for ſo this word is often taken in the

1 A note to discerne true Christians from hypocrits.

the Scriptures. This is the marke then whereby true Christians are discerned from the false: for whilest hypocrits inioy all things at their desire, they bleſſe God, and highly extoll him; but in aduerſitie, they murmure and blaſpheme him; thereby plainely ſhewing, that they neuer truſted in him at all; and therefore they ſerue God no longer then he ſerues their turnes in al things. Contrariwiſe, when the faithfull are exerciſed vnder diuers croſſes and calamities, they are prouoked thereby to draw neere vnto God, and to truſt in his helpe. The particle *Alſo*, therefore hath great weight in it; for it is as much as if the Prophet had ſaid, The faithfull ſerue God cheerfully, not onely when hee vſeth them gently, but euen then *alſo*, when hee deales roughly with them: neither faint they vtterly, becauſe they are ſuſtained by hope. Wherein cõſiſts the true triall of ſound godlines then? Truely in this, that we truſt in God, not onely when hee filles vs abundantly with his benefits, but then alſo when hee withdrawes the light of his countenance; yea, when he afflicts vs, and ſhewes vs nothing but the ſignes of his wrath and heauie diſpleaſure.

2 A triall of a ſound heart.

Let vs learne therefore to apply this doctrine to our vſe, as often as the calamities of this preſent life doe preſſe vs: and let vs not ceaſe to hope in him, although all things ſeeme vtterly deſperate. If he ſhould kill me (ſaith *Iob*) yet would I truſt in him: Iob 13.17. And *Dauid* proteſts, that hee will not feare, though he ſhould walke thorow the valley of the ſhadow of death. Why ſo? becauſe hee knew that God was with him: Pſal. 23.4.

In thy name.] In theſe words the Prophet meant to ſhew from whence this magnanimitie of minde in the faithfull proceedes; which ſuffers them neither to faint nor to fall vnder the greateſt aſſaults: ſurely it is in reſpect that being looſed from thoſe profane deſires, wherein the wicked are intangled, they euen in their greateſt diſtreſſes herewith they are compaſſed about, haue freedome and libertie of ſpirit to ſend forth their grones and cries boldly into the preſence of God. Naturally I confeſſe our deſires are diſordered, and the cares of this life doe as it were glew vs to the earth; our thoughts ſloat vp and downe, or elſe are ſo beſotted, that they cannot freely aſpire vnto God. The eſſence of God in like manner is hidden from vs, whereby wee wax the more ſlow and dull in ſeeking of him. For theſe reſpects therefore the Prophet brings vs backe from this hidden & incomprehenſible eſſence of God, to his *name*. As if he ſhould ſay; Content your ſelues with that manifeſtation of him which you find in his word: for there he ſets before vs as much as is expedient; to wit, his iuſtice, wiſdome, and goodneſſe; yea and his very ſelfe alſo.

It is not without cauſe alſo that he addes this word *remembrance*: for thereby he ſhewes, that the firſt apprehenſion or thought of Gods name ſufficeth not; but that wee ought to meditate thereon continually; becauſe without this helpe, all light of doctrine would by and by vaniſh. For the trueth is, the light and ſound knowledge of God muſt needes inflame our hearts with a deſire after him: yea, more then that, it prouokes vs to an inſatiable thirſt after profiting, euen as oft as we remember him. The knowledge of God then goes before: and in the ſecond place we ought to exerciſe our ſelues much in the meditation of it: for it is not enough once to haue had ſome little taſte thereof, vnleſſe therewithall a loue and deſire after the ſame bee increaſed by a continuall meditation. Hence wee may learne then, that the knowledge of God is no idle nor dead imagination.

the light of true doctrin.

Knowledg & meditation muſt goe together.

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Meditation a ſpeciall helpe to maintaine

Verſ. 9. *With my ſoule haue I deſired thee in the night, and with my ſpirit within mee will I ſeeke thee in the morning: for ſeeing thy iudgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world ſhall learne righteouſneſſe.*

SEe yet a more ample expoſition of the former ſentence: for before, ſpeaking in the perſon of all the faithfull, he ſaid, that the deſire of their ſoules was to the name of God: but now he brings in himſelfe ſpeaking; *My ſoule* hath deſired thee, ſaith hee. As if hee ſhould ſay; All the powers of my ſoule are buſied in ſeeking of thee and thy name.

How ſoule and ſpirit is taken here. The vnderſtanding and will, two principall parts of mans ſoule.

The word *Nepheſh*, is often taken for the vitall ſpirit: but becauſe the Prophet vſeth two ſundry words here, I ſo diſtinguiſh them, as that the *ſoule* ſhall ſignifie the deſire and the will; and the *ſpirit*, the intellectiue part. For we know that the vnderſtanding & will, are the two principall parts of mans ſoule: and God will haue both of them; as good reaſon is he ſhould. And hereunto appertaines that Commandement, Thou ſhalt loue the Lord thy God with all thine *heart*, and with all thy *ſoule*, and with all thy ſtrength: Matth. 22.37. The Prophet teacheth then, that all the faculties of his ſoule were bent, and *tied* him to *ſeeke* and *deſire* the Lord.

Others take this word *ſpirit*, for the regenerate part: and thus by the *ſoule*, they vnderſtand the naturall man; and by the ſpirit, the grace of God, which is ſupernaturall. But this cannot ſtand: for the naturall man neuer ſeekes vnto God; yea, and we know by experience what ſtriſe wee haue in our ſelues when we aſpire vnto God; as alſo with what great difficulty we wind our ſelues out of this repugnancie. This interpretation then needs no long refutation, ſeeing it manifeſtly croſſeth the very text of holy Scripture. Moreouer, it ſufficiently appeares by many places, that theſe words, Spirit and Soule, import as much as vnderſtanding and heart.

In what ſenſe the word night is taken in this place.

By *night*, the holy Ghoſt often meanes aduerſities; which are compared vnto darkneſs and obſcuritie. But in this place I expound it a little otherwiſe: as if the Prophet ſhould ſay; There is no time ſo vnfitting and inconuenient, which I take not to call vpon thee, and to ſeeke vnto thee. This expoſition di-

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fers not much from the firſt, yet it is ſomewhat more generall: for the night ſeemes to be ordeined for reſt, in which all the deſires and trauels of men ceaſe; ſo as there is little difference betweene ſleepe and death. But when it was time to take reſt and to be quiet, then the Prophet ſaith, he awaked to ſeeke GOD, ſo as no occaſion could hinder him from it.

Where is the practiſe of this dutie become in theſe dayes? See Pſal. 119. 55. & 62.

The meaning whereof is not as if thoſe which ſleepe can haue any ſetled or ſtable thoughts: but ſleepe it ſelfe being a part of our courſe whilſt we ſeeke God, though we lie as in a trance without vttering any word, yet then we may be ſaid to praiſe him by faith and hope. But the Prophet ſpeakes not of ſleepe here properlie, but rather by way of ſimilitude, as it further appeares plainely by the member following, where the *morning* is oppoſed to the night: and thus he notes out a continuall courſe.

In the next place we are to conſider of the reaſon which he yeelds of his ſo doing when he ſaith, that *the Inhabitants of the earth ſhall learne righteouſnes by the iudgements of God:* ſignifying thereby that men are inſtructed and taught to feare God by his rods wherewith he ſmites them. For in proſperitie they forget him, ſo as their eyes ſtand out for fatnes: they reioyce and keepe a coyle, and can not abide to be brought into any good order. The Lord therefore is faine to repreſſe their pride, and to teach them how to bow vnder his hand. Laſtly the Prophet here confeſſeth that himſelfe & the reſt of the faithfull were prepared by the corrections of the Almightie to kiſſe the rod, and to ſubmit themſelues to his gouernment; and to put themſelues vnder his protection: for vnleſſe the Lord maintaine his owne right and authoritie ouer vs with an out-ſtretched arme, none of vs all will willingſie frame our minds aright to do him ſeruice.

Pſal. 73.

Verſ. 10. *Let mercie be ſhewed to the wicked, yet he will not learne righteouſnes: in the land of vprightnes he will doe wickedlie, and will not behold the Maieſtie of the Lord.*

THe Prophet oppoſeth this ſentence to the former: for he had ſaid that when the faithfull are afflicted, or ſee others in the like caſe, that they ceaſe not for all that to reſt in the aſſurance of Gods fauour, and to hope conſtantlie in his help. Now on the contrarie he ſaith that ỹ wicked can not be brought to loue God, albeit he labour to draw and knit them vnto him by all ſorts of his benefits: nay rather they become the worſe, although he ſhew himſelfe moſt gracious towards them. It may ſeeme then at the firſt bluſh that this verſe ſhould be contrarie to the former: for it was there ſaid that the iuſtice of God is knowne vpon earth, euen then whilſt he himſelfe ſhewes that he is iudge of the world, and executes vengeance vpon the iniquities of men. But here he ſaith, that the wicked can not be allured nor drawne by any meanes to ſerue God: and ſo farre is it off that they are any thing the better for the ſtripes which they receiue, that they waxe worſe and worſe, and that whilſt he lades thē dayly with his benefits: for it is out of controuerſie that all make not a right vſe of afflictions. What vſe I pray you made *Pharaoh* of the plagues wherewith God ſmote him? did not the blowes which he felt make his heart the more hard?

The wicked are bettered neither by corrections nor benefits.

Exod. 7. 13.

But howſoeuer he ſpake generallie of the inhabitants of the earth before, yet he only and properlie meant Gods elect. I denie not but this benefit redounds ſometime to hypocrites alſo, to wit, that they are now and then touched with the feeling of Gods Maieſtie: yea and they are often reſtrained from breaking out euen for feare of the whip. Notwithſtanding becauſe the Prophet here deſcribes the fruites of true repentance, it muſt needs be that he ſhould only meane the children of God when he ſpeakes of *the inhabitants of the earth.*

Now ſome reade this verſe by an interrogation thus, Shall the wicked obteine fauor? or, Wherefore ſhould the wicked obteine fauor? As if the Prophet meant to ſay, that they were vnworthie to taſte of Gods mercie. But for mine owne part I rather thinke that the wicked will neuer be taught to do well, albeit God ſhould allure them thereunto by powring out all his benefits vpon them. The Prophet therefore here reſtraines that which he ſaid before in generall termes. And when he ſaith that *they do wickedlie in the land of vprightnes*, he therein further amplifies the vnworthines of this ingratitude. It was enough and too much that they had alreadie abuſed Gods benefits, and made themſelues more obſtinate thereby: but they made their ſinne aboue meaſure ſinfull when they dealt thus wickedlie in the *land* which God had hallowed. Now he ſpeakes only of Iudea; albeit wee may alſo applie it to other Countries wherein God is now worſhipped: But at that time *Iſaiah* could giue this title to none other, becauſe there was no knowledge of God but in Iudea. For this cauſe he calles Iudea *the land of vprightnes:* and thus I interpret it, becauſe the Prophet vſeth the word *Necechoth*, which is of the femenin gender, and can no way be referred to men.

This land was adorned with this title in regard the law was in force there, and for that the people were the peculiar choſen of God: therfore the Prophet addes this to aggrauate the peoples vnthankfulnes, as hath been ſaid. For their expoſition is farre wide from the naturall ſenſe, who extend it generallie to all the world: becauſe in what place ſoeuer we liue God maintaines vs vpon this condition, that we behaue our ſelues vprightlie towards all. The Lord indeed hath now cauſed his kingdome to ſpread into all places; *the land of vprightnes* therefore is whereſoeuer his name is called vpon: and thus we deſerue a double condemnation if wee yeeld not teſtimonies of true thankfulnes by giuing our ſelues to pietie & good works whē God prouokes vs thereunto by ſo many of his benefits.

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How farre this land of vprightnes may now be ſaid to extend it ſelfe.

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Where he addes, that the reprobates *shall see the maiestie of God*; it is not to lessen the fault, but rather to augment and increase it: for it is a foolish and wicked ingratitude in men to bee careleſſe of Gods glory, which plainly shines before their eyes. The wicked then are no way excusable: for although God proclaime his name diuers waies; yet in this so cleere a sunshine they see nothing. Questionlesse there want not euident signes at all times by which the Lord manifests both his glory and greatnesse: but their number is very small who take it to heart, as we haue seene before, Chap. 5.19.

The Lord not onely sets forth his maiestie and glory by his ordinarie workes in nature, but also by certaine signes and worthy documents, wherein hee fully instructs vs as touching his iustice, wisdome, and goodnesse. The wicked shut their eyes at it, and perceiue it not, albeit they be very quicke and sharpe sighted in other matters. This frowardnesse and peruersitie the Prophet now reproues. Others thinke hee threatens the reprobates here, as if they were vnworthy to behold the workes of God. Which although it be true, yet seeing this member is ioyned to the rest, the Prophet still reproues the sottishnesse of those, who are so farre off from making benefit of the workes of God, that rather they become the more senseleſſe by them. For which cause it should not seeme strange vnto vs at this day, if there be few which come to repentance, albeit Gods iustice manifests it selfe so diuersly: for infidelitie is alwaies blinde, when it should behold the workes of God.

Infidelitie alwaies blind when it should behold the workes of God.

Verſ. 11. *O Lord, they will not behold thine high hand: but they shall see it, and be confounded with the zeale of thy people; and the fire of thine enemies shall deuoure them.*

THis is an exposition of the former sentence: for hee enters into no new discourse, but expounds that at large, which he had said before in few words. He said in the other verse, that the wicked would not behold the maiestie of the Lord: now he shewes that this magnificence of the Lord is the same which appeares in his *workes*. For the Prophet sends vs not to the hidden maiestie of God, which wee cannot behold with our eyes; but brings vs to his workes, which hee here represents by a figure, vnder this word *hand*. Well, he accuseth the wicked once againe, shewing that they haue nothing to alleage for their defence; neither can they couer themselues vnder any pretence of ignorance: for albeit they were starke blind, yet was the *hand of God* made manifest enough; so as nothing could hinder them from seeing of it, but their owne grosse vnthankfulnesse, or rather wilfull sottishnesse. For many haue skill enough to pleade ignorance, affirming that they perceiue not these workes: but hee telles such, that *Gods* hand is stretched forth; not onely in such wise that it may be discerned of a small number, but also farre and neere.

They shall see it and be confounded.] He makes it very apparent, that this beholding is not the same whereof he spake before, when hee said, that the wicked saw not the maiestie of the Lord: for they saw it well enough, but they regarded it not. Notwithstanding, at the last *they shall see it*, although too late, and to their great disaduantage. For hauing a long time abused the patience of God, in shewing themselues obstinate and rebellious, they shall be constrained in the end to take knowledge of his iudgements. Thus albeit *Caine*, *Esau*, and the like (who repented their sinnes too late) fled from Gods presence, yet in despight of their teeth they were made both to see and feele that he was their Iudge: Gen. 4. 13. and 27.38.

God may well suffer the wicked to take their swinge for a while, but in the end hee paies them home. *Heb.* 12.17.

Thus he often drawes some remorse as it were euen from those that despise him, to the end he might cause his power to shine cleerely: but such apprehensions bring them no profit at all. The Prophet then so threatens the wicked, whose blindnesse hee hath rebuked, that he therewithall takes from them all pretext of ignorance; plainely telling them, that the time shall come, wherein they *shall know* with whom they haue to doe, and shall then well perceiue that this *maiestie* and *high hand of God* which they reiected & made light of, ought not in any sort to bee contemned. For they ouerflow in all riot and dissolution with their eyes shut, they flout and mocke, thinking God will neuer call them to iudgement: yea, which more is, the miseries and afflictions of the faithfull, are things wherein they take great delight. Thus they looke vpon vs with disdaine, as if they were out of all danger, hardening their hearts more & more: but in the end, they shall know that the seruants of God haue not serued him in vaine. Now that hee might the better shew that this beholding of God, should not onely be vnprofitable, but also hurtfull to the wicked, he saith, that they *shall be confounded*, when they shall see the blessing of God vpon his people, wherein they shall haue neither part nor portion.

In the next place he further augments the sharpnesse of the punishment, in regard that these vngodly ones shall not onely be *consumed with enuie*, when they shall see the children of God deliuered from these miseries, and exalted into glory; but they shall also be stricken with no lesse an euill, to wit, *the fire* of the enemies shall deuoure them. *The zeale of* the people then in this place, signifies the indignation wherewith the reprobates shall bee inflamed when they shall compare the condition of the faithfull with theirs.

Hee calles that *the fire of the enemies* wherewith God consumes his aduersaries; taking this word *fire*, for Gods vengeance: for it must not be taken here for that visible *fire* wherewith things are consumed in this world; neither yet for lightning onely; but by a figure it is taken for a cruell torment: for so by this word the holy Ghost is wont often to note out the extreme wrath of the Lord. Yet I de-

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*Gen.*19.14. *Deut.*32.22 *Iob* 20.26. & 22.20.

nie nor but the Prophet alludes to the deſtruction of Sodome and Gomorah.

Verſ. 12. *Lord vnto vs thou wilt ordaine peace: for thou alſo haſt wrought all our workes for vs.*

THis tends to the conſolation of the faithfull. As if he ſhould ſay; We ſee what will fall vpon the heads of the wicked, for thou wilt caſt them out of the company of thy children, & wilt conſume them with fire as thine enemies: but we ſhal haue an happy and bleſſed eſtate. The verbe *Shaphat*, which ſignifies to *Ordaine* among the Hebrewes, is as much to ſay, as to *Eſtabliſh*: as if he ſhould ſay; Thou wilt hold and preſerue *vs* in peace continually. The wicked indeed inioy a kind of *peace*, but it laſts not long: our peace is ſeated and eſtabliſhed in the *Lord*, and hath ſuch a foundation as ſhall indure for euer. Now by the word *peace*, he meanes a ſetled and laſting felicitie. Hence let vs conclude then, that the children of God which truſt in him, are fully bleſſed: for the life of the wicked is more then miſerable, albeit it be ſoaked in much deliciouſneſſe and pleaſures, as thoſe that haue all things at their wiſh. There is no aſſured nor ſtable peace then, but in the fatherly loue of our God.

By *workes*, hee meanes all the good which God doth to his choſen: as if he ſhould ſay; All our affaires and actions: all things which we vſe for our benefit in this world, in a word whatſoeuer, we put our hands vnto. Thoſe then who haue alleadged this place, to ouerthrow the doctrine of free will, did not well vnderſtand the Prophets meaning. I grant it is God onely that works, whatſoeuer is good in vs; ſo as all our vprightneſſe proceeds onely from his Spirit: but the Prophet meant ſimply to teach here, that wee receiue all the good things which we inioy, onely from the hand of God; and thence concludes, that this fauour ſhall neuer ceaſe, till wee be come to full and perfect happineſſe.

He that hath begunne a good worke in vs, will perfect it vnto the end. *Phil.*1.6.

Moreouer, ſeeing God is author of all bleſſings, wee ought eſpecially to be mindfull of thoſe which are chiefe and principall: for if wee ought to acknowledge that the things which ſerue for our maintenance in this life, are the gifts of God; much more ought we ſo to doe in things appertaining to the ſaluation of the ſoule. If ſo be then we owe thankfulneſſe for his liberalitie in ſmall things, how much more ſhould wee acknowledge his goodneſſe in things that are high and excellent? But what need haue wee to obiect this text againſt the Papiſts, to refute their doctrine of free will, ſeeing they may be eaſilie anſwered by other places: yea, we haue infinit teſtimonies beſide which are much more euident.

Thus it ſeemes then that the Prophet ſtirs vp the peoples mindes to thankfulneſſe: for hee commands them ſo to admire the goodneſſe of God in his benefits, that they confeſſe all things they haue to be his gift. We haue here then a very fruitfull doctrine; to wit, that the faithfull are to conceiue an aſſured hope of Gods goodneſſe for the time to come, by conſidering what benefits they haue receiued from him in times paſt; and thence to conclude, that he will vndoubtedly haue eare ouer them hereafter. Haue wee then at any time had experience of Gods mercy towards vs? Let vs learne to truſt in him for euer: and ſeeing it hath pleaſed him to ſhew himſelfe ſo bountifull and readie to doe vs good, let vs boldly and conſtantly ſettle our hearts in this truth; to wit, that hee will neuer faile vs.

Benefits receiued of God in times paſt, ought to incourage vs to hope for the like in time to come

All the faithfull haue done thus; and this way haue they confirmed themſelues in the faith: for ſee how *Dauid* ſpeakes, Pſal.138.8. Thou Lord wilt not forſake the worke of thine owne hands. And Saint *Paul* ſaith; He which hath begun a good worke in you, will perfect the ſame: Phil.1.6. Likewiſe the Patriarke *Iacob* ſaith; Lord, I am leſſe then all thy mercies and trueth which thou haſt ſhewed thy ſeruant: *but thou ſaidſt*; *I will doe thee good*, &c. Gen. 32.10, 11, 12. For God is not like to men; that is, to be wearie in well doing, or to be drawne dry by too much giuing; but the more good he hath done vs, ſo much the ſtronger ought our hope to be, and to receiue daily increaſes.

Verſ. 13. *O Lord our God*, other *Lords beſides thee haue ruled vs:* but *wee will remember thee onelie and thy name.*

THis verſe containes a complaint which the faithfull make, becauſe they were oppreſſed vnder the tyranny of the wicked. Thus this ſong is compoſed to comfort the hearts of the faithfull, who in regard they were to vndergoe an hard condition of baniſhment, and to bee expulſed out of that good land which was vnto them a ſigne of eternall happineſſe: as alſo being depriued of the ſacrifices of the holy aſſemblies; and ſo in a manner, of all conſolation and comfort; being furthermore ſhut vp vnder the bondage of the Babylonians, in a ſtrange Country, baniſhed from their Country, and ouerwhelmed with ſhame and moſt grieuous afflictions; they might yet notwithſtanding by this ſong, powre out their ſighes vnto God, and ſo find ſolace in him.

He ſpeakes therefore in the name and perſon of all the faithfull, who in appearance ſeemed to be reiected of God, but therewithall profeſſing, that they were his *people*, and ſo conſequently, did put their confidence in him. But had they not great cauſe to mourne thus, when they were in bondage vnder the tyrannie of other *rulers* beſides the Lord himſelfe, who once had gathered them in vnder the wings of his protection? Hence therefore it followes, that if they had not been eſtranged from him, they had neuer fallen into ſo wretched a condition, as to be expoſed to the mercileſſe tyrannie of their enemies. But it ſhould ſeeme by this, that the gouernement of Princes is contrarie to that Obiect.

Anſ. which God himſelfe exerciſeth; notwithſtanding that they rule in his name: but the Prophet ſpeakes not of thoſe heere who beare rule for our good, but of ſuch as are Idolaters, and enemies of the true doctrine. *Dauid* himſelfe was a King, hauing a diuers gouernment from that which God exerciſeth, yet ſo, that he was Gods miniſter notwithſtanding for the common good and ſaluation of all the people that were committed to his charge; and likewiſe maintained the true Religion, which theſe tyrants deſired wholly to ouerthrow. The like alſo did iuſtlie befall the Iewes, who had well deſerued to be ſubdued vnder the crueltie of Infidels, ſeeing they refuſed to obey God who vſed thē ſo louingly.

1 But it is not amiſſe to note the cloſe oppoſition which is heere put betweene God and the faithfull Kings who gouerned the people

2 vnder his name and authoritie; and thoſe *tyrants* who at the laſt oppreſſed them vnder vniuſt lawes. This will the better appeere by a like place out of *Ezechiel*, I haue (ſaith he) giuen them good lawes by the which they might liue: but becauſe they haue not obſerued my iudgements, and haue caſt my ſtatutes behind their backs; prophaning mine ordinances, and ſetting their eies towards the Idols of their fathers: therefore I alſo gaue thē ſtatutes which were not good, and iudgements in which they ſhould not liue, Ezech. 20.24. Now in regard they might haue proſpered and beene happie by Gods bleſſing in times paſt if they had yeelded their obedience to his word: therefore *Ezechiel* threatens them, that Tyrants ſhall rule ouer them, and in ſpite of their teeth ſhall cauſe them to ſubmit themſelues to their cruell edicts and lawes: yea and that without bringing any profit or reward at all vnto them.

It is iuſt with God to make vs ſerue cruel Lords, when we will not yeeld willing obedience to his lawes.

Iſaiah in this place bewailes the like miſerie: Oh (ſaith he) whilſt the Lord *reigned* ouer vs we had much adoe to content our ſelues

1 with our eſtate: but now we are conſtreined

2 to beare a wofull *ſeruitude*; and therein are iuſtlie puniſhed for our wickednes. The faithfull alſo which liue vnder the Papacie; or ſuch as are forced to yeeld in any ſort to wicked lawes and conſtitutions full of ſuperſtition, may well take vp the like complaint: for they are vnder ſuch an authoritie as is againſt God: they are oppreſſed vnder more then a barbarous ſeruitude which binds not the bodie only, but leades them to the flaying of their ſoules.

The ſlauerie of ſuch as are vnder the tyrannie of the Romane Antichriſt.

But we will remember thee only.] It ſeemes this particle ſhould be oppoſed to the former thus, Albeit theſe prophane Lords would turne and withdraw vs from vnder thy gouernment, yet will we hold our ſelues faſt vnto it, becauſe we aſſuredlie know our ſelues to belong to thee. But there may be gathered from hence a more ample doctrine, to wit, that although carnall reaſon is readie to ſay that ſuch as are made a pray to their enemies, and cruellie vexed vnder their tyrannie, are forſaken of God: yet the Iewes ceaſe not therefore ſtill to reioyce in him; notwithſtanding they ſaw him nothing neere vnto them: for the only *remembrance* of his name ſuſteined them; and did ſweetly feede and nouriſh their hope. Thus there is an oppoſition of great weight betweene the *remembrance* of Gods name, and the preſent feeling of his fauor: for it is a rare and ſingular grace of God conſtantlie to cleaue vnto him, when he ſeemes to be abſent and farre off from vs.

A ſingular grace of God it is to cleaue faſt vnto him whē he ſeems to forſake vs.

Others tranſlate, In thee, and in thy name: but here is no ſuch coniunction. To let that paſſe therefore, this place affords vnto vs ſuch conſolation as is exceeding neceſſarie for our times, wherein the peruerſe vnthankfulnes of men by caſting off the ſweet yoke of God, haue drawne vpon themſelues a grieuous and cruell ſlauerie: neither are we to wonder if we ſee this tyrannie alreadie exerciſed euen in many places where the name of God is called vpon. The faithfull, I ſay, muſt not therefore be diſcouraged; only let them reſt their hopes vpon this conſolation, to wit, God will neuer vtterlie forſake thoſe whoſe whole ioy and delight conſiſts in the *remembrance of his name*. Let them not feare then, I ſay, at any hand to profeſſe this their confidence before all men. What confidence? Truly that they had rather die ten times then once to recoile back from God, and ſo to darken his glorie. For whoſoeuer he be that through feare giues place to men, let him know for a truth that he hath not as yet rightlie taſted how gracious the Lord is. Whileſt we enioy the free vſe of Gods word then, let vs diligentlie exerciſe our ſelues in it, that ſo we may arme our ſelues therewith againſt the time of need, to the end the world may know that we haue not ſtudied it as in a dreame.

A Conſolation fitting our times.

Better to die often then once to reuolt.

They that ſin againſt conſcience for feare of men, neuer yet taſted in truth how gracious the Lord is.

Verſ. 14. **The dead ſhall not liue,* * neither *ſhall the dead ariſe,* * *becauſe thou haſt viſited and ſcattered them, and deſtroyed all their memorie.*

* Or, being dead they &c.
* Or, being ſlaine they ſhall not &c.
* Or, for this cauſe thou haſt &c.

THe Prophet comes againe to ſpeake of the wofull end of the wicked, whoſe proſperous eſtate often diſquiets and diſmaies vs, as we may ſee in the 37. Pſal. and in the 73. 17. That our eies then may not be dazeled in the beholding of preſent things, the Prophet threatens that their end ſhall be moſt wofull. Others expound this place of the faithfull, who ſeeme ſo to die in the eyes of the world, as if they ſhould neuer riſe againe: but it is very cleare that he here ſpeakes of the wicked and reprobates, which will euidentlie appeere by the contrarie to this, which is added in the 19. verſe. For we haue in this place an oppoſition betweene the reſurrection of the good, and the bad, whoſe eſtates would be little differing one from another, vnleſſe it ſhould appeere that the one ſort were iudged to eternall death, and the other to a bleſſed and an euerlaſting life. Nay the wicked are not ſimplie condemned to eternall perdition, but all the iudgements of God which befall them in this life, are as it were the beginnings and ſeales vnto them of their endleſſe torment, for they can not be relieued by any conſolation at all. Why ſo?

Euery iudgement that lights vpon a reprobate in this life, is a ſeale vnto him of his endleſſe torment in the life to come.

ſo? Becauſe they inwardly feele that God is their enemie.

Whereas we haue tranſlated *Slaine*; others reade it Giants: but ſeeing the word *Rephaim*, in many places of the Scriptures is taken for the ſlaine, it will agree beſt if wee take it ſo here; otherwiſe the oppoſition would not be fitting.

Pſal. 88. 10. *Prou.* 2. 18. & 9. 18. & 21. 16.

That which followes; *For this cauſe haſt thou viſited them*, is put here by way of expoſition: for he ſhewes why the reprobates periſh without hope of any reſtauration; to wit, becauſe God hath determined to caſt them away. Now what can they expect from Gods wrath which is inflamed againſt them, but death and perdition?

Verſ. 15. *Thou haſt increaſed the nation, O Lord; thou haſt increaſed the nation: thou art made glorious: thou haſt enlarged all the coaſtes of the earth.*

THis verſe is diuerſly expounded: for ſome think the Prophet ſhewes how the faithfull are not preſſed with one affliction alone, but are plunged ouer head and eares as it were in extreme miſeries, and yet can ſee no iſſue out of them. Others expound it more ſimply thus; O Lord, thou haſt inriched thy people with many benefits: and ſo they think that the Prophet mentions thoſe bleſſings which God beſtowed vpon his people diuers waies: as if he ſhould ſay; Thy people, Lord, haue felt by experience, how liberall thou art by the infinite benefits which thou haſt beſtowed vpon them. But when I conſider that which by and by followes, where hee ſaith, *thou haſt enlarged*; that is to ſay, thou haſt cauſed thy kingdome to ſpread, which was once ſhut vp within verie narrow bounds; I had rather ioyne theſe two things together; for ſo the latter member expounds the former; and that alſo which followes, to wit, *that God ſhall be glorified*, agrees very well. For wee know that Gods glorie ſhines in nothing more, then in the aduancement and inlargement of his Church.

Gods glory ſhines in nothing more, then in the inlargement of his Church.

It is as much then as if hee had ſaid; Lord, thou hadſt in times paſt but a little handfull of people, but now thou haſt multiplied and *increaſed* them. For the Gentiles were adopted and ioyned to the Iewes, on condition that they both ſhould make but one people. And thus the Lord added an infinite number to them; for the children of *Abraham* were gathered out of all nations. We muſt therefore ſupply in this place an addition of a greater number, and not of benefits; in this ſenſe, Thou didſt not content thy ſelfe Lord, with that ſmall number which once thou didſt inioy: and therefore thou gatheredſt vnto thy ſelfe a people without number out of all the quarters of the world.

Now this belongs to Chriſts Kingdome, which was euey where eſtabliſhed by the preaching of the Goſpell: and the Prophet now extols and notes our Gods mercy touching this *increaſing* and multiplication by the word enlarged. I grant this phraſe ſtraieth not much from our common manner of ſpeech, when wee vſe to ſpeake of the inlarging of a dominion, or of an inheritance: yet it is not the Prophets meaning to ſay, that the land ſhall become greater, but that it had larger bounds, and a more free habitation by meanes of the mutuall ſocietie of the inhabitants after the pure worſhip of God was publiſhed euery where: for the diſcords which were betweene the Iewes & Gentiles ſtraitned their dwellings, and made them leſſe free then otherwiſe they would haue been. Wee haue here then a promiſe touching the vocation of the Gentiles; which ought greatly to haue comforted the faithful in their exile, and in that miſerable ſcattering and baniſhment from the Church: for howſoeuer they ſaw themſelues wonderfully diminiſhed and weakned, yet they might without all peraduenture, aſſure themſelues that they ſhould not onely increaſe to an infinit number; but that ſtrange nations alſo, and thoſe that were farre remote, ſhould be added vnto them.

A promiſe in this verſe, touching the vocation of the Gentiles.

Verſ. 16. *Lord, in trouble they haue viſited thee: they powred out a prayer when thy chaſtening was vpon them.*

THis may bee well expounded of thoſe hypocrits who neuer ſeeke vnto God, vnleſſe they be conſtrained thereunto by miſeries and calamities. But ſeeing the Lord alſo inſtructs the faithful by his rods and chaſtiſements, as the Prophet hath heretofore ſhewed: therefore I had rather referre theſe things ſimply vnto them. Firſt, to the end they may know that God is iuſt in his iudgements. Secondly, that they might thereby learne to feare the Lord, and euery day to grow vp in it more and more. Thirdly, that they might feele that the bitterneſſe of the medicine is taken away by the fruite which they receiue from it.

Verſ. 8. 9. Three ends of afflictions. 1 2 3

Thus *Iſaiah* then ſpeakes here in the perſon of the Church; that ſo, whenſoeuer the faithfull ſhould reade this ſentence, they might acknowledge that they were neerer vnto God in their afflictions, then when they abounded in all things which their hearts could wiſh; for then commonly we wax proud and forgetfull: ſuch is the frowardneſſe of our nature. Is it not needfull then that we ſhould be tamed & brought vnder by force of armes? This meditation is very profitable to correct the bitterneſſe of our troubles: for when we know what benefit redounds to vs by them, it makes vs leſſe to abhor them.

Iſaiah ſpeaks here in the perſon of the Church. We are neerer God in afflictions, then when we inioy all that our hearts can wiſh.

The word *Lachaſh*, (which wee haue tranſlated Prayer) ſignifies, To murmure. We are not to take this ſentence then for a well framed praier; but for ſuch a one, as teſtifieth that the heart is pent vp in great dolours, as thoſe who feele ſuch anguiſh, that they can ſcarcely open their teeth to vtter their perplexed thoughts. He therefore ſpeakes of ſuch a praier as is pure and far from all counterfetting: for when Gods ſeruants are vnder

heauie afflictions, they ſtudie how to breathe out their ſighes, as witneſſes of their extreme griefes. In time of proſperity, men can ſpeake with open mouth; but in aduerſitie, they are ſmitten downe, they dare not open their lips: ſhewing the conceptions of their hearts, rather with inward grones, then with words. Thence proceede thoſe ſighes which cannot be expreſſed, whereof S. *Paul* ſpeakes, Rom. 8. 26. The Prophet then pronounceth this of the faithfull, to whom indeed this doctrine ought to be reſtrained: for albeit inward garboiles doe now and then force out groanes euen from the very reprobates; yet they are hardened more and more, and become ſo much the more fierce and obſtinate.

Verſ. 17. *Like as a woman with child, that draweth neere to the trauaile, is in ſorrow*, and *crieth in her paines, ſo haue wee been in thy ſight, O Lord.*

18. *Wee haue conceiued, wee haue borne in paine, as though wee ſhould haue brought forth winde: there was no helpe in the earth; neither did the inhabitants of the world fall.*

1 TWo things are to be noted here principally. Firſt, he compares the faithfull to *women in trauaile*; wherein their paines are vnſpeakeable, as it is well enough knowne. The afflictions of the faithfull therefore, he ſaith, cauſeth them to caſt forth verie bitter and loud cries. Whence we gather, that the Prophet ſpeakes not here onely of that ſorrow which proceedes from the ſuffering of outward griefes and diſcommodities; but rather reſpects thoſe horrible vexations which ſharpely wound, and with incredible vehemencie aſſailes the hearts and ſpirits of the godlie, when they feele that God is angrie with them, their conſciences alſo checking them. No bodily paine therefore may bee compared with the griefe of the Spirit, which is moſt liuely expreſſed by the particle *before thee*.

Sight of Gods anger the chiefe cauſe of griefe. See Prou. 18. 14.

2 In the ſecond place he goes further, and exceeds the meane which is in his ſimilitude: for where paines haue *no end*, the condition of the faithfull is far worſe then is the condition of *women in trauaile*. For being once deliuered from their ſorrowes and griefes, they reioice in ſeeing the fruite which they haue brought forth; yea they forget all the paines which they indured: but hee ſaith here, that ꝙ faithfull are in cõtinuall trauaile. Why ſo? Becauſe they ſtill are aſſaulted with new pangs and trauailes; and whẽ they thinke the birth is neere, then they bring forth nothing but ſorrowes and anguiſh, which is expreſſed by the word *wind*: to wit, they ſaw no appearance of any deliuerance or eaſe of their ſorrowes. For ſo he forthwith expounds himſelfe when hee ſaith, *that there was no helpe* for them *in the earth*. That is to ſay, we ſee no ſuccour at all.

John 16. 21.

He addes, that *the inhabitants of the world did not fall*: for the Hebrew word *Naphal*, ſignifies to fall. Some affirme, it ſignifies to dwel. If we take it in the latter ſignification, the ſenſe wil be, That the Iewes ſhal not dwel; that is, they ſhall not returne into their Country; the inhabitants which inioyed it, ſhould not periſh. But if we follow the common tranſlation, this muſt be referred to the wicked on this wiſe; *The inhabitants of the world oppreſſe vs, and yet they fall not.* Why ſo? Becauſe they haue more then heart can wiſh. For when the wicked floriſh, as *Salomon* ſaith, then Gods children muſt of neceſſitie ſigh, and be like vnto women in trauaile with child.

Yet let vs not refuſe euen this hard condition, if wee would haue any place in Gods Church. It is moſt certaine that the common lot of all men is to beare ſundry and infinite calamities: and thence came the old prouerb; It were beſt of all neuer to haue been borne; or being borne, to die quickly. But we ſee that the faithfull are tired with extreme miſeries, and exerciſed therewith aboue all others. For God meanes to try their faith, to the end they may ſerue him, hauing renounced their luſts, and the world alſo. Seeing the Lord then hath ſuch a ſpeciall care of them, he will chaſtiſe them; and in the meane while, will ſuffer the wicked to run riot into all miſorder.

Why God corrects his children, and lets the wicked in the meane while run riot.

Hence alſo wee are admoniſhed, that wee muſt not onely ſuffer one or two calamities, and ſo an end, leſt we ſhould think our ſelues diſcharged after wee haue indured ſome few aſſaults: for we muſt alwaies be prepared to meete with new trials. When the Lord takes vp his children, he lets them not down forthwith. For we muſt be content euen then to *bring forth the wind*, whẽ we thinke ꝙ houre of deliuerance is come: our ſorrowes ſhall ſtill increaſe, and our throwes ſhall ouertake one another at euery turne. Wee muſt hold out with patience then in this combate, as long as God ſhall be pleaſed to exerciſe vs vnderneath it.

We will therefore follow the vſuall expoſition, *They fell not*: for as the Lord now and then cheeres vp the hearts of his children, in manifeſting vnto them the light of his countenance in their ſaluation, and in ſhewing vengeance vpon the wicked: ſo he alſo giues them with all occaſion of mourning, by cauſing them to ſee their aduerſaries euery way aduanced into high place of rule and authoritie ouer them. And if the Lord hath ſo exerciſed his Church in former times, why ſhould we thinke much if hee take the ſame courſe with vs now?

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By *the Inhabitants of the world*, he meanes the prophane and vnbeleeuers: for he oppoſeth the reſt of the world to the countrie of Iudea, which by way of excellencie he called the *land*, or the earth, verſe 15. making mention of the *Inhabitants* thereof apart.

Verſ. 19. *Thy dead men ſhall liue: euen with my body ſhall they riſe. Awake, and ſing, ye that dwell in duſt: for thy*

*Or, my body.

* Or, of the medow.

thy dew Is as *the dew* * *of herbs, and the earth ſhall caſt out the dead.*

Our beſt courſe in affliction is, to gather in all our ſenſes, and faſten our minds vpon God.

God only able to giue our reſtleſſe ſpirits reſt and reliefe.

Queſt.

Anſ.

The reprobates are dead whileſt they liue.

Col. 3.3.

Rom. 8.23. 24.

Col. 3.3.4.

The day of reſurrection, the day of our refreſhing. *Mat.* 25.32.

All miſeries are forerunners of death.

Chriſt hath by his death taken away the curſe both of theſe beginnings of death, as alſo of death it ſelfe.

A commendation of Iſaiahs faith in God, and loue to the Church.

Iſaiah ſtill continues to ſpeake of this Conſolation, and turnes his ſpeech vnto God: and thus he ſhewes that our beſt courſe is to bend all our ſenſes towards him, as oft as we are to reſiſt temptations. For wee ſhall find nothing more hurtfull vnto vs then to vtter words at randon, pleaſing our ſelues in them: for what doe we elſe but roule our ſelues hither and thither, and at the laſt plunge our ſelues into many errors? We can chuſe no way therefore that is more ſafe then to draw neere vnto God, who only is able to quiet our diſtreſſed conſciences: which if we doe not, we muſt of neceſſitie meete with many encumbrances, which will ſhake our faith. Will you haue the ſumme of this verſe then? If God be the protector of his ſeruants, notwithſtanding they be as good as dead, ſhall they not *liue* euen in death it ſelfe, or rather ſhall they not haue power to *riſe againe* although they be altogether dead? Yes ſurely.

But it may here be demanded of what time the Prophet ſpeakes in this place, for many expound it of the laſt reſurrection. The Iewes referre it vnto Meſſiah and his kingdome: but they deceiue themſelues, becauſe they imagin that this was fulfilled at his firſt comming: our writers that are Chriſtians haue alſo miſſed the marke, who haue reſtrained it to the laſt Iudgement. For the Prophet comprehends the whole kingdome of Chriſt, euen from the beginning thereof vnto the latter end. Why ſo? Becauſe the hope of the bleſſed life alwaies ouercomes the world, as we ſhall ſee anon. Now to the end we may the better vnderſtand the Prophets meaning, we muſt firſt know, that life is not promiſed generallie vnto all, but only to ſuch as die in the Lord: now he ſpeakes of the faithfull which ſo die, whom the Lord preſerues vnder his ſafegard. We know that God is the God of the liuing, and not of the dead, Math. 22.32. Are we the Lords? Doubtleſſe we *ſhall liue*. But we muſt in the meane while become as thoſe that *are dead*, for our life is hidden, and as yet we can not ſee that which we hope for. Thus then he only ſpeakes of the dead; that is to ſay, of the condition of the faithfull which ſit now in the ſhadow of death, in regard of the many afflictions wherewith they are dayly viſited: whence we ſee that this can not be reſtrained to the laſt reſurrection. For we contrariwiſe affirme that the reprobates are dead, euen whileſt they liue. Why? Becauſe they neuer taſted of Gods fatherlie loue in Chriſt, wherein the true life conſiſts, and therefore they periſh in their brutiſh ſottiſhnes. But becauſe the faithfull runne vnto God, therefore they obteine life in the middeſt of their greateſt dangers, yea, euen in death it ſelfe: but in regard they ſet this laſt reſurrection before them as the end of their hope; therefore it can not be ſaid properlie that they liue, til that day be come; that being then freed from all ſorrowes and corruption, they may receiue a ſure life that neuer decaies. And therefore S. *Paul* very fitlie ſhewes that it were to turne the order of things vpſide downe, if that the faithfull ſhould liue till ſuch time as Chriſt who is the fountaine of life appeeres. Therefore it is we ſaid before that *Iſaiah* here comprehends the whole kingdome of Chriſt: for albeit we begin to feele the fruits of this conſolation when we enter into the Church, yet we wholie enioy not the full meaſure thereof till the day of the reſurrection be come, wherein all things ſhall be perfectlie reſtored, in which reſpect it is alſo called the day of reſtauration, Act. 3.21. Here then we ſee the only remedie to mitigate the bitternes of all our griefes, to wit, euen to turne our eies to the beholding of this day, in which God ſhall ſeparate the good from the bad.

As death then naturallie deuoures and deſtroyes all the race of *Adam*, ſo the miſeries to which they are ſubiect in this world are forerunners of the ſame death. Their life therefore is but a kind of death; but in regard that by the redemption wrought by Chriſt the curſe of God is taken away both in theſe beginnings of death, as alſo in death it ſelfe: therefore it is rightlie ſaid, That all thoſe that are grafted into Chriſtes bodie *liue, whileſt they die*, becauſe all their euils are turned vnto their good, Rom. 8.28. Whence it followes that they alwaies come forth as thoſe that are more then conquerors, euen out of the very iawes of death; and that till they be fullie and wholie knit vnto their head. Would wee then be eſteemed in the number of thoſe that are *dead* in Chriſt, of whoſe life he is the ſure gardian? We muſt then lift vp the eies of our faith aboue the whole courſe of nature.

But this is yet better expreſſed by the word *body*, or carcaſe, as if he ſhould ſay, this old rottennes which it ſeemes hath conſumed the bodies of the faithfull, ſhall hinder the Lord nothing at all to make them riſe vp in full beautie againe. As touching the proprietie of the Hebrue phraſe, ſome tranſlate it, With my bodie: others, Which are my bodie. Others againe, ſupplie a particle of ſimilitude, As my bodie: but in regard the ſenſe agrees well enough without adding or diminiſhing, let vs content our ſelues with that which the words do plainely ſound of themſelues, and ſo had I rather take it by way of application.

At the leaſt this word is added of ſet purpoſe, ſo as the Prophet thereby ioines himſelfe to the whole bodie of the Church: and thus he placeth himſelfe in the number of thoſe which being dead in the Lord, do notwithſtanding wait for a reſurrection apart. And in that he mentions himſelfe in particular, it is that he might giue the more authoritie vnto his doctrine. For he thereby ſhewes that he ſpake from the heart, vttering and teſtifying by this his confeſſion the fruit of his faith, according to that ſentence, I beleeued, therefore did I ſpeake, Pſal. 116.10. 2. Cor. 4.13. otherwiſe the wicked and prophane may well diſcourſe in words of Gods mercie, and of life eternall, and yet in the meane while haue no feeling at all of theſe things

in their heart. As did that falſe Prophet *Balaam*, who knew well enough that that which he ſpake was true; and yet for all that receiued no profit by his prophecies himſelfe: Num. 23. 19. and 24. 5.

But our Prophet ſpeakes in this place far otherwiſe; for he profeſſeth, that he is of their number who belonged to a better life: thus ſhewing that he willingly vnderwent the ſorrows and calamities which God laid vpon him for the furtherance of his mortification; as one indeed that choſe rather to ſuffer afflictions with the people of God, then to inioy the pleaſures of ſinne for a ſeaſon. Now thus he makes it cleere to all the world, that he ſpeakes not here of things whic hee knew not, or of that which he felt not; but of thoſe things which he learned by experience. Yea, hee ſhewes hereby, that his confidence was ſo great, that he willingly ranged himſelfe among a company of *dead bodies*, which yet ſhould (as he beleeued) be reſtored *to life*, chuſing rather to bee accounted a *rotten carcaſe*, knowing himſelfe to bee a member of the Church, then to be in his *full ſtrength* out of the ſame. And this doubtleſſe cauſed his doctrine to be ſo much the more effectuall: for he oppoſeth it to the former ſentence, verſe 14. in which hee ſaid, that the wicked ſhould not liue; becauſe all hope of (a ioyfull reſurrection) was taken away from them.

Obiect. If any obiect that the reſurrection ſhall be common as well to good as to bad; it is eaſilie anſwered: for *Iſaiah* ſpeakes not here onely of the reſurrection; but of that felicitie which the faithfull ſhal inioy. I grant the wicked ſhall riſe, but it is to eternall perdition: their reſurrection therefore ſhall be to their ruine and death; whereas it ſhall bring happineſſe and glory to the iuſt.

Anſ. He calles *the inhabitants of the duſt*, the faithfull, who are humbled vnder croſſes and afflictions, who in life haue death continually before their eyes. Yet I deny not but they alſo inioy the benefits of God euen in this life: but by this ſimilitude the Prophet ſets out their miſerable condition, as thoſe that beare in their bodies the dying of the Lord Ieſus: 2. Cor. 4. 10. For it is needfull that their outward man ſhould be beaten downe and mortified, till at the laſt it be brought to nothing, that ſo the inward man may be renued daily: 2. Cor. 4. 16. If we meane then to haue any part or portion in this conſolation, let vs willingly content our ſelues to *lie downe in the duſt*.

For this cauſe hee commands the dead to *ariſe and ſing*; which may ſeeme to be very vnfitting for men in their caſe, there being nothing among them but a ſorrowfull ſilence. In this therefore the Prophet ſhewes an apparent difference betweene the elect of God, who ariſe by an heauenly power, albeit they be as good as rotten in their graues, and lie buried in the duſt; and the reprobates: for they being ſeparated from God and Chriſt, the fountaine of life, wither away, whileſt they liue, that ſo death may vtterly deuoure them.

An apparent difference betweene the elect and the reprobate.

Now in that he promiſeth to giue them the *dewe of the meddow*, hee thereby inricheth his doctrine with a verie elegant and fit ſimilitude: for we all know that the flowers do fade and die in winter, but eſpecially in meddowes, for they ſeeme to be altogether dead, neither can a man be perſwaded to the contrarie, that ſhall onely behold the vpper face of the earth; but the rootes notwithſtanding lie hid vnderneathe, which after they haue ſucked in the *dewe* of the ſpring time, doe againe gather ſtrength and life: ſo as the flowers which before were withered away and dried, doe then become freſh and *greene*.

Thus the people ſhall gather new force after they ſhall bee reuiued and watered with this fruitfull *dewe* of Gods grace, although for a time it ſeemed they were wholly withered and gone. Sure theſe ſimilitudes which are drawne from ſuch things as are familiarly knowne amongſt vs, haue great force in them to worke vpon our affections. For if flowers or graſſe, which are wet with the dewe that falles vpon them, doe ſprout forth, and wax greene; how much more ſhall we be reuiued if we be watered with the quickening deawes of Gods grace? Why ſhould not our bodies receiue new liuelineſſe, albeit they were rotten before? Hath not God as much care ouer vs, as he hath ouer the hearbs? Is not the holy Spirit of greater force then the deaw? Saint *Paul* I remember vſeth the like ſimilitude, 1. Cor. 15. 36. where hee ſpeakes of the reſurrection: but in regard he applies his metaphor to another purpoſe, I thinke it not amiſſe to let it paſſe for this time; becauſe I would not willingly confound that place with this. Let it ſuffice vs that we haue attained the true meaning of the Prophet.

What force familiar ſimilitudes haue to work vpon our affections.

Note.

In the end of the verſe where I haue tranſlated, *The earth ſhall caſt forth her dead*: ſome tranſlate it in the ſecond perſon; Thou ſhalt bring downe the land of Giants: or, Thou wilt bring downe the Giants in the earth. I reiect not this interpretation, becauſe the words may well beare this ſignification: but as I take it, the firſt ſeemes to agree beſt to the text, although the matter be not much materiall, in regard of the ſubſtance. For this muſt be referred to the conſolation which we mentioned a little before.

Verſ. 20. *Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and ſhut thy doores after thee: hide thy ſelfe for a very little while, vntill the indignation paſſe ouer.*

IN this verſe hee exhorts the children of God vnto patience, that they might cõtinue to beare their miſeries and afflictions quietly, as alſo to remaine inuincible againſt all the ſharpe temptations, which as it ſeemed ſhould ouerwhelme them. There was great need of this exhortation therefore: for the pitifull caſe into which the poore people were ſoone after brought, ſeemed in all outward appearance to bee farre off from the promiſe which was formerly made vnto them. The Prophet then like a tender hear-

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ted nurſe, takes this troubled people by the hand as it were, who otherwiſe knew not what ſhift to make, and carries them aſide into a *ſecret place to lodge* them in ſafetie, till theſe ſtirres and hurly burlies were appeaſed. Now whereas he calles them *my people*, he ſpeakes in the perſon of God, and not in his owne.

By *chambers*, he meanes a quiet and peaceable ſtate of conſcience: to wit, when with boldneſſe of courage and confidence, wee arme our ſelues with patience, in waiting for the comming of the Lord: as *Abacuk*, who hauing foretold what calamitie ſhould befall the Iewes, profeſſeth that hee ſtands all day vpon his watch-tower: that is to ſay, in a *place of ſafetie*, to expect the euent in patience and ſilence. *Iſaiah* commands them to doe the like here: as if he ſhould ſay; You that are the ſeruants of the Lord, get you into your *chambers*, or into ſome other ſequeſtred place, when you feele your ſelues aſſaulted with ſuch temptations as you are not able to reſiſt.

But for as much as it is not ſufficient to be once well fortified againſt the violence of garboiles and ſtirres, he therefore alſo commands them to *ſhut the doore after them*, which is to be referred to conſtancie and perſeuerance: as if he ſhould ſay; Looke to it that the diuell finde not the leaſt creuiſe open to aſſaile you: for hee can eaſily enter into our hearts, if we giue him but the leaſt aduantage that is.

Whereas he bids them *to hide themſelues*, his meaning is, that the faithfull ſhould inioy a ſecure freedom, if ſo be they were couragious in waiting for the comming of the Lord: for albeit we ought to fight boldly and valiantly, yet ſeeing the power of God is often manifeſted in our weakneſſe, wee cannot poſſibly take a better courſe, then in all humilitie to run and ſhrowd our ſelues vnder his wings, that ſo hee may ſaue vs from all inordinate feares and terrors. Furthermore, in regard that wee are giuen to boiling paſſions naturally, and are euer and anon caried away with impatiency, if we feele not Gods help at hand to ſuccour vs preſently: therefore hee ſaith, that theſe ſtormes and tempeſts ſhall *blow ouer*, and continue but a while. We muſt make account to fight euery day againſt one temptation or other; neither muſt wee thinke to come to the end thereof as long as we liue: and this is it that makes our miſeries ſeeme ſo wonderfull long and tedious vnto vs. But if we compare them with that eternitie wherin we ſhall inioy happineſſe without end; the meditation thereof will cauſe them to ſeeme but as a moment. As Saint *Paul* in a certaine place ſhewes, that the light afflictions which for a ſhort ſpace wee ſuffer in this world, are no way to be compared vnto that eternal weight of glory which ſhall bee reueiled in the world to come: 2. Cor. 4. 7.

2. Cor. 12. 9.

Wee muſt make our accounts to meete with new conflicts euery day.

Rom. 8. 8.

When the Prophet addes, *vntill the indignation be paſt*: he meant thereby to remoue all difficulties out of the mindes of the faithfull: and it is no leſſe then if hee had promiſed them deliuerance out of hand. Mee thinkes this word *indignation*, ſimply conſidered in it ſelfe, ſignifies that affliction which proceedes from the wrath of God. Others referre it vnto the enemies of the Church; which ſenſe though I reiect not, yet the firſt likes me better. For wee ſee how carefull the Prophets are to inſinuate into our mindes, that no euil befalles vs, but by the hand of God, and that he neuer ſends the ſame without cauſe, but is firſt prouoked thereunto by our ſinnes and offences. Hence we learne that God will not be angry with his Church for euer, but will cauſe his wrath to ceaſe at the laſt, euen as we ſee it to fall out in ſtormes and tempeſts: and this is the cauſe why the faithfull beare their croſſes with the greater courage. For thus the Church ſaith, Mich. 7. 9. I will beare the wrath of the Lord, becauſe I haue ſinned againſt him, &c. Why ſo? She knew well that God meant her good in chaſtiſing of her. Now our Prophet brings in the *Lord* ſpeaking, (as I touched before) to the end his exhortation might haue the better authoritie.

No euil befalles vs but by the hand of God.

God will not alwaies retaine his anger towards his Church, but wil cauſe his wrath at the length to ceaſe. *Mich.* 7. 18. *Zac.* 1. 12, 13

Verſ. 21. *For behold the Lord commeth out of his place to viſit the iniquitie of the inhabitants of the earth againſt him: and the earth ſhall diſcouer her blood, and ſhall not hide her ſlaine.*

NO doubt but it is an heauie temptation to the faithfull, when they ſee the wicked exerciſe their rage againſt them, and in the meane while, that God ſhould hold his peace: for in ſo doing, they imagine he hath forſaken them. The Prophet then labours to preuent this temptation, and ſhewes, that howſoeuer the Lord hath been ſilent for a while, yet hee will in the end *ſhew himſelfe* in due ſeaſon, to giue reliefe to his ſeruants, and to puniſh the wrongs that haue been done him. Thus by the word of *comming forth*, he deſcribes the Lord reaching out his hand as it were to his children: as if the ſame had been hidden before, in regard they felt not his helpe. For that is the cauſe why he ſaith, the Lord *comes forth* into fight; namely, to ſuccor his Church, and to execute his iudgements vpon her enemies: for in former time it ſeemed he had kept himſelfe cloſe and altogether ſhut vp in heauen. We may alſo verie well affirme, that *Iſaiah* alludes to the ſanctuarie; which maner of ſpeech is often met withall in the bookes of the Prophets. As if he ſhould ſay; Howſoeuer the prophane nations deſpiſe the Arke of the couenant, being ſeated in a very meane place; yet *from thence* ſhall the faithfull feele by good experience, how readie the power and fauour of God is preſt to ſuccour them, and that hee is not called vpon in this holy place in vaine. In the meane while, wee muſt hold this as a ſure principle; that albeit the wicked ſcorne the Temple, as if it were no better then ſome Country barne, or ſome ſuch like thing; yet euen *from thence* will the Lord *come forth*, when

Mich. 1. 3. *Abac.* 3. 13. *Zach.* 14. 3.

he sees the time fit to defend and to auenge his peoples quarrell vpon all the inhabitants of the world.

And this exposition sutes better then if by the word *place*, we should expound that he should come forth of heauen; for *Isaiah* meant to expresse somewhat more. The Prophets whē they make any mention of heauen they therewithall present before vs the glorie and maiestie of God: but our Prophet in this place respects our capacitie, that is to say, when we feele that God who in times past seemed to be farre off, and hidden out of our sight, doth at the last appeere for our comfort. He also hath vsed a particle demonstratiue, and a participle of the present tence for the greater certentie of the matter; as also to the end the faithfull might not thinke much to bridle their passions by patience till his *comming forth*.

Hitherunto appertaines that which he ads touching the *visiting of iniquitie*: for it were contrarie to his nature who is the Iudge of all the world to suffer wicked men to giue ouer themselues to all wickednes without impunitie. There is in the verb, *to visit*, a similitude well enough knowne: for we thinke that God either sees not at all, or else is busied about some other matters when he withholds or deferres the execution of his iudgements be it neuer so little a while.

These words also, *against him*, want not their weight: for it is often said that when the wicked lay their ambushes they spread a net or dig a pit for themselues. The sense then is, that all the annoyances & oppressions which the wicked bring vpon the Church, shall in time fall vpon their heads that haue been the contriuers thereof. *Psal.9.15, & 57.6.*

Lastly, there is also a very great vehemencie in the word, *shall disclose*: for now whilest the wicked shed and tread vnder foot innocent blood, the earth seemes as it were to suck and drinke it into her womb: in the meane while it seemes the death of the faithfull is quite and cleane forgotten, and the memorie thereof raced out of mens minds for euer; yea, and ỹ God himselfe vtterlie neglects it. These are mens imaginations, but the Lord witnesseth the contrarie here. He calles the *blood* of the earth then, which the earth hath drunke in, as it is said Gen.4.11. The earth hath opened her mouth to receiue thy brothers blood, when the blood of *Abel* was shed. For the Lord in that place amplifies and aggrauates the foulenes of the fact when he saith, That the earth is defiled with ỹ blood which was shed: and therefore he therein shewes, first, how pretious the death of his Saincts is in his sight: secondly, what care he hath of the same; and lastly, that he will reuenge it. For the earth it selfe shall be armed to punish the cruelties which haue been exercised by tyrants and the enemies of the truth against the faithfull: so that there is not the least drop of blood which is shed that shall not be accounted for. Let vs therefore remember this consolation, and set it alwaies before our eyes when the wicked smite vs, laughing and sporting themselues whilest they vex vs with all maner of outrages. For God in the end will shew that *innocent blood* hath not cried in vaine, because he can neuer forget his Saincts.

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A Consolation which we ought to haue continuallie before our eies.

THE XXVII. CHAPTER.

Vers.1. *In that day the Lord will visit Leuiathan that pearcing Serpent, and Leuiathan that crooked Serpent, With his sore and great and mightie sword: and will kill the Dragon that is in the sea.*

THE Prophet speakes heere of Gods iudgement in generall, and so comprehends the whole kingdom of Satan. For hauing spoken before of the vengeāce of God against tyrants and vnbeleeuers which had shed innocent blood, he now passeth on further, and publisheth the edict it selfe. The word *Leuiathan* is diuersli expounded, but generallie it signifies a serpent, or the whales and fishes of the sea, which are as mōsters in regard of their excessiue greatnes. Now howsoeuer this description agrees to the king of Egypt, yet vnder this one kind he meant to comprehend all the enemies of the Church.

For mine owne part I make no question but by way of Allegorie he speakes here of Satan and his whole kingdome, describing it vnder the figure of some monstrous beast, and therwithall also priuilie taxeth the *subtelties* wherewith he couers his deceitfull baits. And thus he meant to preuent many doubts wherewith (as with mightie billowes) we are at euery turne tossed to and fro, whilest God on the one side promiseth to assist vs, and yet Satan on the other side ceaseth not to make vs feele the force of his darts and craftie conueyances: for his cunning is exceeding great to worke mischiefe, and his wrath is wonderfull hot against the poore Saincts of God. *Gen.3.1.* Satan.

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But in the meane while the Prophet shewes that neither his *force* nor *fraude* shall be able to let the Lord from destroying both him and his kingdome. Furthermore, it is not to be doubted but as he here speakes of Satan himselfe, so likewise of all his imps and instruments by whom he gouerns his kingdome, and molests the Church of God. Let it be granted that this kingdome be furnished with infinite policies, and also with an inuincible power, yet shall the Lord easily bring them all to nought. Satans imps.

Which that we may the better conceiue, the Prophet opposeth against them the *mightie and sharp sword of the Lord*, by which it will be no masterie for him to slay his enemie how strong or subtile soeuer he be. We are

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to make account then that we ſhall euer haue to deale againſt Satan, who like a roaring Lion ſeekes about whom he may deuoure: and the world on the other ſide being like a Sea in which we are floting vp and downe, wherein euery moment diuers monſters aſſaile vs, indeuouring to ſinke our ſhip, and to caſt vs away: neither is there any force left vs, by which we may reſiſt them, vnleſſe the Lord be our helpe. And therefore by this deſcription the Prophet meant to ſet before vs the dangerous eſtate in which we ſtand; ſeeing we haue (on euery ſide) ſo many ſtrong and furious enemies, being alſo full of fraud. In regard whereof, wee ſhould be put to our ſhifts, and vtterly vndone, if God preuented them not by oppoſing his inuincible power againſt them for our defence. For this wretched Kingdome of Satan can neuer bee deſtroied, but by the *ſword* of the Lord.

The Church aſſailed on euery ſide with mightie and ſubtile enemies.

Nothing but Gods ſword is able to ſubdue Satans kingdome.

But wee are to obſerue what he ſaith in the beginning of the verſe; to wit, *In that day*. For thereby he meanes, that God permits Satan to vphold and continue his Kingdome for a time; but ſo, that it ſhall downe in the end; as Saint *Paul* ſaith, Rom 16.20. The Lord will *ſhortly* tread downe Satan vnder your feete. And thus by this promiſe wee ſee, that the time of our warfare is not yet accompliſhed, but that we muſt fight valiantly till this enemie be wholly ſubdued: who yet will neuer ceaſe to aſſaile vs as long as we liue, albeit he hath bin put to the worſt an hundred times. Let vs arme our ſelues then to wage battell with him continually, and to beare off the violent blowes, wherewith hee will try whether our armour be of proofe or no: but that we may not be diſcouraged, let vs alwaies caſt the eye of our faith to *that day*, in which all his forces ſhall be daſht in peeces.

Our warfare is not yet accompliſhed.

The epithites wherewith he ſets out this *Leuiathan* in part, notes his cunning and ſubtile policies; alſo in part his open crueltie: and thus he lets vs ſee that his ſtrength is vnable to be matched or ouercome. For the word *Beriach*, ſignifies a bolt or ſtake of yron: vnder which the Prophet by a figure meane to note out a piercing power, either in regard of the venomous biting, or the violence of Satan. The ſecond is drawne from the verbe *Akal*, which ſignifies to ouerthrow, and is to be referred to his ouerthwart and crooked bowings and turnings.

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Verſ. 2. *In that day ſing of the vineyard of* *red wine.

*Or, to the red vine.

NOw he ſhewes that all this ſhall be done for the ſaluation of the Church. Why ſo? Becauſe the Lord prouides for the ſafetie of all ſuch as he hath once vouchſafed to receiue vnder his protection. That the Church then may inioy a ſure eſtate, Satan with all his retinue ſhall be brought to nought. And hitherunto tend all the adminiſtrations of Gods vengeance vpon his enemies; namely, to ſhew that hee hath care of his Church. Now albeit the Prophet expreſſeth not the word Church in this place; yet it is euident enough, that it is ſhe to whoſe heart the Lord ſpeakes on this gracious manner. Nay this figuratiue manner of ſpeech hath greater emphaſis in it, then if he had in plaine words called them the people of Iſrael: for in as much as the excellencie of a *vine*, conſiſts chiefly in the placing and planting of it, and alſo depends vpon the continuall dreſſing of it: if the Church be Gods vine, we thence gather, that ſhe cannot floriſh, but by the continuall courſe of his daily fauour and bleſſing vpon her. By this *ſimilitude*, hee alſo expreſſeth what ſingular loue and affection the Lord beares vnto her, as we haue more fully declared in the fifth Chapter.

This word Vine, hath great emphaſis in this place.

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Now he calles it a *red vine*: that is to ſay, very excellent. For red wine in the Scriptures, ſignifies excellencie, if wee conſider other places thereof well. Now he ſaith, that *this ſong ſhall be ſung in that day*, in regard that for a time the Church ſhould bee miſerably waſted; ſo as it ſhould become like vnto a deſert, or a place vntilled. But therewithall hee foretels that after this waſte, ſhe ſhall be reſtored, and filled with ſuch plentie of excellent fruit, that ſhe ſhall haue ample occaſion to *ſing for ioy*.

Verſ. 3. *I the Lord doe keepe it: I will water it euerie moment: leſt anie aſſaile, I will keepe it night and day.

*Or, I am the Lord that keepes it.

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IN this verſe the Lord ſhewes what care he hath for this vine, and what diligence hee vſeth in dreſſing and keeping of it. As if he ſhould ſay; I omit no care nor paines that belongs to a good maſter of a familie, who prouidently prouides all things fit for his houſhold in due ſeaſon. Now hee not onely ſhewes what hee will doe when the time of ioy and gladneſſe ſhall come; but he alſo tels what benefits the Iewes had receiued from his hands before, that ſo they might be put in the better hope for the time to come. But in the mean while, we muſt ſupply a cloſe oppoſition here, of the time which is betweene theſe two: for God ſeemed vtterly to neglect his Church, and that in ſuch wiſe, as it became like a deſert. And hence it was that the vineyard of the Lord was ſo ſpoiled and waſted, to wit, becauſe the Lord left it for a time, and gaue it vp as a pray into his enemies hands. Whence we gather, that our welfare will ſoone decay, if the Lord doe neuer ſo little withdraw himſelfe from vs: as on the contrarie, that all ſhall goe well with vs, as long as he aſſiſts vs.

Our welfare ſoone decaies, if God doe but a little withdraw his hand.

Now he mentions two points wherein the Lord will ſhew his diligence; to wit, hee will *water* his vine continually, and will alſo incloſe and *watch* it, that it be not ouerrunne by theeues or wild beaſts, but may be preſerued from all diſcommodities. Theſe two things are chiefly to bee looked vnto for the good conſeruation of a vine; to wit, that it be well husbanded, and well fenced. By *watering* of it, he comprehends whatſoeuer belongs to the dreſſing and manuring of it: wherein

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he promiseth to leaue no dutie vnperformed whereby the good thereof may be procured.

2 But vnto this, vigilancie must needs be added: for what would it auaile to husband a vine with great labour, if afterward it should be left open for theeues and beasts to enter in and spoile it at their pleasures? The Lord promiseth therfore that he will likewise *keepe it*, that no hurt be done vnto it, but that the fruites may haue time to ripen; and may afterward be reaped in their season. Howsoeuer this poore vine be subiect then to many inconueniences by reason of enemies and cruell beasts which will still be assailing of it with great furie, yet God promiseth that he will interpose himselfe for her defence, so as it shall be kept safe and sound from all dangers. Now seeing he hath appointed a *certaine day* in which we shall *sing this song*, let not our hearts quaile if for a time he withdraw his help from vs. Be it that he leaues vs to be spoiled and vexed for a little while, yet will he let vs see in the end that he hath not forgotten vs.

God will neuer cease to supplie his Church with necessarie benefits.

Vers. 2.

Vers. 4. Anger is not in me: Who would set the briars and thornes against me in battell? I would goe thorow them, I would burne them together.

THis verse conteines a most sweet consolation in it. For the Prophet therein shewes the incredible loue which God beares to his people; albeit they be of a peruerse and wicked spirit. God takes vpon him heere then (as we shall see anon) the person of a louing father greatlie offended, who is angrie with his sonne, yet so, that he must needs shew how much he is inclined to pitie and compassion, because ỹ ardent loue he beares to his sonne ouercomes all his displeasure. In a word, he shews that God can not so hate his chosen, but that he therewithall will make them feele his fatherlie loue towards them, euen in the middest of his corrections wherewith he visits them. The Scripture is wont to set forth God vnto vs many waies: for sometime it sets him before vs as one whose wrath

1 is kindled, and as one terrible to behold;

2 againe, in other places, shewing nothing but mercie and loue. Now why is he set forth thus diuerslie? Surely because wee are not capable of his goodnes. For this cause he is faine to shew himselfe froward with such as are froward; and pure with the pure, as *Dauid* shewes, Psal.18.26. For he manifests himselfe in such wise vnto vs, as we giue him occasion. And if he shew himselfe seuere at any time, we may thanke the hardnes of our owne hearts for it.

God can not so hate his chosen, but he makes them feele his fauour.

But the Prophet speakes not here of all indifferentlie, but of the Church only, to whom he will euer be a father, notwithstanding that he chastise and correct her for her sinnes and iniquities. His Church shall continue safe then, howsoeuer she be vnworthie of such a benefit. This sentence therefore must be restrained to the Church, that so there may be a relation alwaies had betweene God and his elect: whom he can not but dearely loue, although his anger be seuere against the reprobate. Thus we see the excellencie of this Consolation: for if we be sure that we are the called of God, we may boldly resolue that he can not be *angrie* with vs: and to speake properlie, it is impossible. Why so? Because he loues vs with such a constant affection, as he can neuer lose it. I denie not but God at that time hated some euen among this people, and yet he calles them his beloued, because of his secret adoption. Now by how much the more God shewed himselfe good and gratious towards the people, by so much the more were they all left without excuse that had prouoked his wrath against them by their rebellions. Neither need we doubt but he aggrauates their fault by this circumstãce, to wit, that he is enforced to change his wonted affection towards them in regard of their frowardnes. For hauing spoken of his mildnes, he suddenlie cries out, *Who would set the briars and thornes against me in battaile?* Or (as others translate) who will make me like the briar and the thorne? Now it were not amisse to reade it, *Who will set the briar against me, that I may fight as the thorne against it.* For there is no coniunction copulatiue betweene these two words. But I willinglie content my selfe with the first exposition, to wit, that God wisheth he might haue to do with thornes and briars, which he would quicklie consume with the fire of his indignation. But if any 3 had rather say that the Prophet here taxeth the doubts which often troubles vs by reason of our owne infidelitie, when we feele the anger of God to be kindled against vs, as if he should say, You much deceiue your selues in that you compare me to a thorne and a briar; that is to say, in attributing a cruell or froward disposition of nature vnto me: if any (I say) shall thus interpret it, I hinder him not to follow the same: and yet I suppose it to be besides the Prophets meaning. Whereas o- 4 thers also thinke that God here puts vpon him the person of one that is angrie, as if he should say, I will no longer be so milde nor easie to be intreated as I haue been heretofore: this also seemes so constreined that it needs no further refutation. I grant, that as God is gratious and mercifull by nature, so nothing goes more against the same then roughnes and seueritie; as one that is constreined to borrow another nature (as it were) from others, when he would shew himselfe angrie. But if the text be read as I haue first interpreted it, I doubt not but it will be sufficient of it selfe to refute the rest, to wit, that God takes vp a heauie complaint that he is not to *fight* rather with *thornes*, then against his *vine*, which he is therefore constreined to spare, because it is his inheritance.

God can not be angrie with his chosen.

This verse must be restrained to the Church.

That which followes after, *I will goe by steps thorow them, and burne them* doth also confirme mine exposition: for *burning* belongs to *thornes* and *briars*; all which the Lord would burne euen as if he made war against them: and therefore he shewes, that he will carrie himselfe more moderately, because hee hath to doe with his vine. Hence we gather, that

if

If God refraine his anger towards vs, it is not for our merits, but for his free election ſake.

if the Lord be not angry with vs, wee are not to attribute it to our owne merits or deſerts, but to his owne free election. For in ſaying, *who would ſet him*, he apparently ſhewes, that he hath iuſt cauſe to make war vpon vs, and vtterly to conſume vs; were it not for the compaſſion he hath to his Church. And we ſhould alſo be like to *thornes* and vnbeleeuers, vnleſſe the Lord in his mercy, did vouchſafe to ſeparate vs from amongſt them, leſt wee ſhould periſh with them. If any would ioyne theſe two words, *in battell*, with theſe words, *who would ſet* the ſenſe alſo would not be amiſſe.

Verſ. 5. *Or will he feele my ſtrength, *that he may make peace with me, and be at one with me?*

*Or, let him make peace with me, let him make peace with me.

THe Hebrew particle is often diſiunctiue; and therefore this place is expounded as if it had been ſaid; Either let her feele my ſtrength, or let her make peace with me: that is to ſay, *if ſhe make not peace with me, then ſhall ſhe feele my ſtrength, to her great loſſe.* Others expound it a little otherwiſe; Who will feele my ſtrength? that is to ſay, *who will repreſſe it?* But I leaue this interpretation, becauſe it ſeemes too much conſtrained; contenting my ſelfe with that which is moſt receiued. The expoſitours thinke then that God threatens the Iewes, as one that aſſaies all meanes to bring them home into the right way: for God muſt worke vpon vs many waies, in reſpect wee are ſo accuſtomed to abuſe his patience and goodneſſe. And therefore he often teſtifies, that hee will bring vpon vs the puniſhment of our ingratitude; which it ſeemes *Iſaiah* doth in this place: as if he ſhould ſay; If this people will not accept of my kindneſſe, and repent, and ſo *make peace* with mee, I aſſure them they ſhall feele the waight of my hand, which hitherunto I haue withholden from them. There may another apt ſenſe be alſo gathered hence, and yet ſomewhat differing from this. As if the Lord ſhould exhort the people to acknowledge his power, by which they might be brought to ſeeke peace with him: for whence proceedes that brutiſh confidence, that wee feare not the anger of God, but becauſe we reuerence not his power as we ought to doe? *

Yet had I rather take it here by way of interrogation; which kind of reading we often times meete with all; as thus: Will hee feele my force that hee may make peace with me? as if a father being in ſome perplexitie and care for the good of his ſonne, ſhould take vp a ſorrowfull complaint on this manner; Will not this vntoward boy indure that I ſhould doe him good? I am at my wits end, I know not how to deale with him; he will abide no rough handling: and yet he abuſeth my lenitie. What ſhall I doe? Surely I will turne him out of doores, if I ſee no amendment: and then I thinke hee will *feele* how great the power of a father is, whereby I haue hitherto maintained him. For ſeeing he cannot beare kind vſage, I will try what ſeueritie

Simile.

will worke. Will hee not at length acknowledge what mine authoritie is ouer him, and ſeeke to bee at one with me? Now wee ſhall the better vnderſtand this, if wee conſider that all our euils ariſe from the want of being touched with the feeling of Gods goodneſſe: for could it once come into our mindes how many benefits wee haue receiued from his hands, it would ſuffice to withdraw vs from all our our bad courſes, and wee would forthwith ſeeke to bee reconciled vnto him.

Our miſeries ariſe from the want of feeling of the Lords goodneſſe.

We may behold here then, how carefull our heauenly Father is for our ſaluation, as one that would make vs feele both his power and goodneſſe; that ſo perceiuing the worth of them both, we might partake in the fruits of both more and more. In a word, he would be as familiar with vs, as with his children, if our owne wilfull malice did not hinder him. Seeing then we will not indure that he ſhould deale *graciouſly* with vs; muſt hee not needes manifeſt his *power* and greatneſſe, that we being humbled by the ſame, and touched to the quicke with his iudgements, we may with all meekeneſſe ſeeke vnto him, and gladly ſue for pardon and fauour at his hands? now this is brought to paſſe when we conuert vnto him without faining: for it cannot be that we ſhould finde fauour in his ſight, as long as wee pleaſe and flatter our ſelues in our vices. On the other ſide, if wee make peace with him, then muſt wee make full account to bee at enmitie with Satan and ſinne.

Note how carefull the Lord is for our welfare.

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Let vs make our account that if we will make peace with God, we muſt be at enmitie with Satan and ſinne.

But the *doubling* of the words giues vs moſt cleerely to perceiue, how deſirous the Lord is to be at *one with vs*: for hee might haue ſaid in a word, that hee is willing to make peace with vs, and readie to forgiue. When then he doubles it twice, *Let him make peace with me*, I ſay, *let him make peace with mee*: he therein expreſſeth with what a willing and readie mind, yea and with what feruent deſire hee haſtens to aboliſh all our iniquities.

Note Gods willingneſſe to be at peace with vs.

Verſ. 6. *Hereafter Iacob ſhall take roote, Iſrael ſhall flouriſh and grow, and the world ſhall be filled with fruit.*

NOw hee ſhewes by the effects, what this loue is whereof he ſpake in the former verſes. For the better vnderſtanding whereof, wee muſt conſider the eſtate of this ancient people which was Gods heritage: not by their deſerts, but by the benefit of the free adoption. The Lord had iuſt cauſe to bee angrie with them, ſo farre forth as to caſt them wholly out of his ſight, and to roote them cleane out. But hee refrained his anger, becauſe hee had to doe with his vine and inheritance. For his onely meaning was, that the people ſhould acknowledge their fault, and by that meanes returne into fauour with him. And this is the cauſe why hee addes this promiſe to the former, leſt the people ſhould deſpaire, by being ouermuch feared with this power of God, from which theſe rods and chaſtiſements were threamed

Verſ. 2, 3.

It is an easie matter to slip into desperation by the sight of Gods iudgement, vnlesse some hope of mercie be left vs.

to proceed. For it is easie to slip into desperation by the sense of Gods iudgement, if there be not some hope left vs of mercie.

Therefore he saith, *that Iacob shall take roote* againe: as if he should say, I haue in deed wasted my Church, and brought her almost to nothing, yet shall she *recouer her first florishing estate*, so as she shall fill the whole world; for she shall increase more and more after she is reconciled vnto me. Now this similitude which is drawne from *taking roote*, is very elegant, because we are as good as plucked vp by the rootes whilest God is angrie with vs, for then we are as good as dead and vtterlie cut off: but how soeuer the Lord afflicts his Church, yet he neuer suffers the rootes to die: true it is they lie hid, but yet in time they shall reuiue and bring forth fruit.

God afflicts his Church, but he neuer suffers her roote to perish.

Whereas he saith the world *shall be filled* with the fruit of these rootes; that was accomplished at the comming of Christ, who gathered and multiplied the people of God by his Gospell: for then Israel and the Gentiles were vnited into one bodie, and so the difference was taken away which was betweene them in former time. Now we are not ignorant that the Gospell, and the whole fruit which it brought forth, proceeded first from the Iewes.

Ephes. 2. 14. *Isa.* 2. 3.

Ioh. 4. 22.

Vers. 7. *Hath he smitten him as he smote those that smote him? or is he slaine according to the slaughter of those that were slaine by him?*

HE confirmes the former sentence, to wit, that they might see sure and euident signes of Gods loue and goodnes euen in his chastisements: for he is wont so to correct his people that whilest he beates thē downe with his left hand, he susteins them with his right. This verse is diuerslie expounded: some interpret it thus, Haue I smitten Israel, as his enemies haue smitten him? The Assyrians shewed them no mercie, but vexed them with all rigor, but I haue moderated my wrath, and haue not smitten them for their ruine: whereby I haue well shewed that I was not their enemie. And yet me thinks the other exposition pleaseth me better, which also is the most receiued, to wit, that a difference is here put betweene the faithfull and the wicked: for the Lord punisheth them both indifferentlie; but yet after a diuers maner. For in punishing the reprobate he giues way to his anger, because he meanes to root them out in regard they be vessels of his wrath ordeined to destruction, as those that haue no taste nor feeling at all of his goodnes: but when he corrects his children, he moderates his anger, and aimes at a contrarie marke, for he thereby meanes to worke their amendment, and to draw them to himselfe, that so in the end they may haue a better & a more permanent estate.

God afflicts the elect and reprobate both alike in this life, but after a diuers maner.

Rom. 9. 22.

Quest.

But may some man say, Wherefore doth the Prophet vse a relatiue here, saying, *of him which smote him*. I answere, it is because the Lord often vseth the wicked as his instrumēts to correct his chosen, and that for their greater humbling. For no doubt it is a very great triall the Lord puts vs vnto, when he suffers vs to be oppressed vnder the tyrannie of the wicked: for we doubt sometimes as if he tooke part with them against vs, or as if he hated vs, and meant to disappoint vs of his succor. For the preuenting of this doubt, he saith, It is true, that now and then he permits the wicked to afflict his people, and to worke their wills vpon them for a time, but in the end they themselues with their impietie shall be punished much more sharplie then they haue punished the faithful. Notwithstanding if any had rather follow the first exposition, I leaue it to his choice, namely, that the Lord will not deale with vs as with his enemies. Thēce came that sentence, It is better to fall into the hands of God, then into the hands of men: for the Lord can neuer forget his couenant; wherein he hath giuen his word to vse his Church with all louing and fatherly affection.

Ans.

2. Sam. 24. 14.

Vers. 8. *In measure in the branches thereof wilt thou contend with it, * when he bloweth with his rough wind in the day of the east winde.*

* or, although he shal blow.

THis is the second proofe of Gods mercie towards his elect; whom he iudgeth with the world, lest they should be condemned with the world: for whilest he smites them, he so moderates his blowes, that he still hath an eye to their weaknes; so as he will neuer correct them beyond measure. As touching the word *measure*, all the expositors conclude that it signifies moderation: for otherwise wee were neuer able to beare Gods hand; but should be ouerwhelmed forthwith: but he holds an euen hand, and is also faithfull, as S. Paul saith, and wil not suffer vs to be tempted aboue that we are able to beare, 1. Cor. 10. 13. And thus *Ieremiah* desires the Lord to correct him in iudgement, that is to say, *in measure*, that so the blowes might be proportionable to his infirmitie. But the expositors agree not in ỹ interpretation of these words, *in the branches*: for some translate, In setting one of them against another by ciuill warres: Others, that God will reuenge their wickednesses by that sword which themselues haue drawne out and put into his hand. But I passe by both these expositions, because I can not approue of them: that interpretation which I take to be the most probable is theirs, who expound, In his *buds*, that is to say, In his plāts, signifying, that the Lord will not only curse their goods, but their persons also. For we know that Gods chastisements are of diuers kinds: the lightest are those whereby he depriues vs of outward things, which are commonlie termed the goods of fortune. His meaning is then, that God will so chastise the faithfull, as he will not only touch them in their persons, but he will also depriue them of ordinarie foode, to wit, of wheate, wine, oyle, and other like commodities which the earth brings forth: for the verb *Shalach* (wher-

1. Cor. 11. 32.

Ierem. 10. 24.

Goods of fortune.

of

of this word bud comes) ſignifies to bring forth, ſprout, or bud.

But I haue another expoſition which comes neerer the Prophets meaning; to wit, that God contends with his Church in her buds or branches: for albeit hee lops off the branches, and cuts downe the body of the tree alſo, yet he will not ſuffer his wrath to conſume the rootes and all: but the tree ſhall ſpring, becauſe there is alwaies ſome ſap in the rootes, which God will neuer ſuffer to die nor decay. And this fits well with the ſixt verſe, where hee promiſed that Iſrael ſhould take roote, and bring forth fruit. He expounds that then which hee ſpake before; to wit, *in meaſure:* that is to ſay; hee will not plucke it vp by the rootes: for the Lord will lop off that which appeares on the outſide of the tree; to wit, the branches and the leaues; but he will keepe the roote ſound. As for the reprobates, hee will vtterly ſtub them vp, and ſo mangle them to peeces, that they ſhall neuer ſprout more.

Whereas others haue tranſlated; He blew with his wind: I haue thought it better to ſay; *although he ſhall haue blowed:* for he continues the ſimilitude in which hee alluded to the herbes and plants, which wither away when any ſharpe wind blowes vpon them; yet it is but in the vpper parts, becauſe the roote lies alwaies warme in the earth. So, albeit the Lord comes violently vpon the faithfull, and disfigures them ſo, that they ſeeme as good as brought to nothing, yet is hee wont to preſerue ſome ſappe and ſeede within them.

Whereas the Prophet names *the eaſt wind*; he reſpects the ſituation of Iudea, becauſe that wind did much hurt there; as wee may ſee by many other places. Now we know that euery Country hath his particular wind, which is noiſome vnto it. As for example; ſome haue the the north-eaſt wind; ſome the ſouth wind: others the eaſt wind riſing vnder the Sunne, which is very hurtfull; for it makes the corne to ſhed, blaſts and ſpoiles al fruits; it ſhakes the trees, and leaues nothing almoſt in the fields y is good behind it. By this *eaſt-wind* then, ſome vnderſtand that which is towards the Sunne riſing, being exceeding noiſome to many Countries.

Verſ. 9. *By this therefore ſhall the iniquitie of Iacob bee purged, and this is all the fruit, the taking away of his ſinne: When hee ſhall make all the ſtones of the Altar as chalke ſtones broken in peeces,* that *the groues and images may not ſtand vp.*

HAuing ſpoken of the chaſtiſement of the people; he now begins in plainer words to ſhew, that the Lord wil ſo prouide for their ſaluation, by thoſe rods wherewith he corrected them, that they ſhall feele the fruit thereof. I grant he ſpake of this before, but now he expounds himſelfe more cleerely; to wit, that all the afflictions wherewith God humbled them, ſhould ſerue as medicines to purge their ſinnes, ſo as they ſhould recouer his former fauour.

In what ſenſe it is ſaid that afflictions purge away ſinnes.

But will ſome man ſay, are ſinnes purged by afflictions, by which God corrects vs? If it bee ſo, then it followes that they are ſatisfactions for ſinnes; as the Papiſts teach. For theſe two things depend one vpon another; to wit, if God correct vs for our ſinnes, that they may be done away; then if he ſends no affliction, it followes that there muſt be ſome ſatisfaction in ſtead of it. But it is no hard matter to looſe this knot, if we note that the Prophet meddles not here with this queſtion; namely, whether wee merit remiſſion of ſinnes by workes, or whether afflictions bee ſatisfactions for our offences. For his purpoſe is plainely to teach, that corrections are remedies ſent of God, whereby hee cures our maladies, in regard we are wont to abuſe his patience and long ſuffering. Needfull it is therefore that he ſhould force vs to acknowledge our ſins, & to beare afflictiõs patiently: and thus afflictions are as purgations whereby our wicked luſts are conſumed, euen as if they had paſſed thorow the fire; which metaphor the Scripture is often wont to vſe. But they can no way become ſatisfactions: I grant men may bee prepared by them to repentance.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Corrections are Gods medicines by which he cures our maladies.

Pſal. 66. 10. 12.

Pſal. 89. 46.

Thus hee teacheth then that the faithfull haue none occaſion at all to repine againſt the hand that ſmote them; but rather to acknowledge that God vſeth this as a meanes to procure their ſaluation; becauſe otherwiſe they would not be brought to taſte how good and gracious he is. If any deſire a ſhorter diſtinction, we ſay in a word, *that chaſtiſements purge our ſinnes mediately, but not immediately,* for they bring vs to repentance; which in its order and place, leades vs to the obtaining of the forgiueneſſe of ſinnes.

Now whereas we haue tranſlated, Behold, all the fruit ſhall be, &c. others read it in the genitiue; Of the taking away: but I hold it better to reade it in the nominatiue caſe, in which it is. The word *all,* is often taken for great, or abundant: hee meanes then that there ſhall come a plentifull harueſt as it were, by theſe afflictions. To be ſhort, hee would haue this correction to be well taken, in regard of the profit which it brings with it; that the faithfull bearing of them patiently and quietly, might thereby be purged from their corruptions, and brought into the way of ſaluation.

Afflictions ought to be taken in good part, in regard of the fruit they bring with them.

But in the next place the Prophet expounds himſelfe yet more cleerly, where hee ſpeakes of the aboliſhing of *ſuperſtitions:* for whileſt Iſrael was in proſperitie, they neuer thought of repentance: and truely it is giuen to men naturally to wax extreme proud and ſtubburne, when they inioy eaſe and pleaſure. He ſhewes then that God meant together with their chaſtiſement, to purge their ſins; becauſe they had ſoothed vp themſelues in their naughtineſſe before, whileſt the Lord heaped vp bleſſings vpon them, and cauſed them to feele his goodneſſe and mercy: but now they ſhould change both their mind and

Proſperitie begets pride in vs naturally.

their maners, acknowledging and confessing that they were iustlie punished. Now the Prophet puts one kind here for all, to the end we should comprehend the whole vnder this part: so as in a word he notes out the abolishing of all Idolatrie and superstition. For he mentions not the *Altar* which was consecrated vnto God, but that which themselues had dedicated to their Idols. *When the stones* of it then should be broken, *the Idoles ouerthrowne, and dasht in pieces*, so that no signes of Idolatrie at all were to be seene, euen at that very instant should the *sinnes of the people be taken away*.

If sinne be put away when all Idolatrie is banished: then whilst Idolatrie remaineth sinne must needs be imputed.

Hence we learne that we can looke for no pardon from the Lord vnlesse we forthwith repent vs of our sinnes: for whosoeuer he be that flatters himselfe in his filthines, he shall assuredlie pull downe the wrath of God vpon his owne head, which he ceaseth not to inflame against him. Our iniquitie then is taken away when we are touched with a true feeling of repentance. In the second place obserue, that albeit repentance be an inward affection of the heart, yet it stayes not there, but brings forth fruites to the view of men. For it is in vaine to make men belee ue we feare God, vnlesse we cause our light so to shine before them by our outward works: for we can not separate the roote frō the fruite. Thirdly we haue to note, that the Prophet mentions *Idolatrie* principallie in this place, because it is the fountaine from whence all euils flowe. For whileſt Gods pure worship and sincere religion florisheth, you shall see the duties of charitie necessarilie to flow frō thence: but we no sooner forsake *God*, but he forthwith lets vs fall into all sorts of vices. And this is the maine reason why he comprehends all kinds of wickednesses vnder the name of *Idolatrie*. Besides, we see that he not only condemnes Images and Idols, but whatsoeuer the Iewes had inuented without the prescript rule of the law: whence it followes, that all will-worship is reiected of GOD. Where he addes in the end, that *they shall no more arise* or stand vp: he shewes how odious a thing Idolatrie is in Gods sight, seeing he will haue the very memorie thereof to be quite abolished, so as afterwards there should no signe thereof be left at all. And yet the Prophet meant to expresse somewhat more, to wit, that our repentance should be such, as that we ought to perseuere therein cōstantlie vnto the end. For we call not that true repentance when men are only moued vpon some sudden passion to renounce and abolish their superstitions, and then forthwith to suffer them to sprout and increase againe, which yet we see comes often to passe in manie, who in the beginning seemed to be consumed with zeale in an outward shew, and within a while haue growne key cold againe. But the Prophet here notes out such a constant zeale, that those who haue once begun to forsake and renounce their abominations, hold out and perseuere in a good course vnto the end.

The forsaking of God, the next way to tumble vs headlong into the committing of all iniquities.

God reiects not Idolatrie alone, but all willworship, all be it be grounded vpon neuer so good intents.

True repentance holds out to the end.

* Or, neuertheleſſe.

Vers. 10. * *Yet the defenced Citie* shall be *desolate, and the habitation* shall be *forsaken, and left like a Wildernes. There shall the Calfe feede, and there shall he lie,* * *and consume the branches thereof.*

* Or, shall brouze vpon the tops thereof.

YEt.] Some take the Hebrue Coniunction *Vau*, for a particle of rendring the cause; and some, as if it signified Otherwise: therefore it will beare a double sense. If we interpret it *For*, then the Prophet should giue a reason of that which went before: but that is against the drift of the text; and besides, it is vtterlie a verie absurd exposition. Those who take it for Otherwise, haue the most likelihood: for this threat may well agree, If you repent not, looke to the issue; *Your Citie* which is so well fortified, *shall be made like a wildernes*. But yet me thinks this is too constreined a sense. I had rather then expound it, Notwithstanding, or *neuertheleſſe*: for the Prophet meant to say, that Ierusalem and the rest of the Cities of Iudea should be destroyed: neither could Ierusalem possiblie escape, albeit God meant to spare his people. This admonition was very requisit, because the faithfull might haue been discouraged in seeing this *holie Citie* ouerthrowne, and the Temple laid on heapes: but they knew by the former prophesies that God had meanes enow in store to conserue his Church, and the consideration thereof vpheld them. The Prophet then goes about to preuent this temptation. And from hence learne, that we ought neuer to be out of heart howsoeuer we be brought to a great exigent; and that the Lord begins to handle vs with all extremitie. Now albeit this threatning may well concerne all Iudea, yet I rather thinke that he speakes here principallie of Ierusalem, which was the Mother Citie of that countrie.

Whereas he addes that *the Calfe shall feede there*, it is a figuratiue maner of speech much vsed among the Prophets as oft as they mention the destruction of a Citie: for they then forthwith shew that the place shall be made pasture ground. In which we haue to obserue what should moue the Lord to execute such a iudgement as to put brute beasts to feed in that place which the Iewes by their wickednes had prophaned. Surely he had adopted them to be his children, and therefore it was their duties to haue yeelded subiection to so louing a father: but in regard they had broken out into licentious behauiour against him, and had shaken off his yoke, it was iust with the Lord as a punishment of their ingratitude, that the place of their dwelling should now be inhabited by better inhabitants, taken from among brute beasts, rather then men.

The sinnes of a nation may so farre prouoke the Lord, that where it was an habitation for men, it shall become an habitation for beasts only.

Whereas he saith the *tops*, it is to augment the description of this waste and desolation: as if he should say, There shal be such plentie of grasse, that the *Calues* shal only *brouze* vpon the tendereſt parts thereof. The word *Saiph* signifies also a bow or branch: but because they naturallie sprout vp on high, I take it here for the *top*, or end. We may also affirme that the Prophet alludes to the faire shew which

which the Citie had, it being in times paſt beautified with faire and high buildings; but nothing ſhould be ſeene there (theſe houſes being throwne downe) but *graſſe*, and *boughes of trees*, wherewith the *calues* being plentifully fed, ſhould onely for wantonnes, *browze* vpon the *tops* thereof.

*Or, his harueſt ſhall dry. *Or, ſhall come, and ſhall ſet, &c.

Verſ. 11. *When *the boughes of it are dry, they ſhall be broken: the women *come and ſet them on fire: for it is a people of none vnderſtanding; therefore hee that made them ſhall haue no compaſſion of them; and he that formed them ſhall haue no mercy on them.*

SOme thinke the Prophet hath reſpect to the ſimilitude of the *vine*, whereof hee ſpake in the beginning of this Chapter; and therefore they tranſlate, When the branches ſhall die. I grant that the word *Keſirah*, is ambiguous: but becauſe the ſimilitude of the harueſt agrees better; as alſo that the Hebrew word may be ſo expounded, therefore I had rather take it in this ſenſe. And yet I trãſlate not, When the harueſt ſhall be dried; but, Whẽ the harueſt ſhal dry. Now, *To dry* in this place ſignifies nothing elſe but to come to ripeneſſe; as if hee ſhould ſay, Before the crop be ripe it ſhall be cut downe: and ſo the Lord will depriue thee of that which thou thoughteſt thou hadſt ſure enough in thine hand. Where he ſaith, the *women ſhall come*; his meaning is, that God ſhall neede no ſtrong armie of men to finiſh this buſineſſe, but poore weake women ſhall ſuffice: and thus he amplifies the indignitie that ſhall bee offered them in this chaſtiſement. For he threatens that the calamitie ſhall be full of ſhame and reproach, in regard that it is a greater diſgrace to be praied vpon and ſpoiled by the hands of fillie women, who were neuer expert in feates of armes, then by *men* who are ſouldiers by profeſſion.

In the next place hee ſhewes the cauſe of this ſo great a calamitie: for at the firſt bluſh the Lord might ſeeme too ſeuere in ſuffering his choſen to be ſo miſerably vexed and ſcattered, without any ſuccour. Why ſo? Becauſe it is contrary to his louing and fatherly diſpoſition, to deale thus with his children. But our Prophet ſhewes, that God did not correct the Iewes ſo rigorouſly without good reaſon, for *they were deſtitute of vnderſtanding*, & ſound iudgement. It is not for nothing thẽ that he ſaith, *ignorance* was the cauſe of all their miſeries: for ſeeing true wiſdome conſiſts in the feare of God, doth not the holy Ghoſt iuſtly condemne all them to bee blind earthwormes, who deſpiſe God to walke after their owne inordinate luſts?

Prou. 1.7. Pſal. 111.10

Ignorance excuſeth not.

For ignorãce is for the moſt part ioyned with malice.

And yet ſuch a blindneſſe cannot excuſe nor free vs from being guilty of malice: for they that offend God, doe it maliciouſly, notwithſtanding they bee hoodwincked, in reſpect of the violences of their luſts: *ignorance* and *malice* then are ioyned together; yet ſo, that this ignorance proceedes from a corrupt deſire of the heart. Thence is it that the Hebrewes call all ſinnes generally by the name of ignorances: and thus *Moſes* ſaith, Oh that they were wiſe! Deut. 32.29. Now euery one may eaſily bee drawne to ſubſcribe to this, by conſidering in himſelfe with what crooked affections he is carried away: for being once depriued of the light of holy doctrine, and *deſtitute of vnderſtanding*, the diuell ſets vs going with ſuch a head ſtrongneſſe, that we neither feare Gods hand, nor make any account of his holy word. And that he may ſet vs ouer bootes and all, as they ſay, in the next place hee ſtriues to take away from vs all hope of pardon, which may be referred to the whole body of this people in general. For albeit that a remnãt were preſerued, yet the wrath of God ceaſed not for all that to be inflamed againſt the whole multitude in generall.

Whereas the Prophet calles God *the maker and former of Iſrael*; it is not meant as in reſpect of the creation of heauen and earth; but becauſe he made & formed Iſrael his Church anew, by the worke of regeneration: in which ſenſe, Saint *Paul* ſaith, that we are the workemanſhip of God: as wee alſo haue ſhewed in another place. Now the reaſon that moued *Iſaiah* to ſpeake thus, was to aggraiuate and to amplifie the meaſure of their vnthankfulnes, to which they were growne: ſhewing that they were iuſtly puniſhed, becauſe they diſhonoured and diſreuerenced that God moſt ſhamefullie, who had both formed and preſerued them.

Eph. 2.10.

Chap. 17.7.

Verſ. 12. *And *in that day ſhall the Lord threſh from the chanell of the riuer, vnto the riuer of Egypt: and yee ſhall bee gathered one by one, O children of Iſrael.*

*Or, yet notwithſtanding.

IN this place the Prophet mitigates the ſharpneſſe of the former ſentence: for it was an horrible iudgement of God vpon this people, to be left deſtitute of all hope of fauour or mercy. The Hebrew particle *Vau* therefore, ſhould bee tranſlated as it was in the tenth verſe; Notwithſtanding, or, *Neuertheleſſe it ſhall come to paſſe in that day*. Alſo the Prophet vſeth a ſimilitude, wherein he compares the gathering of the Church to corne that is threſhed; which is afterwards ſeparated from the chaffe. But what might mooue him to vſe this ſimilitude? The poore captiues were ſo oppreſſed, that they appeared no otherwiſe, then as corne that is hidden and ſcattered vnder the chaffe. The Lord was faine to diuide that which was hidden vnder this confuſed heape then, as with a fan. This ſimilitude therfore of *threſhing* out the corne, doth very fitly reſemble this gathering.

By the chanell of the riuer, vnto the riuer, bee meanes Euphrates and Nilus: for the people were driuen partly into Caldea or Aſſyria, and partly into Egypt: for many fled into Egypt, when the reſt were carried captiue into Babylon. Thus then he foretelles how the Lord wil gather his people from all quarters, not onely from Caldea, and out of the whole

region of Mesopotamia, but from Egypt also.

I haue translated *one by one*: others turne it; Euery one from euery place: but this is too constreined an exposition. I therefore take mine to agree best: and thus there may bee a double sense, Either I will gather you all till I come to one: or, I will not gather you by bands or companies, but one after another: as we see it come to passe in the gathering in of those that haue wandred and ranged hither and thither. For all cannot be mustered at an instant, but they must bee gathered to their files one by one. So the Iewes being scattered and dispersed abroad, could not easily bee gathered and vnited together. His meaning is then, that this dissipation should be no impediment vnto them to be restored to a flourishing estate againe; which indeede afterwards came to passe. For the Iewes were sent home, not with troopes of horsemen and chariots, nor with any great power of men, neither yet with swords and speares; but as *Hosea* saith, by the onely hand of the Lord. See Hosea 1.7.

Vers. 13. *In that day also shall the great Trumpet be blowne, and they shall come which perished in the land of Ashur, and they that were chased into the land of Egypt; and they shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Ierusalem.*

HEre he expounds the former verse: now he vseth another similitude, in which he shewes, that God shall be of sufficient power to bring home his people with little adoe. For as Kings are wont by the onely *sound of a trumpet*, to assemble great armies; so he shewes that the Lord will quickly call his people together: in respect of whom, this prophecie should bee no lesse effectuall, then the voice of the trumpet is, which assembles souldiers together. He calles them the *lost people*, in regard they were so miserably dispersed, so as they seemed very neere to such a forlorne estate, as was vtterly without any hope of being restored: for had the Monarchy of their enemies continued, it is like enough they would neuer haue released their prisoners. For they caried them not captiues so far off, but they went therewithall to abolish the name of Israel by little and little.

That which the Prophet addes of *Egypt*, containes yet a more excellent testimonie of Gods loue: to wit, that those which fled thither, should be gathered, albeit they were vnworthy of pardon. For their offence was double, as *Ieremiah* verie well shewes in the seuen and twentith verse of the tenth of his prophecie. For first of all they had obstinately rebelled: and in the second place, they would not obey the reuelation of the Prophet. For they ought rather to haue submitted their neckes to the yoke of the Babylonians, then to haue fled into Egypt, against the expresse commandement of the Lord. 1 2

Now our Prophet shewes further, what fruit should come of this deliuerance; to wit, as soone as the Iewes shall returne out of captiuitie, into their owne land, they shall then *worship* the Lord their Sauiour better then euer they did, in all puritie and vprightnesse: for by the *mountaine*, hee meanes the Temple and sacrifices. True it is that this was accomplished in the time of *Darius*: but doubtlesse the Prophet extends his prophecie further off: for this restauration was as it were an obscure shadowing out of that deliuerance which they obtained afterwards by the meanes of Christ: at whose comming, the spirituall sound of the *Trumpet*, that is to say, of the Gospell, was heard; not onely in *Assyria*, nor in *Egypt*, but in the vttermost bounds of the earth. And then were the people of God indeede, *summoned* to meete together in *mount Zion*, that is to say, in the Church. For wee know it is vsuall with the Prophets thus to speake, when they purpose to shadow out vnto vs Gods worship and seruice, and a true harmonie and consent in godlinesse and religion. Thus applying their manner of speaking to the custome that was in vse among that people, that so they might be the better vnderstood of all: we also know that the Gospell came vnto vs out of this *mount Zion*, of which we haue spoken more amply in the second Chapter.

It is the duty of such as haue receiued any deliuerance from God, to returne him thanks and praise for the same. Ezra 6.1.

THE XXVIII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Woe to the crowne of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim: for his glorious beauty shall be a fading flower, which is vpon the head of the valley of them that be fat, and are ouercome with wine.*

Isaiah enters now into a new sermon, as it were altogether diuers from the former, from which also it should be separated. First, hee shewes that the wrath of God is neere vnto the Israelites, and then to the Iewes. For it is very likely the Prophet foretold these things when the Kingdome of Israel flourished: which yet wee cannot affirme for certaine, albeit it sufficiently appeares y the ten Tribes were not yet caried away captiue. This course the Prophet takes then; first he shewes that the indignation of God is ready to fall vpon *Israel*. in regard of the grosse wickednesses, and all sorts of corruptions which bare sway amongst them: for they were puffed vp with pride & arrogancie; yea, they had plunged themselues into all disorders, and ouerflowed in all voluptuousnes and dissolutions. Thence they grew to an 1 2

open

open contempt of God: for we dayly ſee that when men giue themſelues ouer to their luſts, they eaſily forget him. In the next place he ſhewes how God moderates this his anger, by ſparing the tribe of Iudah: for when the ten tribes were led away captiues with the halfe tribe of *Beniamin*, the Iewes yet remained vntouched. This mercie of God the Prophet magnifies, to wit, that he would not ſuffer his Church whollie to periſh, but preſerued a ſmall remnant. Thirdly he ſhewes that the Iewes had alſo corrupted themſelues, ſo that they would not indure that God ſhould continue his mercie towards them: wherfore ſeeing impietie reigned as much amongſt them as it did among the Iſraelites, they likewiſe muſt make account to feele the rod as well as their brethren.

Which order we ought diligentlie to obſerue: for many deceiue themſelues in the expoſition of this place, in regard the Prophet hath not named Iſrael expreſſlie. But it is a thing well enough knowne that the tenne Tribes are comprehended vnder this word *Ephraim*. As touching the word *woe*, becauſe the particle *Hoi* doth for the moſt part ſerue to expreſſe an execration, I would not depart from the common opinion of the expoſitors, eſpeciallie ſeeing the Prophet vſeth a plaine denunciation of iudgement. Yet if any had rather turne it, *Alas the Crowne*, I hinder him not. The letter *Vau* ſhould be taken as a particle that ſhews the cauſe, thus, For his flowre ſhall be fading. He compares the honor and glorie of Iſrael to a *flowre* which fades, as ſhall be ſaid by and by. In a word, he *taxeth* the wealth of the Iſraelites: for by the *Crowne of pride* he meanes nothing elſe but the falſe confidence wherewith they were ſwollen in regard of their ouermuch abundance and riches. You ſhall euer lightlie ſee theſe two ſinnes goe hand in hand: for the ouerflowing of worldlie commodities begets pride and crueltie, becauſe in proſperitie we ſoare aloft, and can not vſe theſe things with ſobrieties as we ought.

Riches euermore begets pride.

Now the Iſraelites dwelt in a very fat and fruitfull ſoile: and that is the cauſe why *Amos* calles them the *fat kine* of the mountaine of Samaria, Amos 4. 1. Being puffed vp then in regard of their riches, they (proudly) deſpiſed both God and men. And therefore the Prophet calles them *drunkards*, in regard that being made drunke with their proſperitie, they feared no danger nor inconuenience; nay, which was worſt of all, they would not ſubiect their hecks to Gods yoke.

As a fading flower.] I make no queſtion but he alludes to the *Crownes* they vſed in banquets at that time, which alſo are vſed at this day in many places. The Iſraelites gaue themſelues to gluttonie & drunkennes: no doubt alſo but the fruitfulnes of the land was an occaſion vnto them of this their intemperancie. In calling this flower *fading*, he ſtill proſecutes his ſimilitude, alluding elegantlie to *flowers*, which quicklie wither.

He alſo ſaith that this glorie is *vpon the head of the fat valley*, becauſe they ſaw the fat paſtures and the fruitfulnes (which cauſed them to ouerflow in pride) vnder their feet. Others tranſlate *valley of ointments*: but this agrees not ſufficientlie. For by this word the Prophet ſignifies ſuch an abundance and fulnes as made them forget and deſpiſe God and all godlines.

By the word *head*, he alludes to the ſituation of the countrie, in regard the Iſraelites dwelt for the moſt part in fat and fruitfull vallies. He attributs a *Crowne* vnto them, compaſſing the whole land and kingdome, becauſe it floriſhed, and abounded with all ſorts of good things. For he meant to note out their wealth, which begat careleſnes, ſecuritie, boldnes, intemperancie, and crueltie.

And this doctrine alſo belongs (as well) to vs (as to them:) for we are admoniſhed by the example of theſe, to vſe our proſperitie moderately, otherwiſe we ſhall be vnhappie euery kind of way. For the Lord will *curſe* our riches and abundance.

Verſ. 2. *Behold, the Lord hath* * *a mightie and ſtrong* hoſt *like a tempeſt of haile, and a whirlewind that ouerthroweth, like a tempeſt of mightie waters that ouerflow, which throw to the ground* * *mightily.*

* Or, mightie and ſtrong.

* Or, with the hand.

3. *They ſhall be troden vnder foote,* euen *the Crowne,* and *the pride of the drunkards of Ephraim.*

THis may be referred to the Aſſyrians, as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, They are euen readie to come vpon you vnder the leading of the Almightie; and that at an houres warning whenſoeuer it ſhall pleaſe him to call them forth. Yet had I rather take it for a ſtaffe, or ſome ſuch like thing, whereby the Lord would bring downe the height of Iſraels pride. He compares this ſtaffe, or whatſoeuer thing it was, vnto a *whirlewind*, or deluge of waters, which beate downe graſſe and flowres, and marre all the beautie of the earth: wherein he continues forth the ſimilitude of the fading flower wherof he ſpake in the beginning; for there is nothing more hurtfull to the tender flowers then a ſtorme of haile, or a whirlewind.

Now he vſeth a particle demonſtratiue, to wit, *Behold*, becauſe the wicked are not ſtirred nor moued, be the danger neuer ſo imminent. He tels them then that he ſpeakes not as of things that are to be called into queſtion, neither of ſuch things as come out of his owne head, but of that which ſhould ſpeedilie fall out.

Where I haue tranſlated, *with the hand*, S. *Ierome* turnes it, A ſpacious land: but this croſſeth the very text. Others take it for ſtrength: and ſo they affirme that he ſpeakes of a violent driuing an end. But the natiue ſenſe, as I think, is this, that all the glorie and magnificence of ỹ Iſraelites ſhall be throwne downe, euen as if a man ſhould puſh downe one ouercome with drinke with his hand. The third verſe is only a confirmation of that which went before.

S. Ierome.

Vers. 4. *For his glorious beautie shall bee a fading flower, Which is vpon the head of the valley of them that bee fat*, and *as the hastie fruite afore summer, Which while hee that looketh vpon it while it is in his hand, hee eateth it.*

It is not an easie matter to humble such as are besotted with the pleasures of this life. Denys a tyrant of Sicilia.

HEe almost repeates the verie same words which were in the first verse: for it is not an easie matter to humble and terrifie those that are besotted with the pleasures of this life, whose eyes are hoodwincked by reason of abundance and prosperitie. For *Denys* the second, a tyrant of Sicilia, became so bewitched, that hee was ready to fall on his nose euer and anon, because hee was an excessiue eater and drinker at great banquets: and thus mens mindes are intoxicated, through ouer much pampering of themselues with delicates, so as they both forget God and themselues. The Prophet then repeates one and the same thing twice, to these that were so blockish and dull of hearing: to the end they might vnderstand and beleeue that which otherwise would haue seemed incredible.

But hee yet adornes his speech by another goodly similitude, which is verie fitting for his purpose; for fruits that are *hastiliæ vipæ*, are best esteemed, in regard they come first, and giue some hope of a future increase; but they last not long, neither are they fit to keep. And besides, they are fit for none but great bellied women, or for childrē; or else for youths, which being inordinate in their appetites, deuoure them by and by. Now he saith, that such shall be the felicitie of the Israelites: as if hee should say; Your prosperitie wherein you so much reioice, will not last very long, but will be eaten vp *in an instant*. Now looke what *Isaiah* threatens to the kingdome of Israel, the same belongs also to all the world. For men by their ingratitude, are the cause that all the benefits which the Lord bestowes vpon them, cannot come to ripenesse. Why so? Because wee abuse and corrupt them by our naughtinesse. Thence it is that we bring forth hastie fruites of small continuance, which otherwise might last to nourish vs a long space.

Vers. 5. *In that day shall the Lord of hostes be for a crowne of glory, and for a diadem of beautie vnto the residue of his people.*

HAuing spokē of the Kingdome of Israel, he comes now to speake of the Tribe of Iudah, and shewes, that in the middest of this so fearefull a iudgement of God, hee will alwaies cause his mercy to be felt. So that howsoeuer the ten Tribes were gone and lost; yet the Lord would reserue a remnant which should be consecrated vnto him, that therein the crowne and the *diadem* of his glory and magnificence might be found: that is to say, the Church shall neuer bee so mangled and disfigured, but that the Lord wil find a means to crowne and decke her with honour and glorie. And yet I extend not this prophecie indifferentlie to all the Iewes, but onely to the elect, who were miraculously preserued from death: for albeit he calles this one Tribe and an halfe but a *remnant*, in respect of the other ten Tribes; yet wee shall see hereafter, that he puts a difference betweene those who were of the Tribe of Iudah onely. Neither are wee to wonder that the Prophet speakes thus diuersly of one and the same people: for sometimes he directs his speech to the whole body as it was generally infected with vices; and another while he applies himselfe to the faithfull in particular. It is certaine that hee rightly calles the Iewes a *remnant* of people, in regard of the ten Tribes which had reuolted from the pure seruice of God, and had separated themselues from the vnity of faith: but if we shall consider them without comparison, and shall view them as they were in themselues, apart from the rest, hee had iust cause to tax their wickednesse.

The Church shall neuer be so disfigured, but the Lord wil find a means to decke her with beautie and honour, Cant. 1.4.

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I am not ignorant that others are of a contrary iudgement; the reason is, because he by and by speakes of wine, vers. 7. and so they thinke this sentence should bee ioyned with the beginning of the Chapter thus; It may be the Lord will spare the Iewes; but how is it possible he should, seeing they are as bad as the rest? Seeing then that they are guiltie of the same sinne of vnthankfulnesse, must they not needes share with them in their punishment? But these expositours doe not aduisedly consider that the Prophet is about to set forth a testimonie of Gods singular fauour, in that hee did not cause his whole indignation to fall at once vpon all the race of *Abraham*: but albeit hee ouerthrew the Kingdome of Israel, yet he gaue the Iewes respite to see whether they would repent or no. Now with the setting forth of Gods patience towards them, hee vnder hand amplifies the fault of this peoples ingratitude. For should not they haue learned wisdome by their brethrens harmes? yes; the calamitie of the Israelites should surely haue awakened them, and drawn them to repentance. But they past it ouer lightly, and neuer tooke it to heart. Were they not vnworthy of so many benefits then, that would take no benefit thereby? Well, yet the Lord was pleased to conserue his Church euen in the middest of them.

Now you see the cause why hee deliuered Iudah and the halfe Tribe of Beniamin, out of ỹ calamitie in which he wrapped the Israelites. Moreouer, because Iudah was a verie small Tribe, and was therefore contemned of their brethren the Israelites, the Prophet affirmes that there is glory and riches enough in God, to supply all outward wants. By this place we are taught what is the true way vnto saluation; euen to place our whole happinesse in God himselfe: for we no sooner turne backe to the world, but wee gather flowers which fade and wither, yea and vanish away by and by. But alas this phrensie reignes in

Our true way vnto happinesse, is to place it wholly in God.

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euerie place more then it ſhould: for men will ſeeke to bee happie without God: that is to ſay, without happineſſe it ſelfe. *Iſaiah* alſo ſhewes, that no calamity, be it neuer ſo great, can any way let God to inrich and adorne his Church. For when all things ſhall ſeeme as good as deſperate, yet God liues ſtill to *crowne* his ſeruants with *glory*. It is to be noted alſo, that he promiſeth the Church ſhall bee beautified with a new hew, euen then when her multitude ſhall be diminiſhed; that by this meanes the faithfull might neuer be diſmaied in the moſt horrible waſte that may befall them.

Verſ. 6. *And for a ſpirit of iudgement to him that ſitteth in iudgemẽt, and for ſtrength vnto them that turne away the battell in the gate.*

THe Prophet ſhewes the cauſe why the Lord wil beautifie the remnant with new glorie. For hee propounds before them the eſtate of a right gouernment, vnder which a people is preſerued: which conſiſts in two things principally; that is to ſay, *Counſell* and *ſtrength*. By *counſell* and wiſdome, affaires ought to bee managed amongſt the ſubiects at home: *force* and munition are for the annoiance of the enemie abroad. Now for as much as Kingdoms and Commonwealths vphold and maintaine their eſtates by theſe two meanes, therefore God promiſeth the *ſpirit of wiſdome and ſtrength* vnto his people. And therewithall teacheth them, that the gift of both theſe are in his owne hands, and that they are not to be ſought elſewhere: for neither can the Magiſtrates gouerne the Citie well, in giuing to euery one his due: neither can the Captaines and Leaders repulſe the enemie, vnleſſe both be led and directed by the Lord.

Wiſdome and ſtrength are the Lords, Iob 12.13. Pſal. 127.1.

Verſ. 7. *But they haue erred becauſe of wine, and are out of the way by ſtrong drinke: the Prieſt and the Prophet haue erred by ſtrong drinke, they are ſwallowed vp with wine, they haue gone aſtray through ſtrong drinke; they faile in viſion, they ſtumble in iudgement.*

HEe now directs his ſpeech vnto the profane deſpiſers of God, who were Iewes onely in name; and ſets forth their ingratitude to the full: for albeit they had ſo euident a teſtimonie of Gods wrath before their eyes, and ſaw their brethren ſeuerely chaſtiſed in their ſight; yea, albeit they had good experience of his mercie & patience towards them, yet could they not be brought into the right way, by this ſo fearefull an example of ſeueritie: neither could they be brought to anie amendment by ſo liuely a taſte of Gods goodneſſe in ſparing of them.

He ſpeakes here of *wine and ſtrong drinke*, by way of ſimilitude: for I vnderſtand not this place of the common ſinne of drunkenneſſe, againſt which he ſpake in the firſt verſe; but I rather thinke hee meanes they were become like vnto *drunkards*, in regard they were depriued of common ſenſe and vnderſtanding. If the word As, therefore be ſupplied to *wine and ſtrong drinke*, then the ſenſe will be the more plaine and euident. I deny not but men wax worſe then beaſts, by the exceſſe of taking in meates and drinkes: nay, queſtionleſſe their exceſſe therein had ſore dazeled the ſpirits of the Iewes: but if we conſider well of the whole courſe of the text, it will bee eaſie to ſee, that he condemnes their iniquitie vnder a ſimilitude.

Where hee addes, *the Prieſt and the Prophet*, he continues the amplification of their ſinne whereof wee ſpake before: ſo that the common people were not onely drunke, but euen the *Prieſts* themſelues, who ſhould haue been lights to haue giuen direction vnto others: for they are compared to the *ſalt* of the earth, as Chriſt teacheth: now if they grow vnſauorie and graceleſſe, what ſhall become of the multitude? if the eye be darke, what ſhall become of the parts of the whole body? Mat. 5. 13. and 6. 23.

But the worſt of all was, that they erred not onely in open wickednеſſes, but in *viſion and iudgement* alſo: whence we may gather, that the ſtate of the Iews was very deſperate. And here haue we a faire looking glaſſe, wherein we may take a thorow view of our ſelues. Is it not ſtrange, that after ſo many miſeries and afflictions, which God hath vſed to purge out our corruptions, that the Church ſhould yet notwithſtanding be ſo impure? But ſuch is our frowardneſſe, that wee kicke againſt the prickes: ſo that howſoeuer the Lord indeuors by all meanes to correct our vices, yet we not onely fruſtrate the ſame by our rebellions, but daily gather new defilements to the former, wherewith we were ſpotted before. It is no meruaile then if men now adaies are ſo hardened and wax worſe and worſe, notwithſtanding the Church hath been ſo manie waies humbled: for *Iſaiah* affirmes, that the people in olde time did the like.

Now whereas the Lord ouercame ſo great and execrable a villanie, by his ſoueraigne bountie, and did ſtill preſerue his Church; we muſt needes acknowledge that this came to paſſe by his ſecret purpoſe, far beſides the expectation of any: for he ſhall preuaile but little with vs, if he onely vſe ordinarie and common remedies.

From this place alſo it appeeres how ſottiſh & childiſh the Papiſts are in their brags, who haue euer in their mouthes the Church, the Church: & vnder the title of their Prieſts, Biſhops, Prelates, & their authoritie, reſiſt the open and manifeſt Scriptures: as if, forſooth, theſe holy orders could neuer *erre*. Indeede they would make vs beleeue, that they haue the holy Ghoſt ſhut vp in their braine, as if they were the body repreſẽtatiue of ỹ whole Church which is neuer forſaken of God. But here we ſee what *Iſaiah* ſaith of the *Prophets* and *Prieſts* of his time, whoſe calling was far more excellent then was the calling of anie (of their ſhauelings.) Doubtleſſe if euer there

The ſottiſhneſſe of the Papiſts aſſertion, The Church cannot erre, diſcouered.

were a true Church of God, it was amongst the Iewes: and the calling of the *Priests* of that time was approued of by his word, for which these haue not so much as a syllable. And yet he shewes that euen they were not only corrupted in maners, but *erred also in vision and in iudgement*: and not only that, but the *Prophets* also, whom God raised vp extraordinarilie to be helps vnto the Priests in regard of their negligence: euen these became *blinde* in their reuelations, and in that holy ministrie of teaching and instructing the people. What is more vaine then, then vnder the pretext of a titularie office to exempt themselues from erring, when as yet in the meane while they haue not only forsaken the Lord and all true religion, but haue also troden vnder foot all honestie, and yet are not ashamed to defend their tyrannie by all the meanes they can?

Vers. 8. *For all their tables are full of filthie vomiting: no place is* cleane.

HE goes on with the similitude, and represents out vnto vs as in a glasse the maners of such as are giuen to gluttonie: for hauing once cast off all humanitie, they not only become like brute beasts, but plunge themselues into all filthines. Doubtlesse it is an odious and vile spectacle, to see *tables* bestrawed with *vomitings*: and therefore *Isaiah* vnder this figure shewes, that the whole liues of these people were very noysome and vnsauorie. Yea we may safely coniecture that the Prophet in a word meant to say, That things were whollie corrupted and prophaned amongst the Iewes; so that if any one approched but neere to their *tables*, he should find nothing but *drunkennes*, and *filthie vomiting*: that is to say, he that should obserue their cariage, should see no part thereof free from loathsome vices and impieties. And as for the doctrine, which of all other was the most pretious, truly that was so corrupt, that it stanke no lesse then if it had beene defiled with spewings and excrements. Now it is not my purpose to soare aloft into allegories heere, as some doe.

Vers. 9. *Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to vnderstand the things that he heareth? Them that are weaned from the milke, and drawne from the breasts.*

THe Prophet in this place with great astonishment shewes, that the peoples disease is growne incurable, and that God had no more fit medicines left in store to heale them, in regard he had but lost all the labor and cost which he had spent to recouer them. Truely, behold heere the most soueraigne remedie that God can vse, when he seekes to call such as are gone astray out of the right way, neuer ceasing to call vpon them that erre, to that purpose: but when this takes none effect; what hope is left of their recouerie, that refuse to be ordered by those meanes that should do them good? He complaines then that God is driuen to his shifts (as it were) in regard the people were become so senseleese that they would not endure he should cure them: and therefore he compares the Iewes to *little children* lately *weaned*, or to such as begin to prattle, vpon whom a man should lose his labor that should endeuor to teach them any thing.

S. *Peter* for good cause exhorts the faithfull to draw neere, and as newborne babes to suck in the sincere milke of the word, that they might grow thereby: 1. Pet. 2. 2. for a man will neuer shew himselfe teachable vnlesse he puts off that rebellion which all of vs haue brought with vs from our mothers wombs. But the Prophet here condemnes another kind of Childhood, to wit, when men be so besotted in their vices that they meditate no more in the heauenlie doctrine then if they were become starke idiots. And therefore some fondlie ioine this verse and that place of S. *Peter* together: for they make the Prophet speake as if the Lord should be brought in seeking such disciples as were emptied of all pride; and were become like children lately *weaned*. But he rather complaines that his doctrine was published in vaine, being propounded as a matter of wonderment to fooles and vnwise, who yet are not children in malice, but in vnderstanding, as S. *Paul* saith 1. Cor. 14. 20. It will also appeere by that which followes in the text, that howsoeuer they could not comprehend his doctrine, yet that God was not to be accused of ouergreat seueritie if he reiected them, and would no longer lose time in speaking as to deafe eares.

Vers. 10. *For precept* must *be vpon precept, precept vpon precept, line vnto line, line vnto line, there a little,* and *there a little.*

THis verse sufficientlie manifests that the Lord complaines as one that had lost all his labour, in teaching a people obstinate and vnteachable. For the case was all one as if a man should take vpon him to instruct *little children*, to whom he must repeate the letters ouer and ouer, who yet immediatlie forget what was taught them. For although the Master should spend a whole day in teaching them a letter, yet the next day he must begin his labour afresh, and so the next to that likewise, and yet he shall gaine nothing by it, albeit he bestowes all the paines and skil he hath. Those who change the Prophets words here, that they might not offend the eares of the readers, do by an affected phrase of speech corrupt the sense, and cause his words to lose that grace which otherwise is in them: for *in repeating the same words*, hee meant to signifie a variable and continuall repetition, which we know is very troublesome. For it is a similitude drawne (as we haue said) from little children, whose memories the Master dares not charge with any great matter, because they are vncapable of it, but is faine

Simile.

faine to diſtill the firſt principles into them as it were drop by drop. And for that cauſe he repeates the ſame thing once, twice, yea, many times, and is ſtill refreſhing their memories with their old leſſon. In a word, ſuch ſchollers muſt be alwaies fed with milke, vntill they bee growne to more maturitie and ripenes of iudgement.

The Prophet in like manner ſomewhat after a quipping manner of ſpeech, vſeth theſe words; *heere a little, and there a little.* Thoſe interpret it ill, as I thinke, who reade the word *a little, line:* as if the Prophet had had reſpect to a building that goes vp ſlowlie, and is raiſed an end by lines, now a little, and then a little. For this had been an improper ſimilitude, and too farre fetched, ſeeing he ſpeakes heere of childrens firſt rudiments. I confeſſe indeed that the ſame Hebrew word is vſed in the 18. Chapter, where I haue trãſlated, From all parts, or, Line after line, and ſo in manie other places: but the circumſtance of this text requires another ſenſe, as alſo in Pſal. 19. 4. Vnleſſe the word line, or meaſuring inſtrument ſhould agree better there: yet I denie not but vnder a figure it may well be taken for inſtruction, or rule. For in as much as the rule or plummet which they vſe in buildings is called by the ſame name, as we ſhall afterward ſee in this Chapter, it is no maruell if it be referred to other rules.

Verſ. 11. *For with a ſtammering tongue, and with a ſtrãge language ſhall he ſpeake vnto this people.*

WHereas ſome ſupply, that it is as if one ſpake, it is ſuperfluous. I referre this to *God* then, who, as the Prophet ſaith, *ſpake in a ſtrange language* to this barbarous people. This reprehenſion ought therefore to haue pierced them to the heart, in regard that by their owne default they made him to *ſtut* and *ſtammer*, who yet giues ſpeech vnto all. He threatens them not, but rather accuſeth them of blockiſhnes, in that they made the heauenlie doctrine to become nothing elſe but a confuſed ſound vnto them, ſo as they receiued no benefit by it, becauſe they wittinglie ſtopped their eares againſt it. The Prophet therefore compares their follie to a thing againſt nature, in that they would not heare the voice of the Lord.

Verſ. 12. *Vnto whom he ſaid, This is the reſt: giue reſt to him that is wearie: and this is the refreſhing, but they would not heare.*

SOme expoũd this ſentence in many words thus, If anie ſay vnto them, This is the reſt, they will not heare: but this is of no force, neither doth it make that coherẽce which it ſhould. The Prophet rather ſhewes why God became a barbarian (as it were) to the Iewes: to wit, becauſe they wanted eares to heare him; ſo that in effect he ſpake as vnto them that were deafe, for they would not learne what this reſt meant. But this deafnes proceeded from rebellion; for they preſumptuouſlie reiected all wholeſome doctrine with a ſeuled malice. It was a frowardneſſe doubly inexcuſable then, to reiect *that reſt* which was offred them, which all men alſo naturally deſire. They were too farre gone alreadie in impietie to ſtop their eares when God ſpake: but their ingratitude was much more inſupportable to deſpiſe ſo deſireable a benefit with ſuch an high hand. The Prophet ſhewes them therefore what fruite they might haue reaped from the obedience of faith, of which they depriued themſelues by their owne obſtinacie. He blames their blindnes and ignorance then, becauſe all this proceeded from their rebellion: in that they maliciouſly ſhut their eies againſt the cleere light, which ſhined vnto them from heauen, and loued rather to grope in darknes then to walke in the light. 1 2

Hence we gather, that the vnbeleeuers doe willingly plunge themſelues into a miſerable vnquietnes of mind as ſoone as God tenders his word vnto them: for he allures all men to partake in this bleſſed *reſt*. He ſhewes vs alſo the marke, vnto which if we leuell the whole courſe of our liues, true felicitie attends vs; ſo as hauing once heard the heauenlie doctrine, no man can run aſtray, vnleſſe he will doe it wittingly. Oh how amiable then ought this good word of God to be in our eyes, ſeeing it brings vs ſo ineſtimable a benefit with it, when with reſt and peace of conſcience we may poſſeſſe ſo perfect a bleſſednes! All will in words affirme boldly, that nothing is better then to dwell in a *place of reſt*: and yet where is he that makes account of it when it is offred him? Nay, all in a maner ſhun it, as if men had agreed with a common conſent to liue in miſerable perplexitie, and continuall trembling of heart. In the meane while, none is to murmure and ſay, that he ſinnes ignorantlie: for what is more cleere and manifeſt then the doctrine of God? all excuſes of men therefore are but in vaine. In a word, what is more abſurd, then to lay the fault vpon God, as if he taught men either obſcurely, or confuſedly? Now as God here teſtifies that hee ſhewes vnto men by his word the way how to come to an aſſured *reſt*: ſo on the other ſide hee certifies the vnbeleeuers, that the continuall broiles which are within them, are the iuſt recompences of their wickedneſſe. What an ineſtimable benefit Gods word brings, if our owne infidelitie depriued vs not of it. All men naturallie deſire reſt, yet few take the right way to enioy it. 1 2

Where it followes, *Giue reſt to him that is wearie*, ſome expound it, as if God required works of charitie, if ſo be we will find fauour in his ſight: and theſe workes are here comprehended vnder a part for the whole. But as I thinke the Prophet meant another thing: he rather ſhewes what reſt it is which God affords vs for the releeuing of our infirmitie: and certainly we are conuinced of ouer great ingratitude, if neceſſitie, which of it ſelfe is a ſharpe ſpurre, cannot for all that quicken vs forward to ſeeke this remedy. This ſentence of the Prophet tends almoſt to the ſame end that the words of Chriſt do, Math. 11. 28. Come vnto me all ye that trauell and are heauie laden, and I will eaſe you. So that *Iſaiah* ſets the choice of two things heere before the Iewes, We are conuinced of great ingratitude, if our owne neceſſities can not quicken vs vp to ſeeke the remedies which God freely offers vs.

to

1 to wit, whether they had rather be comforted and refreshed; or to fall vnder the burthen, and so be ouerwhelmed. Wherein hee confirmes that which I touched erewhile; to wit, that God exhorts not those that haue neede of rest, to come vnto him in vaine; as he saith, Chap. 45.19. I haue not said in vaine to the house of Iacob, Seeke yee me. Are wee taught by this word then? Surely if the fault be not in our selues, we may safely rest in the doctrine which he sets before vs. For it is not his custome to feede vs with vaine hopes, though men are often wont by fond conceits, to throw themselues into many griefes and vexations.

2 Moreouer, in that he shewes that this rest is prepared for those that are *wearie* and groane vnder the burthen: we are taught, therein at the least, to haue our recourse vnto the word of God, to the end wee may obtaine *rest*. By which wee may be assured, and that by good experience, that it is the propertie of this word, to quiet our boiling passions, and to appease our distracted and amased consciences. Whosoeuer hee be then that wanders in seeking rest out of the bounds of this word, shall alwaies be vexed, and shall surely tremble in continuall feares: and good reason, for they will bee wise and happie without God. This, as we see, befals the Papists, who hauing scorned this peace, are therefore tossed to and fro all their life time with horrible anxietie. For Satan turnes and windes them, that they are euer vexed with terrible astonishments, and yet can neuer find anie place of rest.

It is the propertie of Gods word to bring assured rest to our soules. See Ier. 6.16.

Verse 13. *Therefore shall the word of the Lord be vnto them precept vpon precept, precept vpon precept, line vpon line, line vnto line, there a little, & there a little, that they may goe and fall backward, and bee broken, and bee snared, and bee taken.*

ALbeit the Prophet repeates the same speech with the former, yet ỹ sense doth a little alter: for now he denounceth the punishment of this so wilful a deafenesse whereof he spake. The iudgement is, that God shall so *dazle their wits*, that they shal not only reap no fruite at all of the doctrine of saluation, but an emptie and vnprofitable sound. In a word, from the former verses he concludes, that seeing the word of God had in no sort profited the Iewes; that their vnthankfulnes should now be punished. Not that Gods word should bee cleane taken from them; but in wanting vnderstanding and *a right iudgement*, they should groape for the way at noone day, and should not finde it. And thus God blindes the eies, and hardens the hearts of the reprobates more and more, when they are waxen incorrigible.

Note that God may continue his word in a nation, & in the meane while deprive them of the benefit thereof.

Saint *Paul* alleadgeth this place when hee reprehends the foolish conceit of the Corinthians, who were so possessed with pride, that they admired none but such as spake vnto them in strange languages, 1. Cor. 14.21. It being an vsuall thing with the common people, to wonder at strange & vnwonted things. But this place of *Paul* is ill vnderstood, by reason they haue not well pondered the Prophets words; which the Apostle very fitly applies to his purpose. For he declares how the Corinthians were caried away with a foolish and vnbridled ambition, vnreasonably affecting things altogether vnprofitable; and thus were become children, not in malice, but in iudgement and *vnderstanding*. By meanes whereof, they pulled the curse of God wittingly vpon themselues; wherewith the Prophet had threatned the Iewes in this place. And so it came to passe, that the word of God was vnto them *precept vpon precept*, receiuing no more fruit by it, then if one had told them a long tale in a language they vnderstood not. Men are growne exceeding fond therefore, when they begin to throw themselues by a vaine affection into wilfull blindnesse and benummednesse of spirit; with which plague the Lord here threatens the obstinate & rebellious. Saint *Paul* then expounds and cleeres this sentence of the Prophet verie well; shewing, that such as abuse the doctrine of saluation, are vnworthy to profit any thing at all by it.

We had almost the like place to this in the eight Chapter, where our Prophet compared his doctrine to letters sealed vp: and anon he will liken it to a closed booke. This falles out when the Lord depriues men of the light of his spirit, and of sound iudgement for their vnthankfulnesse sake; that seeing, they might not see; and hearing, they might not heare at all: whereby hee punisheth them most iustly. We ought to obserue this well, for wee often take our selues to be great proficients, and to be exceeding happie that we haue the word of God amongst vs: but what profit get we by it, vnlesse our vnderstandings be fitted to conceiue it, and our hearts framed to be directed by it? For wanting this, wee are more accursed, then if we had not the word at all. And therefore wee stand in neede of a twofold grace: First, that God would inlighten vs by his word: secondly, that hee would open our eyes, and dispose our affections to imbrace the obedience of it. Otherwise, the light of the Gospell shall stand vs in no more stead, then the light of the Sun doth to the eyes of him that is starke blind.

Chap. 8.16. *Chap.* 29.9. 10.

We are in worse case in inioying the word, then if we were vtterly bereaued of it, vnlesse we yeeld obedience therunto.

By this chastisement then we are admonished, not to abuse the word of God by our prophanenesse; but to vse it to that end for which he hath ordained it.

Let vs beware how wee abuse Gods word.

In the end of the verse he shewes, what ruine is like to fall vpon those that profit not by this cleere light of the word, euen to bee left without a guide, and to *stumble* and *fall*; because they are departed out of the right way. But he telles them their falles shall not be easie, for they shall be *broken*.

By the word *snared*, hee vseth an other similitude; to wit, that *snares* are prepared for vnbeleeuers, wherein they shall be hampered and led to destruction. Wee haue had the like speech in the eight Chapter, and almost

Chap. 8.16,

moſt expreſſed in the very ſame words: for there the Prophet handles the ſame doctrine, as touching the blinding of the people, who by the hardneſſe of their hearts, had prouoked God to anger. Now his purpoſe is here to ſhew, that ſuch who take the bridle in their teeth, and will needes turne their backs and be gone from the direction of the word, are verie neere to a ruinous downefall. For they ſhall either meete with *ſtumbling blockes*, againſt which they ſhall *daſh themſelues in peeces*, or with nets, in which they ſhall be *ſnared and taken*. In a word, they ſhall no way eſcape; for a miſchiefe watcheth for them at euerie turning, who will not walke in the paths which God ſhewes them; for either they ſhall *fall* and bee *broken* before all men; or themſelues by priuie wiles, ſhall intrap their owne feete in the *ſnare*.

Verſ. 14. *Wherefore heare the word of the Lord yee ſcornefull men, that rule this people which is at Ieruſalem.*

HEe (further) amplifies that ſharpe reprehenſion which he vſed before, and withall, addes a conſolation to reuiue the hearts of the faithfull. For as on the one ſide hee threatens the wicked with deſtruction; ſo yet on the other ſide he leaues matter of conſolation for the faithfull, aſſuring thē that their ſaluation is deere and pretious to God. Now by the word *mockers*, hee meanes thoſe that were wittie and malicious, who by their wilie deuices, thought to eſcape the iudgements of God: for the verbe *Luts*, from whence this word *mockers* is deriued, ſignifies to cauill and to mocke. Now he ſpeakes not here to common perſons; but to the Princes and Magiſtrates, who thought themſelues wiſer and more prudent then thoſe that were vnder their gouernment. But they imployed this dexteritie of wit, in deuiſing how they might play mocke holy day with God. It is not for nought thē that the Prophet doth tauntingly accuſe them, in calling them *ſcorners*. As if hee ſhould ſay, You thinke you haue ſuch deepe deuices in your heads, that you can circumuent the Lord; but he will not take it at your hands.

Surely the greateſt conflicts which the Prophets had, were againſt the *rulers* of the people: for howſoeuer all eſtates were horribly corrupted, yet they being ſwollen with a falſe conceit of their owne wiſdome, were the moſt obſtinate and vntractable of all others. This is to be ſeene at all times almoſt: for albeit the common people be caried away with a violent brutiſhneſſe, yet doe they not ouerflow into ſuch impietie as the great ones, Courtiers, & ſuch other ſubtile heads do, who thinke to goe beyond all men in fineneſſe of wit. The Miniſters of Gods word then had need to arme themſelues (with the ſword of the Spirit) principally againſt ſuch ſubtile enemies: for there are none ſō dāgerous, that not onely hurt themſelues, but leade others alſo by their example, to become *ſcoffers* and deſpiſers. And for the moſt part, they dazle the eyes of the meaner ſort, by means of their authoritie and great titles.

Is it not a fearefull and prodigious thing, thinke you, whē the gouernors of the church are not onely blind, but alſo labour to put out the eyes of others, and imbolden them to deſpiſe God, to contemne his holy word, and to rent it in peeces with their ieſts? yea, when they imploy the vttermoſt of their wits and skill to ouerthrow true religion. But we ought to bend our forces againſt ſuch kinde of men, and that according to the Prophets example in this place, and not to be outfaced in this fight, whatſoeuer they can ſay or doe vnto vs. And himſelfe ſhewes how ſuch ſcorners ſhould be vſed: that is, not much to trouble our heads in deuiſing how to inſtruct them, (for teaching wil doe them little good) but wee ought to *rebuke them ſharply*, and to terrifie them with Gods iudgements. The greatneſſe of the offence is augmented in regard ſuch had place in Gods *ſanctuarie*, and thereby infected his choſen people with their vile behauiour.

Verſ. 15. *But yee haue ſaid; We haue made a couenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement: though a ſcourge runne ouer, and paſſe thorow, it ſhall not come at vs: for we haue made falſhood our refuge, and vnder vanity are we hid.*

HEre the Prophet addes the reaſon wherefore he called them mockers; namely, becauſe they had caſt off all feare of God. And hee ſhewes how they made themſelues beleeue, that (of all men) they ſhould neuer be puniſhed for their tranſgreſſions, ſo as they grew the more braſen faced. And as if this had been a ſufficient warrant for them, they gaue themſelues the more freely to doe euill, and without any feare, purſued whatſoeuer their luſts led them vnto. And this is it that he meanes by their *couenant with hell and with death*: for they audaciouſly ſcorned all the threatnings and plagues of God; becauſe they tooke themſelues to be out of his gunſhot.

By the word *Kozeb*, he ſignifies that which he ſaid touching the word *Berith*, which ſignifies a couenant: for he repeates one thing twice. This word *Kozeb*, which ſignifies viſion, is as much as wee vſe to ſay, To vnderſtand: and it ſeemes there is a ſecret oppoſition in this place betweene the *viſions* of the Prophets, and thoſe cunning deuices which theſe wilie ellowes delighted in. But yet in the meane while it is certaine, that theſe fine heads neuer came ſo far as to brag thus, and to vtter ſuch words indeed; for that had been too ridiculous, and little children might haue laughed at them. Moreouer, they alwaies ſtudied doubtleſſe how to get themſelues all the credit they could among the people, albeit they deſpiſed God, & reiected al holeſome admonitiōs; they would not be ſo groſſe then to confeſſe that they *made falſhood their refuge*.

But

But the Prophet obserued their affections and outward practise, and not their faire shewes: and considered what was in their hearts by their deeds, & not by their words. Now because men are wont to please themselues in their vices, and with brasen faces, in despising Gods threatnings, it proues by their practise that they haue made a *couenant* with death, which they nothing feare though God terrifie them with it: therefore the Prophet in generall reproues this carnall confidence, which makes men forget the remembrance of God and his iudgements, whereby they wittinglie deceiue themselues as if they were able to escape his hands.

Lucianists. But especiallie he closeth with these Lucianists and mock-Gods, who thinke they are in nothing so wise as in deriding of God: and the more they would couer their villanie, the louder ỹ Prophet cries out with open mouth against them; as if (out of some darke corner) he should draw all their deepe and desperat thoughts into the light. After this sort I pray you behold the wit, the cunning, and subtletie of these wise men of the world, who being inuironed with miseries and ruine on euery side, do yet thinke themselues hidden in safetie. Are they not well worthie therefore to seeke their saluation in lies, seeing they despise the saluation of God which themselues scorne and deride? Indeed they couer their practises with cunning deceits, and vnder goodly pretexts, and in the meane while take them for nothing lesse then lies: but (whatsoeuer they imagin) the Prophet hits the naile on the head (as we say) and calles them by their names.

A double simile. As touching this clause of a *scourge running ouer*, the Prophet vnder those words comprehends two similitudes. For first he compares 1 the afflictions and calamities wherewith God chastiseth the wickednesses of the world to a 2 *scourge*: and then resembles the same to a *deluge*, in regard of the violence and vehemencie therof. Now these scoffers thought themselues cock-sure in regard of being hurt by any such tempests, how sharp or furious soeuer they were, and made full account to escape; albeit they *ouerranne* the whole land: prouided ỹ they were fortified with *falshood* and with *vanitie* before hand. They could not but see what iudgements and calamities men are subiect vnto: but because they beheld not Gods hand in them, nor considered his prouidence, but imputed whatsoeuer fell out to blind fortune, therefore they sought remedies and leaning-stocks whereby they might secure themselues, and keepe back these scourges farre off from them.

Vers. 16. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lay in Zion a stone, a tried stone, a pretious corner stone, a sure foundation. He that beleeueth shall not make hast.*

NOw *Isaiah* comforts the faithfull, and threatens the wicked with their iust and deserued perdition. First, he sets downe the consolation which concerned the faithfull, who were then in stead of a May-game to these Gallants. For we see how the wicked are not ashamed at this day to deride our simplicitie, holding vs no better then idiots, that in the middest of so many troubles and bitter persecutions wee still hope notwithstanding, that God will turne all to the best for vs. The Prophet soares vp and relieues the hearts of ỹ good with this consolation then against the insolencie of the reprobate, to the end they might goe on cheerefullie and boldlie, contemning all their flouts & mocks, and might also be assured that their hope should not be in vaine. The word demonstratiue *Behold*, is put heere for the greater assurance of the matter; as if he should say, Albeit the vnbeleeuers make no reckning of my words, nor giue any credit vnto them, yet will I be as good as my promise for all that. The pronoune *I*, is also of great weight, for the further confirmation of the prophesie. Now for the words, first *Bochan* is put by way 1 of an epithite with the word *stone*, and signifies, Of proofe; and may be taken as well in the actiue signification, as in the passiue, or for a stone vpon which the whole building is to be framed and ordered as to his rule: or for a tried stone. But the first exposition seemes to agree best, and the proprietie of the Hebrew tongue requires that we interpret it rather in the actiue signification. He calles it *a tried stone* then, in regard of his effect, because the whole building was to be squared and fitted vpon this stone, otherwise of necessitie the whole house must sinke.

The word *corner* which he addes to it, signifies, 2 that it beares vp all the weight of the building; and by this title (which is also giuen him in Psal. 118. 22.) his power and vertue is recommended vnto vs. Lastly, he calles 3 it a *foundation*, or (if we may so speake) a foundation fundamentall: thus proceeding by little and little, and as it were by degrees to the cõmendation of this stone. For he shewes that it is not a common stone, or such a one as is taken out of many which serue in the building: but that it is a rare and excellent one; euen such an one as beares vp all the weight thereof. It is a *stone* then; yet so as it filles the *whole corner*: and is so the corner stone, that the *whole building is laid vpon it*. For as no man can lay any other foundation, 1 Cor. 3. 11. so must all the Church & her members rest and be built vpon it only.

Some translate the second part of the verse as if it were an exhortation, Let not him that beleeues make hast: but I rather take it in the future tence, in regard it agrees best both with the scope of the text, as also because it is approued of by the authoritie of S. *Paul*. I denie not but the Apostles followed the Greeke translation, and in vsing their libertie, were content to giue the sense of the place without looking curiouslie to the words: but they haue in nothing altered the sense, but haue rather truely and naturallie deliuered the same: respecting the drift to which it was rightlie applied. As often then as they alleadge a text out of the old testament, they

diligentlie

diligentlie retaine both the end and vſe of it. The Apoſtle alleadging this propheſie tranſlated it according to the Greeke; Who ſoeuer beleeueth, ſhall not be confounded, Rom.9.33. which agrees with the Prophet: for queſtionles his meaning was to ſay, That he which *beleeues*, ought to be quiet and ſtill; ſo as to deſire nothing beſides; neither wauering in vncertentie, nor yet *haſting* to ſeeke out new remedies, but ſhall fullie content himſelfe in his *faith* only. The tranſlation is proper then as you ſee, in regard the word *to haſt* notes out feruencie, or trembling. In a word, the Prophet meant to cõmend *faith* by this inestimable fruite; becauſe in it we find aſſured reſt and quiet. Whence it followes, that we ſhall alwaies be in vnquietnes and vexation of mind, vntill ſuch time as we haue attained it: for no other hauen remaines for vs to harbor in in ſafetie, but ſ truth of God, vpon which, if our faith be firmely ſetled, we ſhall finde it the only meanes to ſet vs in reſt and tranquillitie of mind. The ſame Apoſtle in another place deſcribes vnto vs the fruite of this faith, where he ſaith, That being iuſtified thereby, wee haue peace with GOD, Rom.5.1.

A commendation of faith, in regard of her effect.

No peace without that faith which is grounded vpon the truth of God.

Now the Apoſtles and Euangeliſts ſhew that this *ſtone* is Chriſt himſelfe: for when he was ſent into the world the Church was then truely built and ſetled. For firſt, all the promiſes had their ſtedfaſtnes in him: ſecondly, mens ſaluation reſteth vpon him alone. Take away Ieſus Chriſt then, and the Church by and by falles and goes to ruine. It is euident by the very text it ſelfe therefore that this is to be referred vnto Chriſt, without whom we haue no aſſiſtance of ſaluation, but ſhall be in danger of vtter ruine euer and anon. Moreouer, we haue the authoritie of the Euangeliſts and Apoſtles; yea, the Holy Ghoſt teacheth the ſame plainely by their mouth and miniſtrie.

Chriſt is this corner ſtone. *Mat.*21.24. *Act.*4.11. *Rom.*9.33. *1.Pet.*2.6.

But if we ſhall ſcan things a little better, it will be eaſie to ſee how theſe things are applied vnto Ieſus Chriſt. Firſt it will be granted that *Iſaiah* doth not for nought bring in the *Lord himſelfe* pronouncing this, to whom only it belongs to lay the foundation of his Church, as hath been ſhewed before, and ſhal be touched againe hereafter: and beſides, this ſentence is oft met with in the Pſalmes.

Reaſons to proone that this ſtone muſt bee Chriſt.

For though all men ſhould lay their hands to this worke, yet were they not able to lay the leaſt ſtone aright: it is God alone then that founds and builds his Church, howſoeuer for this purpoſe it pleaſeth him to vſe the miniſtrie and labors of men. Of whom is it now, I pray you, that we hold Ieſus Chriſt, but of the Father? It was the heauenly Father then who did and performed all theſe things, and appointed his only begotten ſonne to be the foundation of our ſaluation.

It is God himſelfe that hath builded his Church vpon this corner ſtone.

Obiect. But was not this ſtone laid before? Was not the Church alwaies built vpon this foundation? I confeſſe it was ſo, but only in hope: for Chriſt was not yet manifeſted in the fleſhe neither had he as yet accompliſhed the office of our Redeemer. The Prophet ſpeakes therefore as of a thing to come, to the end the faithfull might be well aſſured that ſ Church which they then ſaw, not aſſailed only, but wofullie rent and ſhaken, and falling as it were to the ground, ſhould be eſtabliſhed by a new prop when it ſhall reſt vpon that *ſtone* which God would put vnder it with his owne hand.

Anſ.

He ſaith, it ſhall be laid *in Zion*, in regard Chriſt was to come out thence. Which alſo ſerues much for the cõfirmation of our faith; when wee ſee that he proceeded from that place which was ſo long before appointed vnto him. But *Mount Zion* now is euery where, becauſe the bounds of the Church are ſtretched to the ends of the world. Now Chriſt is the true *tried ſtone*: for all the building muſt be ſquared and proportioned vpon him, ſo as we can not be the building of God, vnleſſe we be fitted vnto him. For which cauſe the Apoſtle commands vs to grow vp in him which is the head, in whom all the bodie ought to be knit and ioined together, Epheſ. 4.15. for our faith muſt be whollie proportioned to Chriſt, to the end he may be the rule of it. He is alſo the *corner ſtone*, vpon which not only a part of the houſe reſts, but the whole weight and ſubſtance of it: for none other foundation can any man lay, ſaith S. *Paul*, but that which is laid, to wit, Ieſus Chriſt, 1.Cor.3.11. Now yee ſee wherefore *Iſaiah* leades vs to this *foundation* when hee brings in the *Lord* promiſing the reſtauration of his Church: for there was ſuch a wofull deſolation, that it reſembled a waſt wilderne, which could no way be brought into any good faſhion but by Chriſt alone.

The Churches ruins can no way be repaired but by Chriſt alone.

In that he is called *a ſtone to ſtumble at*: this is by accident: for the vnthankfull who reiect him by their owne malice, finde him to be that which he would not be vnto them. But of this we haue ſpoken in the eight Chapter.

Verſ. 17. *Iudgement will I alſo lay to the rule, and righteouſnes to the ballance, and the haile ſhall ſweepe away the vaine confidence, and the waters ſhall ouerflow the ſecret place.*

IN regard the waſt of the Church was ſuch, as the faithfull durſt ſcarce hope for a better eſtate, he ſhewes that God hath the meanes readie in his hand to reforme the Church anew. And as before he vſed a ſimilitude taken from building, ſo now alſo by another he teacheth that they needed not to feare as if God were not able in the end to finiſh the good worke of his building begun. In the meane while he doth by the way taxe the pride and inſolencie of ſuch as would be taken to be pillars of the Church; which yet as much as in them lay tooke the next way to ouerturne it. The light of faith was almoſt put out: Gods ſeruice was corrupted: ſo that there was a fearefull deformitie to be ſeene in ſ eſtate of this people, albeit they boaſted themſelues to be the royall Prieſthood. Which we ſee now fulfilled in the Papacie. For they ſtick not to beleh our glorious titles without any ſhame at all, albeit the lamentable con-

Another Simile.

When God begins to build his Church, he will alſo finiſh the ſame.

fusion which is to be seene amongst them, doth plainely discouer to all the world that there is no forme of a sound Church amongst them. Therefore it is that the Prophet stands to shew at what end the reformation of a true Church ought to begin.

No forme of a sound Church amongst the Papists.

Now it is very likely that the words *rule* and *measure* are all one in sense, as may be collected more probablie from the 21. Chapter of the 2. booke of the Kings, vers. 13. where the Lord saith, I will spread the *line* or rule of Samaria vpon Ierusalem, and the *measure* of the house of *Ahab*. Albeit I denie not but he alludes to the ballance wherein things are weighed: but let vs remember that both similitudes are taken from buildings, wherein the master carpenters & masons frame all things by *rule*, that so a iust proportion may be kept in euery part. And thus it is said, That the Lord hath appointed an equall *iudgement* to restore his Church by, wherein, without that all things are iumbled confusedlie together, as the ruinous heapes of an house, to wit, when the wicked are exalted, and the faithfull deiected and afflicted. The same he affirmes of *Iustice*, to wit, that it shall be measured & poized with the ballance, and that all things shall be equalled according to the *rule*. For by *Iustice* and *Iudgement* he meanes a iust and lawfull gouernment of the Church, which is opposed to those disguised shewes which the titularie Bishops so much brag of. *Isaiah* tels vs then that this foundation is not only laid to the end the Church might be new begun, but also perfectlie restored and whollie setled, as they say.

How Iustice and Iudgement are taken in this place.

The other part of the similitude notes out a most iust equalitie. Nothing can be wanting to the building then if Christ be laid for the foundation: but if he be not laid, all will be full of vanitie and confusion. Now in regard that Iustice and Iudgement could not be receiued whilest these false confidences tooke place, therefore the Prophet shewes that they shall be *sweps away*, because the wrath of God shall bring downe all pride, and the ouerflowing of waters shall enter into all these secret corners vpon which they so much relied. He threatens then that the hypocrites shal perish with their vaine brags, and that the Lord in the meane while will not faile to prouide for the safetie of his Church.

Nothing wants to the building, if Christ be laid for the foundation.

But he speakes not of these scourges as if the wicked should become any whit the better by them, for lightlie they waxe rather worse and worse. This should be the purgation then, to wit, God would discouer the vaine & false confidéce wherof they boasted, after he had drawne thé out of their dennes. For the wicked thinke they are so couered vnder the cloake of falshood and vanitie, that no blowes can any way touch them: and that is the cause why they flatter themselues till their iniquitie be found worthie to be hated. But the *waters* will easily come, that is to say, the wrath of the Lord, which runnes and makes a noyse like a streame of waters that will easily breake into the bottome of their lowest caues.

Vers. 15.

Vers. 18. *And your couenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand: when a scourge shall runne ouer and passe thorow, then shall ye be trod downe by it.*

BEfore he spake against the hypocrits, who obstinately scorned at God and all his threatnings; and also ouerthrew their goodly discourses, because they imagined that death and they were agreed: that is to say, they promised vnto themselues neuer to be touched with any of Gods scourges for their vngodlines: as if with iesting and scoffing out the matter they could haue escaped from Gods hand. Now he giues them to vnderstand, that as it is certaine they must giue accounts of this vnto God, so they shal be ouertaken with feare & terror in despite of their teeth. For when men grow thus secure and sottish, it proceeds from a kind of giddines or deepe sleep which they are fallen into, so as they can not feele ỹ greatnes of their sinnes, but the Lord will rouze them out of their drouzines well enough, be they rocked neuer so fast asleepe in it, and wil make their forged couenants to vanish away in the aire. In a word, his meaning is to say, That this peace in which the wicked enioy whilest they thus sleepe in their sinnes shall not last euer, for they shall be forced, will they nill they, to acknowledge God to be their Iudge: and although they intended to giue themselues to pleasure, yet should they be surprized at vnawares, and tossed with troubles and griefes of minde in the middest of their rest. For he will apprehend them as malefactors, who hauing broken prison, scorne their Iudges, raile vpon them; and rise vp in all insolencie against them: but espying the Sergeants at their heeles that pursue them, their courage is by and by cooled, and all their mirth is turned into mourning, and then is their state much worse then if they had neuer broken prison at all. Thus the wicked enioy their pleasure which they take in the forgetfulnes of their sinnes committed only for a moment, but the Lord takes them by the neck, and so affrights their consciences, that they can by no meanes obtaine any quiet.

Vers. 19. *When it passeth ouer, it shall take you away: for it shall passe thorow euery morning in the day, and in the night, and there shall be only feare to make you vnderstand the hearing.*

HE expresseth more in this verse then in the former, for he shewes that the reprobates are neere their destruction, notwithstanding they promise to themselues an eternall happines. The wicked can not but feele the afflictions wherewith they are pressed, but in the meane while they flatter and befor themselues, and thus they thinke to put their misfortunes farre from them. For heare what (deuilish) prouerbs they breathe out, Torment vs not before the time: Let vs be merry whilest

Diuelish prouerbs vsed by the wicked.

whileſt we may; let vs take our pleaſure, and neuer wax melancholicke without cauſe, or for nothing. But the Prophet tels them here, that there hangs an horrible calamitie ouer their heads which they ſee not.

And he addes *euery morning*: that is to ſay, ſpeedily and continually, in regard the wicked neuer feare the Lord till his hand be vpon them. For ſometimes they feare where no feare is; it being only a blind feare, in regard they know not whence it comes. Moreouer, if God threaten, they grow ſecure; becauſe they take him not to bee their Iudge. And thus they had rather feele his hand, then ſeriouſlie to bethinke them what a one hee is.

In that he repeates the *morning* twice, and by and by after, *day and night*; his meaning is, that the plague ſhal not ceaſe, but ſhall ouerflow euerie day. And that to this end, leſt they ſhould imagin it to be but a light calamitie, or ſhould feede themſelues with hope of ſome releaſe. For albeit the wrath of God laſts but for a moment towards the faithfull, yet it indures for euer vpon the wicked; for hee neuer ceaſeth to purſue them to the vtmoſt.

The expoſitours agree not about the expoſition of the latter part of the verſe, which I haue tranſlated, *Feare onely* ſhall cauſe to heare: Saint *Ierom* tranſlates, Feare giues vnderſtanding to the hearing: but the interpretation following comes neerer the Prophets meaning, Onely armour or feare will make them vnderſtand: that is to ſay; All thoſe that ſhall heare this newes, will become teachable, and will harken to the Lord, becauſe of the rumour which they haue heard. And yet I expound it leſſe conſtrainedly thus, (not ſtanding to refute the expoſitions of others) *The time will come, when feare alone will open your eares to receiue admonition.* As if he ſhould ſay; Hitherunto (I confeſſe) I haue gained little by the warnings I haue giuen you, but the Lord himſelfe will deuiſe a meanes to teach you; to wit, by the chaſtiſements and calamities wherewith hee will *feare you*, that ſo you may know with whom you haue to doe. As for example; a ſorrowfull and carefull father that can no way tame a leaud ſonne, will thus ſay vnto him; Seeing thou deſpiſeſt my counſell, the hangman (I feare) muſt one day be thy ſchoolemaſter. And thus deales *Iſaiah* with the rebels of his time, which ſcorned all his ſermons. The Prophets are no body with you now, ſaith he, but a day will come, that you ſhall know to your coſt, that they haue not ſpoken the trueth to you in vaine. Yet all this ſhall not ſerue the turne, becauſe there ſhall be no place left for repentance in ſo late an acknowledgement: for the Lord muſt bee ſought whileſt he is to be found. Did *Pharoah* become the better for his chaſtiſements? Exod. 8. 15. What got *Eſau* by his teares, when hee ſaw himſelfe deprined of his birthright? Gen. 27. 38. For firſt he was deſtitute of true repentance: ſecondly, there followed none amendment of life: Heb. 12.

By the word *feare*, he ſhewes how fearefull a thing it is to fall into the hands of the liuing God: Heb. 10. 31. and that his word is neuer deſpiſed, but he reuengeth the contempt thereof. Hee takes the word *Shemuah* here, for that which is heard; to wit, for the doctrine.

Simile.

A day will come, when the wicked ſhall know that Gods Miniſters haue not ſpoken to them in vaine. *Chap.* 55. 6. *Heb.* 12. 17.

Verſ. 20. *For the bed is ſtrait that it cannot ſuffice; and the couering narrow, that one cannot wrap himſelfe.*

BY this ſimilitude hee adornes the former ſentence. For he compares the reprobates that are preſſed with Gods hand, to thoſe that are laid *in a ſhort and narrow bed*, where they can neither ſtretch nor ſtir any member without much annoiance: ſo that in the place of reſt, they feele nought elſe but diſquietneſſe and griefe. As if he ſhould ſay; You ſhall be ſo hampered, that being compaſſed about with extreme pangs, your *bed* (which is appointed for you to reſt in) ſhall be in ſtead of a racke, or ſome other kind of torture. And if they ſeek to couer themſelues, euē their *couering* ſhall be too narrow. Thus their miſeries ſhall be doubled vpon them, becauſe in the middeſt thereof, they ſhall be depriued of all neceſſarie comforts. For hee expreſſeth the maner of their miſerie by the ſimilitude of a *ſtrait* or *narrow bed*, to the end they might know, that their condition ſhould bee the moſt wretched of all men, in regard Gods vengeances ſhould follow them thicke and threefold, which way ſo euer they turned them, and yet ſhould find no eaſe or redreſſe at all.

It is a miſerie of miſeries to be diſtreſſed, and in the meane while to want neceſſarie comforts.

Now the Lord is wont to vſe theſe ſimilitudes, to ŷ end he might frame his ſpeech to our capacitie; for otherwiſe we are vnable to conceiue how fearefull his iudgements are. From theſe things we gather then, that the *feares* wherewith the wicked are troubled and inwrapped, are verie great and terrible, when the Lord begins once to purſue them: for they would gladly hide themſelues then in the deepeſt bowels of the earth, that the Lord might not find them: but he drawes them out into the light, and pins them vp in ſo *ſtrait* and *narrow* a roome, that they cannot ſtir a foote.

To what end God is faine to vſe theſe and the like ſimilitudes.

A horrible thing to be purſued by the Lord as an angry Iudge.

Verſ. 21. *For the Lord ſhall ſtand as in mount Perazim: hee ſhall bee wroth as in the valley of Gebeon, that hee may doe his worke, his ſtrange worke, and bring to paſſe his act, his ſtrange act.*

BEcauſe he ſpeakes here of the reprobate and caſtawaies, the Prophet propounds nothing but horrors and extreme vengeances: for as the Lord ſhewes himſelfe good and gracious towards them that are his; ſo hee ſhewes himſelfe terrible and feareful to them whom he reiects. And for proofe hereof hee alleageth ſuch examples, as wherein the Lord manifeſted his power for the defence of his people; namely, when he put the Philiſtims

to flight in the valley of Baal-perazim by the purſuit of *Dauid*, 2.Sam.5.20.25. 1.Chro.14.11. Secondly, when the Amorites and other enemies were diſcomfited in the valley of Gebeon by the Iſralites, vnder the leading of *Ioſhua*, who obteined ſuch fauour of the Lord that the Sunne and Moone ſtood ſtill at his requeſt, that he might haue time the better to giue his enemies the foile, Ioſh.10.10.

By the word of *ſtanding vp*, he notes out Gods power, becauſe we thinke him aſleepe, or ſitting idle in heauen, when he lets the vngodly alone at their eaſe. It is ſaid that he riſeth, or ſtands vp then, whē in all mens ſight he giues teſtimonies of his might, which eſpeciallie appeares when wee behold what great care he hath ouer his Church. And albeit there were ſundrie reſpects which cauſed the Lord in former times to lift vp his hand againſt ſtrangers which were the enemies of his choſen, and now to proclaime open warre againſt the Iewes: yet *Iſaiah* applies theſe examples very fitlie to his purpoſe, in regard the Lord prouides no leſſe for the ſafetie of his Church by chaſing the domeſticall enemies out of it, then if he bent his force and weapons of artillerie againſt aliants. He holds them then for no leſſe then his enemies, howſoeuer they haue the face to profeſſe themſelues his friends and people.

God prouides no leſſe for the ſafetie of his Church by expelling her domeſticall enemies, then if he bent his power againſt ſtrangers.

Some thinke he calles this *a ſtrange worke*, becauſe nothing agrees better to Gods nature then to ſhew mercie in pardoning ſins: for when he is angrie, it is againſt his liking, and therefore puts vpon him another nature as it were contrarie to his owne. Becauſe in Exod.34.6. he proclaimes himſelfe to be gracious, merciſull, patient, good, and ſlow to anger, to which the reſt of the Scriptures do accord in many words, and diuers phraſes, ſetting him forth to be infinit in compaſſion. 1

Others expound *Strange*, in regard he was wont in former time to defend his people; it was therefore a rare and *ſtrange* worke that he ſhould now be ſo ſeuere towards them to roote them out as his enemies. To ſpeake what I thinke, I take this word *Strange* for wonderfull, and a thing vnheard of: for ſo we are wont to eſteeme thoſe things that are ſeldome ſeene among men, who as (we know) are much giuen to wōder at new and ſtrange accidents. It is as much then as if he had ſaid, The Lord will not puniſh you after a common and ordinarie maner, but ſo *ſtrangely*, that whoſoeuer ſees or heares of it ſhall be aſtoniſhed. 2 3

In what ſenſe this word ſtrange is taken in this place.

True it is that all the works of God are ſo many teſtimonies of his power, yea, the leaſt of them is ſufficient to draw vs into an admiration: but in regard they are little reſpected becauſe they are common, we thinke he works nothing, vnleſſe it be by ſome extraordinarie meanes. The Prophet therefore ſets before vs the examples of old time, to the end men might know that howſoeuer this was eſteemed a wonderfull and ſtrange hand of God, yet it was no new thing with him, ſeeing he hath ſhewed the like teſtimonies of his power long ſince, and that no leſſe great and vnwonted. Yet I receiue it for granted and willinglie agree thereunto, that the Prophet oppoſeth the wicked Iſraelites heere, to the Philiſtims and Canaanites: As if he ſhould ſay, The Lord was wont to ſhew miracles when he ſaued his people, but now he will do them for their deſtruction: for ſeeing the Iſraelites haue ſo farre degenerated, they ſhall feele the hand of God in their perdition, which their fathers felt in their preſeruation.

Verſ. 22. *Now therefore be no mockers leſt your bonds increaſe: for I haue heard of the Lord of hoſts a conſumption, euen determined vpon the whole earth.*

HE againe aduertiſeth theſe wicked ones whom before he had called ſcorners, that their ſubtle deuiſes, contempts, flouts and cauils ſhould ſtand them in no ſtead, becauſe all their fetches ſhould vaniſh into ſmoke; and herewithall exhorts ſuch vnto repentance in whom there was yet left any hope of healing. For this cauſe he repeates the ſame thing often, to trie if he could awaken them: for he affirmes, if they will obſtinatlie ſtand out, they ſhal do nothing elſe but more and more weaue the web of their own ruine. Wheras ſome in ſtead of *bonds*, tranſlate Chaſtiſements, it agrees not well with the context, which conteines in it a very apt ſimilitude, borowed from nets. For as the Fox that is taken in the *net*, or ſnare, faſtens the knot the more whileſt he endeuors with ſtrugling to eſcape, and to ſaue himſelfe: ſo the wicked, the more they ſeeke ſtarting-holes, the further they worke themſelues faſt in the ſnare. They will needs be running out of Gods reach, and will kick againſt the pricks, like reſtie iades, who indeuor by all meanes to throw their rider: but what get they in the end by ſuch rebellion and ſtubbornnes? nothing but the harder and heauier ſtrokes. *Verſ.14.* Simile. Simile.

By this wee are taught how to proceede with wicked perſons, but then eſpeciallie whē wee ſee them deſtitute of the feare of God: Truly we muſt forthwith threaten them that they ſhall eſcape by none of their cunning ſhifts or ieſts from that wrath of God which is readie to ſeaze vpon them. Hence alſo we are admoniſhed, that it is no good ieſting with God, becauſe he ſhewes vs here as in a glaſſe, and that from the beginning of the world, what the end of ſuch haue been as haue ſet light by Gods admonitions and warnings.

Now to the end this propheſie might the rather be beleeued, *Iſaiah* ſhewes that he ſpeakes nothing but that which was reuealed to him by the *Lord of hoſts*. The word *Calah* ſignifies ſometimes Perfection, ſometimes Conſumption, as was ſaid Chap.10.23. but it is to be taken here for *Conſumption*, becauſe the Prophets drift is to ſhew that the Lord is determined quicklie and whollie to roote out this ſinfull generation from off the earth. Two things are comprehended in this verſe then: firſt, that the world is neere to a feareſull deſtruction (vnleſſe any had rather to referre this word *earth* to the land of Iudea, which I reiect not.) Secondly, that the *day* is 1 2

aſſigned,

aſſigned, in which it ſhall be done, and that it is alſo at hand. The word *heard*, is here taken for reuelation: and thus he ſaith it was reuealed vnto him. For as the Lord determined to vſe the miniſterie of his Prophets, ſo did hee alſo reueale his ſecrets vnto them, that they might be the expoſitors of them. It is as much then as if hee had ſaid; The whole world is filled with wicked impieties, the reprobate reioyce in their rebellion, as if there were no God at all to puniſh them: but hee will ſhew himſelfe Iudge and auenger thorowout the earth, or in all the quarters of Iudea; neither ſhall any part thereof be exempt from calamities and affliction, in regard of *the open contempt of God and his lawes*. Now albeit *Iſaiah* publiſhed theſe things in his time, yet they no leſſe belong to ours, then to his: for God will ſhew himſelfe to be alwaies one and the ſame, and hath been wont to execute his iudgements with like equitie and iudgement.

Verſ. 23. *Hearken ye and heare my voice: hearken ye and heare my ſpeech.*

THe Prophet vſeth a preface, as if hee meant to ſpeake of a thing of great importance: for we are not wont to call for *audience*, or to will the hearers to giue their attention, vnleſſe ſome matter of good conſequence is to be propounded. And yet it ſeems *Iſaiah* ſpeakes here of common things, as of *tilling, ſowing, threſhing*, and ſuch like. But the Prophet meant by this to raiſe the mindes of his auditors aboue theſe earthly matters: for ſpeaking of Gods iudgements, and ſhewing how great his wiſdome is by which hee gouernes the world, albeit the wicked ſort thinke that all things goe vpon wheeles at a venture, his deſire was to teach and expreſſe an high myſterie by familiar ſimilitudes, ſuch as were well enough knowne to all.

High myſteries are ſometimes expreſſed by common and familiar ſimilitudes.

We often complaine, as if God altogether wincked at the practiſes of the wicked, becauſe hee thunders not downe vpon them at our pleaſures: but the Prophet telles vs that God ordaines nothing but that which is lawfull and right. This preface then hath this drift; namely, to teach men how foole-hardy they be to ſet God to ſchoole, in that they controll his iudgements, and interpret them to the worſt; the reaſon is, becauſe hee hath ſet a ſchoolemiſtris before them in the ordinarie courſe of nature, in which they may behold theſe things as cleerely as in a glaſſe. Behold here then a ſecret complaint againſt the *blindneſſe* of men, who ſtumble at the very noone day. He ſhewes that they are ſenſeleſſe and brutiſh, in not cõprehending the workes of God that are ſo apparant; and yet are ſo bold, as to ſubiect that to their ſenſes, and to controll that, which is high and hidden from them. For example, Saint *Paul* in ſpeaking of the reſurrection, calles them *fooles* which know not the power of God in the ſeedes that are caſt into the earth. *Thou foole*, ſaith hee, that which thou ſoweſt, is not quickened, except it die firſt: ſo *Iſaiah* heere pronounceth them ſenſeleſſe fooles, who are not able to comprehend the wiſdome of God in ſo plaine & euident things. To be ſhort, hee affirmes men to be witleſſe and blind in beholding Gods workes, when they are to profit by them.

The drift of this preface.

1 Cor. 15. 36

Verſ. 24. *Doth the Plowman plow all the day to ſow? Doth he open and breake the clots of his ground?*

THis place is vſually expounded, as if God taxed the people of ingratitude, in regard that hee had plaied the part of an husbandman with his ground, and had left no coſt or paines vnbeſtowed; but yet had not receiued that fruit which he expected. And thus the Iewes expound it; whom both Greekes and Latins haue followed: but the Prophet meant another thing. For he ioynes this doctrine with verſ. 22. in which hee had threatned that the deſtruction of Iudah, or of the whole earth was reuealed vnto him: and therefore now addes, that God doth not alwaies ſtretch out his arme, neither doth he euer keepe one rate in puniſhing the rebellions of man, but often times winkes thereat, and defets his iudgements for a time. This patience of the Lord the wicked abuſe, taking the greater libertie thereby to ſinne; as *Salomon* well ſheweth; that is, becauſe all things fall out alike both to good and bad, and that the moſt deſperate wretches doe proſper, when the faithfull in the meane while are ſubiect to many miſeries; yea often to greater then the very reprobates and caſt-awaies: In a word, when the vngodly perceiue no difference (in outward appearance) to be put betweene the godly & themſelues, they either thinke there is no God at all, or elſe that things are gouerned by the diſpoſition of blind fortune. *Iſaiah* anſwers to this on this manner; Know you not that God hath the times and *ſeaſons* in his owne power, and that hee hath skill enough to diſpoſe of his matters in all ages? If the *Plowman* be not alway plowing his ground, nor breaking of his clots, is any man therefore to taxe him of ignorãce? Is it not his wiſdome rather that cauſeth him for a time to ceaſe? For what ſhould a man doe in turning vp the ground continually, but trouble himſelfe to no purpoſe, vnleſſe it were to hinder the growth of his corne? Much leſſe may God bee ſaid then to doe things at random, or without iudgement; for he knowes how and when to performe his worke.

Eccleſ. 8. 11.

The application of this ſimilitude of the Plowman.

Verſ. 25. *When he hath made it plaine, Will he not then ſow the fitches, and ſow cummin, and caſt in Wheate by meaſure, and the appointed barley and rie in their place?*

26. *For his God doth inſtruct him to haue diſcretion, and doth teach him.*

27. *For fitches ſhall not bee threſhed with a threſhing inſtrument, neither*

ther shall a cart Wheele be turned about vpon the Cummin, but the fitches are beaten out With a staffe, and Cummin With a rod.

28. *Bread* corne *When it is threshed, he doth not alway thresh it, neither doth the Wheele of his cart* still *make a noyse, neither Will he breake it With the teeth thereof.*

NOw he speakes of the *seede*, whereof the Plowman puts not in as much as he can; neither powres he it out by heapes, but views the ground, and then sowes it with as much as is conuenient: for otherwise, great heapes would lie and rot, and there would not so much as one kirnell take roote. Againe, he mingles not *diuers seeds* together, but reserues one part of his field for *wheate*, another for *fitches*, and the rest for *Cummin*: all which he doth by *measure*, which is here vnderstood by the word *Shoreh*, which ought thus to be vnderstood as I take it, and not for good, or excellent, for he speakes heere of measuring. He saith the like of reaping and *threshing*: for corne is not *beaten out* all after one manner, but *wheate* is beaten out with the cart *wheele*, or some ragged or toothed instrument: *fitches* with a *rod*, and Cummin with a flaile. Now he speakes heere after the custome of his Countrie: for wheat is threshed in France only with a flaile, Prouence only excepted. To be short, his meaning is, that euery kind of grain is not beaten out after one fashion, but euery one hath such an Instrument as fits the *nature* thereof. Also that the Husbandman is not alway *threshing*, but keepes a *measure*, least otherwise he should bruise the corne.

But who *taught him* this knowledge? Surely God only. If they then be so well instructed, and so prouident in these small things, what are we to thinke of that great Master and Doctor who hath taught it them? Knowes not he how to *keepe a steadie hand* and an euen cariage in his works? Foresees not he the *fittest times* when to execute his iudgements? to wit, when to turne vp the wicked, and to cause his *Plowe* and *Harrowes* to passe ouer them? Doth not he know the fittest time when to *thresh* them out? yea, and *how many blowes*, and *with what kind of punishment he is to strike men*? Knows not he what is fittest for euery time, and for euery person? *Shall not he that hath framed the whole order of nature, dispose of things by equall proportion?* Dare men be so foole-hardie to quarrell with him; or to call his wisedome in question? In a word, the Prophets meaning is, that no man ought rashlie to censure the Lord, if he bring not the way of the wicked vpon his owne head by and by: but rather that men are in this behalfe to represse their boldnes, seeing for the most part they mistake things euen in small matters.

1 2 3

We are not to quarrell with the Lord, if he bring not his iudgements speedily vpon the heads of the wicked, but rather to represse our boldnes in this behalfe.

For if one that knowes not what belongs to Husbandrie should see a Plowman driuing his Plow ouer the fields, making furrowes, and breaking the clods, turning his oxen this way and that way, and following them at an inch, he would surely laugh y man to scorne, and it may be would thinke it a pretie sport for little children: but the Plowman on the contrarie knowing what he doth, can easilie condemne & conuince such an one of rashnes and ignorance: for such as are modest, will iudge that these things were not done in vaine, nor at randon, albeit he knew not the reason. Would not a man thinke that the seed which is cast into the ground were lost? An ignorant bodie would iudge it to be so. And yet if they should giue such a sentence (as those that lack knowledge are alwaies the forwardest and boldest in giuing their verdict) would not men of vnderstanding reproue and condemne such for their rashnes, and that iustlie? Now if the case stands thus, how will the Lord deale with vs (thinke we) if we presume to controll his works, which are so farre aboue our reach, and altogether incomprehensible. Iudge we then by this, how much we ought to flee all ouerweening: and on the other side, in what sobrietie and modestie we are to keepe vnder all our thoughts. For if it be our duties to walke in modestie with men, and not rashlie to condemne that wherof we are ignorant, ought we not much more to walke thus with our God?

There is a place in 2. Tim. 2. 19. 20. which answers to Master Caluins exposition touching this text.

If we ought to iudge modestlie of mans actions, much more of Gods.

As oft then as we shall thinke of the calamities wherwith the Church is so many waies afflicted, let vs not by and by crie out that God hath cast her off, as if because the wicked are let loose, therefore they shall presentlie haue their willes: but let vs on the contrarie assure our selues that the Lord will prouide a remedie for vs when his time appointed is come; and in the meane while let vs reuerentlie and hartilie submit our selues vnder his iust iudgements. Now if any be pleased by taking a narrower view of these words, to gather, that some are punished sooner, some later, as being deferred for a season: this will not only be found probable, but it is also fullie agreed vnto by the Prophet. Hence then there is ministred vnto vs a singular consolation, to wit, the Lord will so moderate his strokes, that at no hand he will bruise or breake in pieces those that are his seruants. Indeed he destroyes the wicked and brings them to nothing; but he corrects his children, that being thereby purged and tamed, they may be brought home into his garner.

God destroys the wicked, he only corrects his children.

Vers. 29. *This also commeth of the Lord of hosts, which is Wonderfull in counsell,* and *excellent in Worke.*

SOme expound this place as if the Prophet should say, that this knowledge of Husbandrie comes of the Lord: but I rather thinke it to be the application of the things that went before. For as he hath set forth Gods wisedome in the smallest matters, so would he now raise our minds higher, that we might learne with the greater reuerence to consider of his secret and *wonderfull* iudgements. We may, and no doubt ought (by the way) to note, as touching that which is conteined in the 26. verse, that not Husbandrie alone, but

all

All profitable sciences the gift of God.

all other profitable arts also are the gifts of God, who powres into their vnderstandings, those artificiall and cunning inuentions. Men therefore ought in no case to wax proud of them, or to attribute the knowledge hereof vnto themselues; as those of old time haue done, who being vnthankfull vnto God, haue deified those whom they thought to bee the deuisers of arts. Thence came the heapes of so many goddes which the heathen haue forged vnto themselues, out of the shop of their owne braine. From out of this workehouse haue proceeded the great *Ceres, Triptolemus, Mercurie*, and infinit others more, so highly renowned by the words and writings of men. But one Prophet shewes, that as these sciences were giuen them from God, so ought they to be referred to his glory, as to him that is the onely author and master workeman. And if this esteeme be to be held of husbandry and other handicrafts, what shall wee say of the noble and liberall sciences; as of Physicke, Law, Astronomie, Geometry, Logicke, and the like? Shall we not much more affirme, that these are the gifts of God? Nay, shal we not bothcōsider & acknowledge his goodnesse in the bestowing of them, that so as well in the least, as in the greatest thereof, we may set forth his honour and praise?

If God be the author of handicrafts, much more of Liberall arts.

THE XXIX. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Ah altar, altar of the Citie that Dauid dwelt in: adde yeere vnto yeere: let them kill lambs.*

aOr, Ariel, Ariel, or woe be to, &c.

IT seems this should be another Sermon: in which *Isaiah* threatens Ierusalem. Hee calles it *Ariel*, that is to say, the Altar of God; because the whole strēgth of the Citie depended vpon the *Altar*. For howsoeuer the Citizens trusted in other meanes whereof they had great store; yet they chiefly relied vpon the Temple and the altar, more then vpon anie other defences. They thought themselues inuincible indeed, by reason of their power and forces: but aboue all, they held themselues in a fort vtterly impregnable, in regard that the Lord couered them vnder his wings. Now they imagined that God was with them as long as they retained the *Altar*, and the sacrifices. Some thinke that the Temple is here called *Ariel*, because it was proportioned like a lion; to wit, broad before, and narrow behind; but I had rather vnderstand it simply of the Altar; and the rather, for that *Ezechiel* also giues it this name, Chap. 43.15. This prophecy doubtlesse was directed to the whole Citie; but we must note the Prophets drift, which is to plucke away from the Iewes this fond trust, because they thought God would surely helpe them, as long as the Altar and sacrifices lasted. For they bragged of them, as those who vntruely perswaded themselues that they had serued God to the full, albeit their liues were vile and wicked.

The Prophets drift.

In the next place hee bends his speech against the *Citie*, which hee adornes with a goodly title, by calling it *the Citie that Dauid once dwelt in*, and yet onely by way of yeelding so much vnto them: for he will afterwards refute this their vaine pretext, so full of vanitie.

Some by this word vnderstand little Ierusalem; that is to say, the innermost Citie, which was also compassed about with walles: for two Cities were compriſed in one as it were, because it was inlarged and extended the confines thereof further off then at the beginning: but as I thinke this place should be vnderstood of the whole Citie. He mentions *Dauid*, in regard they gloried as much in his name, as if Gods blessing had bin continually tied to the palace royall: for God indeed had promised that *Dauids* Kingdome should indure for euer.

2. Sam 7.13. Psal. 89.36.

Hence wee may gather how sottish and ridiculous the Papists are now become, who will needes lincke the Church to Saint *Peters* chaire; and thus would make the world beleeue, that God can no wherere find a place to dwell in, but in the chaire of Rome. Wee dispute not with them now, whether *Peter* was euer Bishop of Rome or no: but let vs grant it were vndoubtedly so, yet dare they affirme that Rome had at any time like promise that Ierusalē had? *This is my rest, here will I dwell, for I haue a delight therein.* Psal. 132.14. But what if God had made them such a promise? doe we not see how *Isaiah* threatens Ierusalem; to wit, that God is driuen thence, when his word was reiected, and his pure worship corrupted. What shall become of Rome then that hath no promise at all? Dare shee compare with *Ierusalem*? If God cursed that holy Citie which he had specially chosen; what will he say, thinke you, to other Cities, who haue ouerthrowne all his holy lawes and ordinances?

Papists ridiculous in tying the Church to Saint Peters chaire.

Rome neuer had that promise made her, which God made to Ierusalem.

God is banished from that place whence his word is excluded.

Adde yeere vnto yeere. The Prophet ioynes this with the former, because the Iewes thought themselues cleere aboard, as they say, when they had a little breathing and respite giuen them: for the wicked imagin that there is a truce betweene God and them, when they see no signes of his wrath likely to seaze vpon them: for this cause they promise to themselues nothing but peace, peace; whileſt the Lord suffers them to inioy ease and prosperitie. Against such securitie the Prophet threatens, that God is readie to execute his vengeance; notwithstanding they offred their sacrifices ordinarily, and renued them

yeere after yeere. Hence we may learne, that albeit the Lord defers his chastisements, and the executiõ of his vengeance, yet we ought not therefore to defer our repentance. For what if hee spares and beares with vs for a time, hath hee therefore forgotten our sins? No such matter. Let vs bewate how we build our peace then vpon so slipperie a foundation. Let vs at no hand abuse his patience and long suffring, but let the same rather draw vs to repentance, and to the seeking of free reconciliation with him.

Vers. 2. *But I will bring the Altar into distresse: and there shall be heauinesse and sorrow; and it shall be vnto mee like an Altar.*

I Thinke that the letter *Vau*, should bee taken here for a particle aduersatiue; as if he should say, Yet *will I* execute my iudgements vpon you, and will auenge my quarrell, although it seeme for a time, that in thus sparing of you, I am at one with you. In the next place hee threatens them with *sorrow* and *lamentation*, in stead of their festiual daies. Some thinke the word sorrow to bee an adiectiue: but I am not of their mind; for it is taken in the same sense in the Lamentations of *Ieremiah*, Chap. 2. 5. The Prophet shewes then that the Lord will bring this Citie into such *distresse*, that the Iewes shall well perceiue they haue not to do with men, but with God: so that howsoeuer the Assyrians made war vpon them, yet they should know to their cost, that God was their chiefe Commander and Captaine.

Where hee addes, that it shall bee to him like *Ariel*, it cannot agree to the Temple onlie: for his meaning is, that the Citie and all shall be sprinckled with the slaughter which the enemies shall make in Ierusalem; which he compares to an *altar*, whereupon beasts are slaine to be sacrificed: for as oft as the wicked are destinated to destructiõ, the Prophets compare the same to a *sacrifice*. In a word, in that he alludes thus to the altar, he affirmes that the whole Citie shall bee like *Ariel*, because it shal ouerflow with the blood of the slaine. Whence it is manifest enough, that an outward profession of Gods worship, together with the externall ceremonies and tokens of his fauourable presence are to little purpose, vnlesse a francke and cheerefull obedience be ioyned therewith. And thus in taunting the hypocrits (who prophanely presented their beasts in sacrifice to God, as if by such meanes they thought to appease his anger) he saith, that all their labour is lost: for hauing polluted the Temple & the Altar, he tells them that none can sacrifice rightly vnto God, but in killing and sacrificing those that were appointed to the slaughter thorowout the Citie; as if he should say, You shall be murthered and killed in euerie place. He calles this sacrifice a violent slaughter, by an improper phrase of speech; because they refused to offer themselues willingly vnto God.

Vers. 3. *And I will besiege thee as a circle, and fight against thee on a mount, and will cast vp ramparts against thee.*

BY the verbe Chaddur, hee alludes to the roundnesse of a ball; and signifies as much as if in our vsuall speech we should say, I will compasse him about: and thus shewes, that they can no way escape. Where it is added, *I will fight against thee on a mount*, it concernes the second meanes by which a Citie is to be taken: for they vse to make incursions heere and there, or to lay a standing siege. Now he confirmes the doctrine of the former verse, & shewes that God should be the chiefe Leader in this war, and that the Assyrians should vndertake nothing but by his commandement, notwithstanding themselues were thrust forward with an inordinate lust and desire of reigning ouer the poore Iewes. For it was verie requisite that this people should be fully perswaded, that God was the author of all the calamities wherewith they were oppressed, to the end they might thereby come to a narrow examination of their impieties. Now the oftener wee meete with this doctrine in the holy Scriptures; so much the more carefull ought wee to be in imprinting the same well in our hearts: for the blessed Spirit of God is not wont to repeat one thing againe and againe without iust cause.

Vers. 4. *So shalt thou be humbled, and shalt speake out of the ground, and thy speech shll bee as out of the dust: thy voice also shall be out of the ground, like him that hath a spirit of diuination, and thy talking shall whisper out of the dust.*

HE derides the pride of the Iewes, who as long as they were in prosperitie (as hypocrits are wont to doe) despised all admonitions and threatnings. The Prophet therefore saith, that they should one day be *humbled*: to wit, after their pride shall bee taken downe. Not that they shall change their maners, but because shame shal constraine them to turne their wonted mirth into mourning. And therefore here must be a close opposition supplied: for he speakes to those iolly fellowes, who seemed to haue the world at will, who with big lookes disdained euery one, as if they had bin subiect to no God at all. Nay, they feared not to load him with blasphemies and iniuries, and contemned his holy word. This pride, saith *Isaiah*, shall be *brought downe* well enough, and this intollerable arrogancie shall cease.

In the next words hee expresseth this further by a similitude, saying, that they shall *whisper* and speake, as it were, out of the holes of the earth. For he cõpares the voice of those which in times past was so loud and high, to the speech of Coniurers, who giue their answers

ſwers out of ſome hollow caue digged vnder the earth, mumbling out I know not what confuſed noyſe; for they ſpeake with no diſtinct voice. His meaning is then that theſe haughtie ones ſhall be like vnto them.

Some expound this as if the Prophet meant to ſay, that their chaſtiſement ſhould nothing profit them: but the text croſſeth that ſenſe; and beſides, he will by and by ſhew that the Iewes ſhould be brought to repentance. But firſt of all he terrifies them, to the end he may beate downe their pride, becauſe they did ſtoutlie & rebelliouſlie deſpiſe all the threatnings of the Prophets. The *humbling* therefore whereof he ſpeakes ſignifies nothing elſe but that they ſhould be couered with ſhame, in ſuch wiſe, that they ſhould not dare to aduance themſelues, nor to vtter forth their ſwelling words of vanitie.

Verſ. 5. *Moreouer, the multitude of thy ſtrangers ſhall be like ſmall duſt, and the multitude of ſtrong men ſhall be as chaffe that paſſeth away, and it ſhall be in a moment euen ſuddenlie.*

I Will firſt recite the opinions of others, and then that which to me ſeemes moſt probable. All (in a maner) do thinke that this ſhould be ſpoke of the enemies of the Iewes; for they take the word *Strangers* for enemies, and ſo they affirme that the multitude of thoſe who ſhould oppreſſe the Iewes ſhall be like the *duſt*, that is to ſay, infinite. But conſidering all things circumſpectlie, I incline rather to another opinion, to wit, that the Prophet ſpeakes by way of contempt of the fortreſſes and gariſons whereupon the Iewes relied. For they had ſouldiers out of forreine Countries that were valiant vnder their pay. And thus I interpret the word *Ariſim*, which properlie ſignifies ſo much; neither do I wonder a little that ſome of the Rabbins ſhould take it for the heathen or wicked. In regard the Iewes then drew vnto themſelues diuers gariſons out of *ſtrange Countries*, they thought they were cock-ſure, and out of danger. The Prophet on the cõtrarie threatens that their gariſons ſhall *skirmiſh in vaine*, notwithſtanding their companies be many in number, for they ſhall be but as *duſt* or *chaffe*, that is to ſay, like vnprofitable offcourings, ſo as they ſhall haue neither ſtrength nor actiuitie.

No wiſdome nor ſtrength againſt the Lord.

Hence may we obſerue, that be our riches or abundance neuer ſo much, yet all ſhall turne to ſmoke as ſoone as the Lord ſhall but blow vpon it. The preparations which men make laſt awhile it may be, but when the Lord ſhall once but lift vp his hand, all ſtrength muſt vaniſh, and become like chaffe.

In the end of the verſe ſome expound, that a ſound ſhall ariſe ſuddenlie, and as in a moment from the inuaſion of the enemies: but I rather referre this word, *ſhall be*, to the time that this ſhall endure, which ſhall be *but ſhort*, as ſaith the Prophet: for his meaning is, that theſe gariſons ſhal not hold out lõg, but ſhall vaniſh away in a *moment*. Men ſhall boaſt but in vaine therfore, ſeeing God is their enemie.

Verſ. 6. *Thou ſhalt be viſited of the Lord of hoſtes with thunder and ſhaking, and a great noiſe, a Whirlewinde, and a tempeſt and a flame of deuouring fire.*

HE addes the cauſe why all theſe multitudes of gariſons ſhall be like ſtubble, ſetting it forth by a contrarie ſimilitude. For he oppoſeth the wrath and *viſitation* of the *Lord of hoſtes* againſt theſe ſouldiers: For alas, how will *ſtraw and ſtubble* be able to reſiſt the flame of a *deuouring fire*? How ſhall *duſt* be able to abide the force of the *whirlewind*? His meaning is then that the vengeance of God ſhall be ſo great, that no preparations ſhall be able to withſtand it. And in this ſenſe me thinks the text concurres well; the parts whereof would not anſwere proportionablie one to another if we ſhould follow another expoſition. Now by this wee learne, that our enemies which aſſaile vs ſhall neuer attempt more againſt vs then the Lord ſhall permit. If he 1
then be pleaſed to defend vs, our aduerſaries can not hurt vs, although they ſhould ſtirre 2
vp all the world againſt vs. On the contrarie, is he minded to correct vs? We can reſiſt his wrath neither by weapons nor any fortreſſes whatſoeuer, for he will ſweepe them away as with a *vvhirlewind*; yea, he will conſume them like a *deuouring flame*, that leaues nothing behind it.

Verſ. 7. *And the multitude of all the nations that fight againſt the Altar ſhall be as a dreame or viſion by night: euen all they that make the warre againſt it, and lay ſiege vnto it.*

I Expound this verſe otherwiſe then ſome do, who thinke that the Prophet meant to comfort the faithfull, which I confeſſe is not without great ſhew of reaſon. And ſo it conteines a very excellent doctrine, to wit, that the enemies ſhall be like thoſe that dreame, when the Lord ſhall diſappoint them of their hope, euen whileſt they imagined they were ſure of the pray. But this interpretation (for ought I ſee) ſeemes not to agree very well with the text. Sometime it falles out that a ſentence ſounds ſo goodly in ſhew, that we are drawne to ſuch a liking of it that it ſteales from vs the true and naturall meaning thereof, ſo as we neither aduiſedlie conſider the text it ſelfe, nor yet take any great paines to ſeeke out the authors intent and purpoſe.

The firſt member of this ſeuenth verſe is explaned in the verſe following.

We muſt not eaſily bee caried away to like of ſuch a ſenſe of Scripture as ſteales from vs the meaning of the Holy Ghoſt, how goodly a ſhew ſoeuer it ſeemes to haue.

Let vs ſee then whether the Prophets meaning be as they ſay, for ſeeing he ſtill continues to denounce threatnings in the verſes following, I doubt not but he proſecutes his ſpeech in this place, which otherwiſe ſhould be broken off abruptlie in this ſentence. For he rebukes and taxeth the Iewes for their obſtinacie, in that they durſt be ſo bold to deſpiſe God & all his threatnings. To be ſhort, he reproues their falſe truſt and confidence by a very fit ſimilitude, ſaying, that the enemie ſhould ſuddenlie come vpon the Iewes euen at that time when they thought themſelues

ſelues ſafe and out of all danger; ſo that the thing ſhall be ſo ſudden and vnexpected, that it ſhall reſemble a *dreame*. Although then (ſaith the Prophet) thou art now forging in thy braine a perpetuall reſt vnto thy ſelfe, yet God ſhall eaſily awake thee, and plucke this thy confidence away from thee.

Now the Prophet tauntingly ſaith the Iewes *drempt*, becauſe being plunged in their voluptuouſneſſe, they neither felt nor ſaw anie thing, but (onely) forged to themſelues ſuch a happineſſe in this drowſineſſe, that it held their mindes amazed and confounded. Thence hee gathers, that the enemie ſhould come as in a *dreame*, to ſcarre theſe *dreamers*. For it often falles out, that a quiet and ſweet ſleepe, is interrupted with feareſull dreames. It alſo comes to paſſe that the pleaſant things which they dreame of, ſerue them to no vſe: for albeit they thinke nothing leſſe, yet the alarum will be ſounded in an inſtant. But this would bee ſomewhat obſcure, if the Prophet ſhould not explane his meaning more fully in the verſe following.

Verſ. 8. *And it ſhall bee like as an hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth; and when hee awaketh, his ſoule is emptie: or like as a thirſtie man dreameth, and loe he is drinking; and when hee awaketh, behold he is faint, and his ſoule longeth: ſo ſhall all the multitude of all Nations bee that fight againſt mount Zion.*

HEe compares the Iewes to men hunger-ſtarued, who ſleepe indeede; but in the meane while, their ſtomacke is emptie and yearnes after meate: and thus it is a thing verie incident vnto them, to bee dreaming of that naturall ſuſtenance which they want. So then when the Iewes ſhould be awaked, they ſhould reſemble affamiſhed perſons. For the Lord admoniſhed them by his Prophets daily, and called them to the heauenly banquet of his word. But they made light of it, neither would they be awaked by it: for they choſe rather to play the ſleepie beaſts in their ſinnes, then to bee filled with theſe ſacred delicates. Whileſt they thus rocked their conſciences aſleepe then, they thought they needed nothing, but were throughly furniſhed for all aſſaies. *Iſaiah* telles them that this *Verſe 7.* is but a *dreame* or deceitfull *viſion*: for when they ſhall bee well awaked by a ſudden calamitie, they ſhall then feele how lanke and *Verſ. 8.* *emptie* they were; and that the opinion of fulneſſe wherewith they were beſotted before, was but vaine & deceitfull. For as the *hungry* which haue ſuch dreames, are the more greeued by them; ſo the people who were falſly perſwaded that all went well with them, ſhall be much more moleſted thereby, then if they had had no ſuch conceit to poſſeſſe their heads; but had rather confeſſe their nakedneſſe and pouertie. This maner of ſpeech ſeemes ſomewhat ſtrange at the firſt, when hee ſaith, that the *multitude* of thoſe which fought againſt *Ariel*, ſhould bee as a *dreame*, &c. but we muſt reſolue it thus: when the Iewes ſhould falſly perſwade themſelues of deliuerance, as if the enemie were gone far off, they ſhould then immediately feele how much they were beguiled; euen like vnto one that being hungry, and dreames he is filling his belly with good cheere; when hee wakes, is more ſtrongly preſſed with hunger, then if he had dreamed no ſuch dreame at all. I ſee nothing heere then which any way appertaines to conſolation: for hee goes on ſtill with the ſame matter, and cries out againſt the obſtinacie and contempt of the Iewes, whom hee could moue neither by any admonitions nor threatnings whatſoeuer.

This at I thinke, belongs to verſ. 7.

Verſ. 9. *Stay your ſelues and wonder; they are blind, and make you blind; they are drunken, but not with wine; they ſtagger, but not with ſtrong drinke.*

THe Prophet holds on his purpoſe ſtill, and ſharply taxeth this groſſe ſottiſhnes of the people. Others tranſlate, Be aſtoniſhed: but I had rather take it in another ſenſe, to wit, that albeit they ſtay long vpon this thought, yet notwithſtanding they cannot auoid it, but that their mindes will be aſtoniſhed in long thinking vpon it. In a word, he meant to ſay, that God would ſo ouerwhelme their thoughts, that they ſhould find no euaſion nor iſſue, although they brake their braines neuer ſo much, in deuiſing how to find it out. And forthwith hee giues a reaſon why they ſhould profit themſelues nothing at all, notwithſtanding they were ſo diligent in the matter, and had ſetled their reſolution thereupon; to wit, becauſe they ſhould be like *drunkards*. His meaning is then, that it muſt be attributed vnto their ſluggiſhneſſe and benummednеſſe, that they were not able to diſcerne nor comprehend any of Gods workes.

Wee ſee the trueth of this fulfilled at this day in many, who haue their ſenſes ſo poſſeſſed and intoxicate with a ſpirituall giddineſſe of braine, that they are as blind as moles euen in things manifeſt and plaine: and although God ſets vp a moſt cleere light of his iuſtice and equity, they are ſo hoodwincked, that in regard of this their confuſed ſight, they wax ſo much the more ſenſleſſe. Now ſuch a blockiſhneſſe is a iuſt puniſhment, whereby God auengeth himſelfe vpon their infidelitie.

But that we may apply this ſentence to our vſe, we are to obſerue that the Prophets words are not to bee taken here, as if hee commanded them to ſtay and to aduiſe longer vpon it; but rather as I haue ſaid, taxeth (and withall derides) their ſottiſhneſſe. It is as much then as if he had ſaid; Thinke vpon it as long as you will, you ſhall vnderſtand nothing. For his meaning is, that they are deſtitute of ſound iudgement and vnderſtanding, and therefore doe in vaine conſider of Gods workes: ſo that as the mole receiues no benefit by the light of the Sunne, no more is

it poſſible for thoſe that are ſpirituallie blinded to comprehend the glorious acts of the Lord.

When he calles them *blinde*, his meaning is, that we are created naturallie to haue reaſon and vnderſtanding whereby to conſider of Gods works: It is by accident therefore (as we ſay) if we be blind; ſo that if ſuch a giddineſſe be fallen vpon vs, ſo heauie a iudgement ought iuſtlie to be imputed to our own vnthanktulnes. He oppoſeth *ſtaggering* of ſpirit, to a quiet and peaceable minde; for he meanes ſuch a diſquietnes as cauſeth the vnderſtanding to ſhake and reele.

Verſ. 10. *For the Lord hath couered you with the ſpirit of ſlumber, and hath ſhut vp your eyes: the Prophets and your chiefe Seers hath he couered.*

THat he might the better ſhew the cauſe of this blinding, he attributes it vnto the iudgement of God, who by this meanes auenged himſelfe vpon the peoples impietie. For as it belongs to him to giue eyes to ſee cleerely, and to enlighten a mans vnderſtanding with the ſpirit of iudgement and reaſon, ſo belongs it to him alone to put out all the light thereof when he ſees that by a peruerſe and obſtinate hatred of the truth we willingly deſire darknes. Are men blinded then, and that principallie in things that are moſt euident and plaine? Let them acknowledge that this proceeds from Gods iuſt ſeueritie.

It belongs only to God to open and ſhut vp our vnderſtandings.

He addes alſo, that the people are depriued of the helps and meanes which ſhould bring the light of knowledge vnto them, and ſhould be guides to direct them in their way. For to this vſe are *Prophets* ordeined, which he notes out by theſe two words *Nebiim* and *Hachozim*. In a word, his meaning is, that not thoſe who only are endued with reaſon and vnderſtanding, ſhall be depriued of common ſenſe, but euen the Doctors and Teachers themſelues who ſhould be lights vnto others ſhould become as ignorant as beaſts, ſo as they ſhould haue no knowledge of the right way: yea, they ſhould be ſo farre off from gouerning others, that they ſhould not be able to gouerne themſelues.

Verſ. 11. *And the viſion of them all is become vnto you as the words of a booke ſealed vp, which they deliuer to one that can reade, ſaying, Reade this, I pray thee: and he ſhall ſay, I cannot, for it is ſealed.*

12. *And the booke is giuen vnto him that cannot reade, ſaying, Reade this I pray thee: and he ſhall ſay, I cannot reade.*

THe Prophet expreſſeth that more cleerely which he touched before, namely, that the Iewes ſhould be ſo blinded, that they ſhould conceiue nothing, although the Lord ſhould enlighten thē by the manifeſt brightnes of his word. And this he ſhewes ſhould not happen to the common people only, but alſo to their guides and leaders, whoſe office it was to haue been ſo learned, that they might haue ordered thoſe that were out of the way. To be ſhort, this blindnes ſhould ſeaze vpon all eſtates: for he declares that both the *ignorant* and *learned* ſhould be ſo dizzie and blockiſh, that Gods word ſhould be vnto them *as a booke ſealed vp*, in ſo much that they ſhould be able to diſcerne no more thereof then of letters faſt cloſed. He teacheth (albeit in other words) the ſame which he taught in the former Chapter, to wit, that the word ſhould be vnto them precept vpon precept, line vnto line, becauſe they ſhould alwaies remaine in the firſt rudiments, and ſhould neuer attaine to the ſolide doctrine. For in the ſame ſenſe he heere ſheweth, that none from the higheſt to the loweſt ſhould gather any fruite from the word of God. He ſaith not then that the word ſhould be taken from them; but although it were amongſt them, they ſhould notwithſtanding be ignorant of the true meaning of it. *Chap.28.13.*

The Lord puniſheth the impietie of men two waies; for ſometimes he wholly takes away the vſe of the word; ſometimes he lets them haue it, and yet in the meane while depriues them of the ſound vnderſtanding of it, ſo as in ſeeing they are ſtarke blinde. Firſt then he depriues them of the *reading* of it, by taking away the bookes of holy Scripture through ỹ tyrannie of the wicked, as it often comes to paſſe: or, by a falſe perſwaſion of men, who thinke they were not giuen to be read of all: Secondly, albeit he ſuffers vs to reade them, and to haue the bookes in our hands, yet becauſe we abuſe them, becauſe we are vnthankfull, and aime not at the glorie of God, therefore we are blinded, and ſee no more, then if we had neuer been enlightned with ſo much as one ſparkle of the word. 1 *Chap.6.9.10.* 2

We are not to boaſt then that we haue the outward preaching of the word, for that ſhall do vs little good if it become not fruitfull in vs, by cleering our iudgements and vnderſtandings. It is as if he ſhould ſay then, I grant that in regard of the Couenant made by the Lord with your fathers he will let you haue the two Tables of this Couenant, Deut.4.20. 37.& 7.6. but they ſhal be vnto you as a booke cloſed vp, for you ſhall vnderſtand nothing at all.

We are not to boaſt if God cōtinue the externall preaching of his word: for he can do that, and yet for our vnthankfulnes depriue vs of that fruit which we might otherwiſe reape by it.

When we ſee that ſuch things did indeed befall the Iewes, according as *Iſaiah* foretold, and that we alſo conſider the eſtate of this people whom God had choſen and adopted, me thinks it can not but make vs tremble in our ſelues for feare in beholding ſo horrible a iudgement. For notwithſtanding they were inſtructed both by the Law and of the Prophets, and enlightened with a wonderfull cleare brightnes, yet they fell into horrible ſuperſtitions, and deteſtable impieties, for the ſeruice of God was prophaned, Religion was wholly defaced and ouerthrowne, themſelues were diuided and ſorted into diuers and monſtrous ſects. Laſtly, when the Saduces, which were the wickedeſt of all, had got the preheminence, faith, and all hope

If God ſpared not the naturall brāches, take heed leſt he alſo ſpare not thee. Rom.11.21.

*Mat.*22.23. *Mar.*12.18.

Luk 10.17. Act. 13.8. hope of the resurrection, yea the doctrine of the immortalitie of soules was vtterly abolished: how could it bee I pray you, but the people must become like beasts or swine? For take away the hope of the eternall and blessed life from men, and what shall we make of them? And yet it sufficiently appeares by the testimonies of the Euangelists, that such they were when our Lord Iesus Christ came into the world. For at that time these things were truely accomplished, according as our Prophet foretold; to let vs see that these things were not vttered by him at random, but that they assuredly came to passe, though the wicked no doubt in his time made light account of his words.

Their incredulitie and blindnes therefore fully appeared when this true light came to lighten the world; to wit, Iesus Christ the only light of trueth, the soule and spirit of the law, and the end whereat all the Prophets aimed. Then, I say, the Iewes especially had a vaile laid ouer their eyes; which was figured before in *Moses*, when the people could not Exod. 34.30 indure to behold him, because of the brightnesse of his countenance. But this is truely fulfilled in Christ, to whom it appertaines to take away and abolish this vaile, as S. *Paul* teacheth, 2. Cor. 3.16.

Vntill Christ then, the vaile remained ouer their hearts vntaken away in reading of *Moses*: for they reiected Christ, to whom *Moses* ought to haue been referred. Now in this place vnder the word *Moses*, the whole law is to bee vnderstood; which being referred to Christ, the true end thereof, this vaile shall then be taken away. These iudgements of God we ought so to behold, that wee at this day acknowledge him to be the same iudge he was wont to bee, and that the same vengeance is prepared for vs, if we giue not eare to his holy admonitions.

In that he expresly mentions them that are *learned* and *ignorant*, obserue that we comprehend not the mysteries of saluation by the quicknesse of our wits, or because wee haue bin well trained vp in schooles; for this could not priuiledge such from the imputation of being *blind*. Gods word then must be imbraced with our whole affection, if wee mind to bee freed from this vengeance, wherewith not the rude and *ignorant* alone are threatned, but those also which are *booke learned*, as they say.

Vers. 13. *Therefore the Lord said; Because this people come neere vnto mee with their mouth, and honour mee with their lippes, but haue remoued their heart farre from mee; and their feare toward mee was taught by the precept of men;*

THe Prophet shewes that the Lord shall haue very iust occasion to correct his people thus seuerely, albeit it was an hard and horrible punishment, that their mindes should bee so besotted by Gods reuenging hand. But as men are bold and rebellious, so they are easilie drawne to plead with him, as if he dealt ouer rigorously with them: the Prophet declares that God hath performed the office of a iudge; & that the cause thereof rested wholly in men, who stirred him vp by their impietie & rebellion. Also he shewes that the people haue well deserued this chastisement; but especially by their hypocrisie and superstitions. 1 2

Hee notes their hypocrisie, in telling them that they *drew neere with their mouth and lips*: for so I expound the verbe *Nagash*, which I take to bee most probable, although others are of a contrarie opinion: for which cause some translate, To shut vp; others To magnifie ones selfe: but the *antithete (to wit, the verbe to *withdraw*) which is added by and by after, shewes that this is the true exposition, which also is most receiued. Hypocrisie. *That is, opposition.

But he taxeth their superstitions and idolatries, when hee saith, that *their feare which they had, was taught by the Commandements of men*. Now these two things are for the most part ioyned together. Nay, more then that, for *hypocrisie* is neuer without impietie or *superstition*; and on the other side, *impietie* & superstition is alwaies accompanied with *hypocrisie*. Superstition. Hypocrisie & superstition goe cõmonly together.

By the *mouth and lips*, he meanes the externall profession, which is common both to good and bad: but they differ in this, that the wicked haue onely a vaine outward shew, thinking themselues discharged, if they haue opened their *lips* in Gods worshippe and seruice: but the good present themselues before God in the trueth of their hearts, & in yeelding him obedience with all their power, they acknowledge and confesse how far off they are from performing their duties as they ought to doe. The difference between true worshippers and false.

Hee vseth then the figure called Synecdoche, a thing very frequent in Scriptures; when a part is taken for the whole. But hee made choice of that part which was verie fit for his purpose; seeing men are wont to make most shew of godlinesse by the tongue and lips. The Prophet then comprehends all the other parts of Gods worship, whereby hypocrits are wont to counterfet and deceiue, for they are euerie way bent to lying and vanitie.

We need seeke no better exposition of these words then Iesus Christ, who vpon the speech of washing of hands, (wherewith the Pharises reproued the Disciples, because they had omitted so holy an act in their conceit) that he might convince them of hypocrisie, saith, *Isaiah* prophecied well of you, O yee hypocrites, saying, This people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far off from me: Matth. 15.7,8. To the *lips* and *mouth* therefore the Prophet opposeth the *heart*; the integritie whereof God chiefly requires of vs. For if we want that, he reiects all our workes, carie they neuer so goodly a shew in the eyes of men. For as himselfe is a Spirit, so also will he Ioh. 4 23,24 be adored and worshipped of vs in heart and spirit: at which end, if we begin not, we may doe what we will in outward shew, but it shall

euery

euery whit bee accounted nothing elſe but vaine oſtentation.

Hence we may eaſilie iudge, what eſtimation the religion of poperie ought to haue amongſt vs, who put all their ſeruice of God in ringing, piping, ſinging, mumblings, in ſetting vp candles, in copes, cenſings, croſſings, and a thouſand ſuch fooleries: for we ſee that God not onely reiects theſe things, but alſo deteſteth them.

With what trúperies the Papiſts wold ſeeme to honor God.

Now for the ſecond point: when God is ſerued according to *mens inuentions*, he condemnes this ſuperſtitious *feare*, albeit men indeuor to couer the ſame with a faire pretext of religion, deuotion, and feare. Hee giues a reaſon why this is *in vaine*; to wit, becauſe this people was taught it by the *precepts of man*. For I read the word *Melummadah*, (which ſignifies *taught*) paſſiuely; becauſe the Prophets meaning is, that all order is ouerthrowne, if mens precepts (and not the rules of Gods word) bee taken for the right manner of his ſeruice. For the Lord would haue our *feare*, and the *honour* which we giue him, to be squared according to the rules of his word, and demands nothing but a ſound obedience, by which wee diſpoſe of our ſelues and all our actions, according to this rule, without turning either to the right hand or vnto the left. Whence it ſufficiently appeares, that all thoſe who are taught to ſerue God after mens traditions, are not onely ſenſleſſe, but do alſo wearie themſelues in a pernicious labour: for what do they elſe but prouoke Gods wrath againſt them, who cannot more plainly diſcouer how much hee hates theſe wil-worſhips, then by this ſo heauie a puniſhment?

Fleſh and blood I grant thinkes it ſtrange that God not only makes none accoūt of this traſh, but alſo ſeuerely puniſheth mens indeuors, who through error and folly, take much paines to appeaſe him. But wee are not to wonder if hee maintaines his owne authority after this ſort. Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe expounds this place, ſaying; In vaine doe they ſerue me, teaching for doctrines mens precepts: Matth. 15.9.

Some would ſupply a coniunction thus; And precepts: as if the ſenſe were not otherwiſe cleere enough. But it appeares he meant another thing; to wit, that they take a wrong courſe, who follow mens commandements for the rule of their faith and life.

Verſ. 14. *Therefore behold, I will againe doe a meruailous Worke in this place, euen a meruailous Worke and a wonder: for the wiſdome of their Wiſe men ſhall periſh, and the vnderſtanding of their prudent men ſhall be hid.*

HE not onely threatens the ignorant and common multitude with blindneſſe, but alſo the *wiſe*, who drew the people into an admiration of them. Now by this puniſhment we may iudge how odious and deteſtable this ſinne of hypocriſie is (before God) of which he ſpake in the former verſe. Is there any puniſhment more to bee feared then *blindneſſe* and *giddineſſe of ſpirit*? Men commonly perceiue not the greatneſſe of this miſchiefe; and yet it is of all other the greateſt and moſt wofull. He ſpeakes not of the rude ones then, but of the teachers themſelues, who ought to be in ſtead of eyes to the people. For the multitude are alwaies blind of themſelues, as the reſt of the common ſort are: but if the eyes be blind, what ſhall become of the reſt of the parts of the body? If the light, as Ieſus Chriſt ſaith, be turned into darkneſſe, how great is that darkeneſſe? Matth. 6.23. This is added therefore by way of amplifying this iudgement.

How deteſtable the ſin of hypocriſie is before God.

From this place alſo we may gather, how fooliſh and vaine the boaſting of the Papiſts is, who thinke they haue put all the world to ſilence, if they once alleadge the authoritie of their Biſhops, Doctors, and Prieſts of the Apoſtolicall Sea. It may be they thinke they haue better knowledge then the Iewes. But whence haue they drawne it? They will ſay, from God. But wee ſee the Prophet ſpeakes not here of the wiſe, among the Caldeans or Egyptians: but of that order of Prieſthood, which God himſelfe had ordained: yea, of the Teachers and chiefe heads, and of the ſtandard bearers of the elect people, and of the onely Church of God in thoſe times. In a word, of that high Prieſt who was a figure of the Sonne of God, Chriſt Ieſus. For vnder this name of *the wiſe men*, hee comprehends whatſoeuer was excellent and in account among the people.

The Papiſts thinke they haue put all the world to ſilēce, if they but once mention the authoritie of their Biſhops and the Apoſtolicall Sea.

Verſ. 15. *Woe vnto them that ſeeke deepe to hide their counſell from the Lord: for their Workes are in darkneſſe, and they ſay; Who ſeeth vs? and Who knoweth vs?*

THE Prophet once againe ſets himſelfe againſt the wicked and prophane contemners of God, whom before he called mockers; who thought themſelues wiſe in nothing more, then in ſetting light by the word of the Lord. For religion was become a thing too baſe for them: and therefore they ſhrowded themſelues vnder their craftie inuentions, as in a labyrinth; by reaſon whereof, they boldly contemned all the admonitions & threatnings of the Prophet: yea, not onely that, but euen the whole doctrine of ſaluation. It ſufficiently appeares by this verſe then, that this plague (which afterwards ſpread it ſelfe further) was then in the world; to wit, hypocrits were wont pleaſantly to ſcorne God in their hearts, and to deſpiſe the prophecies. *Iſaiah* cries out againſt them therefore, and calles them *Hammaamikim*, that is to ſay, Diggers: euen as if they digged themſelues caues and hiding places, thinking thereby to deceiue Gods ſight.

Chap. 28.22.

Hypocrits haue vſed of old to ſcorne both God and the prophecies.

The words following of *hiding their counſels* may ſerue vs for an expoſition. Some expound this verſe as if the Prophet condemned the curioſitie of ſuch who are too bolde

in diuing into the secret iudgements of God: but this exposition hath no good foundation. The Prophet makes it cleare enough of whom it is he speakes, when he addes their scoffing speeches, in that they thought to commit their wickednes so couertlie and priuilie as if none were able to discouer them: now this *hiding of their Counsels* signifies nothing else but a bold perswasion of escaping Gods hand. And thus the wicked obscure the light, by putting their mists before it, lest their secret peruersitie should be espied.

Thence proceeds this shamelesse question of theirs, *Who seeth vs?* for albeit they seemed in outward appearance to serue God, yet they thought themselues able not only to put the Prophets to silence by their shifts and deuices, but euen to ouerthrow the iudgements of God. I grant they did not this openly, for such will alwaies hold an outward shew of profession, that they may the better deceiue others thereby: but in their hearts they acknowledge no God, but that which themselues haue forged in the shop of their owne braine. *Isaiah* then compares these subtle practises of the wicked, in which they so much please and flatter themselues, to *dennes* or caues, for they thinke themselues to be so couered ouer with a vaile that euen God himselfe can neither see nor surprize them in their wickednes.

Hypocrites acknowledge no God in their hearts, but what they haue forged in their own braine.

Now in regard that the great ones are for the most part tainted with this vice, I thinke the Prophet meant speciallie to taxe them: for they thinke themselues too too simple and dull witted, vnlesse they can despise God, and reiect his Law, beleeuing no more thereof then that which likes their owne humors. They dare not for shame reiect Religion whollie, but are constreined whether they will or no to subiect themselues to some one worship or other. But this they do only because they thinke it will bring them in some profit and commoditie; but are neuer touched inwardlie with any true feare of God at all.

This impietie discouers it selfe in too many in these times, but especiallie since the Gospell was reuealed. We see how easilie men might be brought to be at one with God vnder the Papacie, for had not the Pope forged such a god as would change his shape according to mens seuerall dispositions? what man was there amongst them that had not a deuice by himselfe to purge his sinnes; and diuers seruices wherewith to appease his god? wherefore it is no maruell if grosse impieties appeared not then, seeing they were hidden vnder such couerings; but now they be remoued and taken away, men haue plainely shewed what they were before.

In the meane while the euill whereof *Isaiah* complained in his time is no lesse incident to those of our age: for men thinke that God sees neuer awhit when they haue put their shifts betweene, as if all things were not naked and bare before his (all seeing) eyes, or as if any were able to hide themselues out of his sight, or to deceiue him. You see the cause then wherfore the Prophet for a more ample declaration saith, that their *works were done in darkenes*, referring it to the vaine confidence wherewith the wicked are bewitched, who haue their sight so dazeled (notwithstanding the light before them) that in not seeing it, they labor to flee from the presence of God. Nay, which is worse, they promise themselues freedome frō all punishment, and giue themselues the raines to all disorder, as if God lay so closely hid, that he could be no way able to finde them out.

Hereunto appertaines that which they say, *Who shall see vs?* Not that the wicked vtter such words with their mouths, as hath been said, but because they thought or spake thus in their hearts, as their boldnes and vaine confidence witnessed, for they were so plunged in iniquities, that they reiected all admonitions, euen as if they should neuer haue had any thing to do before Gods iudgemēt seate. The prophet then we see had to deale against such wicked ones, who albeit in outward shew they seemed to haue some knowledge of God, yet they denied him by their works, and persecuted the pure doctrine with all extremitie. Now thus to speake, what is it else but to affirme that God is not the Iudge of the world, and so to pluck him downe from his throne of Iudgement? for he can not be knowne but by his word, which being once suppressed, or reiected, it can not be but himselfe, who is the author of it, must also therewithall be forsaken and reiected.

Vers. 16. *Your turning of* deuices *shall it not be esteemed as the potters clay? for shall the Worke of him that made it say, he made me not? or the thing formed say of him that fashioned it, he had none vnderstanding?*

THis verse is diuersly expounded; and there is also some difficultie in regard of two Hebrew particles, *Im*, and *Ci*. *Im* is often taken for an interrogation, sometimes for an affirmation, which is the cause that some take it for Truely. Moreouer, they take the word *Haphac* for Subuersion, as if he should say, Your subuersion shal be esteemed as the clay. Others, for Thought, that is to say, for the counsels which are working in the braine. But the exposition most receiued is, to take this word for Subuersion or destruction: as if he should say, It will be no more mastrie for me to roote you out, then for a potter to turne his clay in his hand: for you are like vnto it, in regard that I haue formed you: yet because the Prophet seemes to oppose the two foresaid particles one to the other, I encline to another opinion, but so, that I reiect not the former exposition, which in it selfe conteines a very profitable doctrine. Thus I vnderstand it then, Your turning, or remouing; that is to say, the counsels and deuices which runne to and fro in your minds, shall they not be esteemed as the potters clay? for is it not as if the vessell should say to him that made it, Hast thou formed me? Your pride is strange therefore, for you do as if your selues

See Chap. 45. 9.

were

were your owne Creators, and as if you had all things at your beck. But it is my proper office to appoint what I thinke good: and if you dare vsurpe my right and authoritie, be it knowne vnto you, that you haue forgotten your condition, no lesse then if you thought your selues goddes rather then men.

This diuersitie of expositions alters the Prophets meaning nothing at all; whose purpose was to confirme the doctrine of the former verse: for hee againe reproues these proud ones, who attributed so much power vnto themselues, that they would by no meanes be brought vnder Gods yoke, being in such wise bewitched with a false opinion of their owne wisdome, that they contemned all good admonitions, as if they had beene somes pettie goddes. Thus you see how it is said, that they *denied God that formed them:* for whatsoeuer it bee that men attribute vnto themselues, therein they rob God, and take away that honour which belongs vnto him.

The exposition should be a little differing in the first member onely: those which take the particle *im* affirmatiuely, draw this sense; Certainely I will breake you, as if a potter should breake the pot which he hath made. But because the Prophet had to deale against great ones, who sought couerts to hide themselues from the Lord, I rather take it by way of an interrogation, as if he should say; Are you such subtile headed fellowes indeed, that by the turnings and discourses which you plot in your minds, you thinke you can bring this and that to passe, as the Potter doth his clay, who by turning it vpon his wheele, makes it receiue what shape it pleaseth him? But let euerie man chuse which sense he likes best: for mine owne part, I haue followed that which I thinke to be most probable.

Vers. 17. *Is it not yet but a little while, and Lebanon shall bee turned into Carmel? And Carmel shall be counted as a forrest?*

NOw the Lord shewes that hee will let these wicked ones see what they are: as if he should say; You rocke your selues asleep in your pride; but I will wake you ere it bee long. For men are wont to take libertie to themselues to doe euill, till they feele the heauie hand of God: for which cause, the Prophet threatens that his iudgements are readie to seise vpon so brutish a boldnesse. Vnder the names of *Lebanon* and *Carmel*, he meant to expresse a renuing of the world as it were, and a change of things therein. But the doubt is, to what end: in which regard, the expositors disagree much one from another: for mount *Libanus* being replenished with trees and forrests, and *Carmel* being a fat and fruitfull soile: many thinke that the *Iewes* are compared to Carmel, because they should become barren: and the *Christians* to Lebanon, because they should bring forth great plentie of fruit. This opinion hath a goodly shew, and men are vsually very much tickled and delighted with the like deuices: but we find a like place to this in the end of 32. Chapter, verse 5. which will make it manifest, that the Prophet doth here by way of comparison, set forth the greatnesse of Gods fauour: for when he shall begin to blesse his people, the abundance of all benefits shall be such, that *Mount Carmel* shall lose the report that it had for fruitfulnesse. He saith then, *that he will make Lebanon to be like Carmel: that is to say, of a woodland, it should bee made passinage to sow corne in:* so as they should gather as much fruit of plowed land, as if their present estate being compared with that which it should be afterwards, it might well be esteemed barren, and desert. But this manner of speech shall be more fully expounded when we come to the 32. Chapter.

with vnapt expositions.

Men much delighted

Others take Carmel for a noune appellatiue: but I had rather take it for a proper noune: for his meaning is, that these so fruitfull fields might well be counted barren and desert, in comparison of this new and extraordinarie fruitfulnesse. Others expound it allegorically, and take Lebanon for the proud, and Carmel for those of meane estate: which is too far fetched; and for mine owne part, I affect alwaies to follow the most naturall sense; and that is it which I haue touched before. Moreouer, to the end the faithfull might not be discouraged, he descends from threatnings to mercy; assuring them that after they shall haue shewed their obedience of faith in bearing the Crosse, which for a time was to bee imposed vpon them, they should behold a sudden change to approch, which would cause them to reioyce. And yet in taking away this hope from the wicked, he signifies that vengeance is then neerest vnto them, when they thinke least of it, and whilest they promise themselues all prosperitie: for when they shall say, peace, peace, then shall sudden destruction ouerwhelme them, as S. Paul saith, 1. Thess. 5. 3.

Vers. 18. *And in that day shall the deafe heare the words of the booke: and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscuritie, and out of darknesse.*

HE promiseth, as hath been said, that the Church of God shall continue safe in the middest of these stormes: for albeit the world should be shaken with infinite tempests, and laid on heapes, as if heauen and earth went together, yet the Lord would conserue a little flocke, and raise vp his Church againe, as out of the middest of death. This place ought greatly to refresh the wearie spirits of the Saints, and to confirme their faith: for is it not a miracle of miracles, that so small an handfull of the faithfull (amongst whom remaines the one and the same religion, worship, faith, and meanes of saluation) should be conserued among so many wrackes of Empires which happened here and there?

But it seemes that *Isaiah* contradicts himselfe; for before he foretold that Gods people should be so besotted, that they should haue

none vnderstanding: vers.11,12. and now on the contrarie hee saith, that the *deafe* shall *heare*, and that the *blinde* shall *see*. His meaning is then, that the Church must first be chastised and purged; not after an ordinarie or common fashion, but so strangely, that shee should seeme as good as vtterly extinct.

And therefore he saith, *In that day:* that is to say, after God hath punished the wicked, and cleansed his Church, hee will not onely inrich *the earth* with store of fruits, but with the renuing of the face thereof, hee will also restore *hearing* to the *deafe*, and *sight* to the *blind*, to the end they may vnderstand his *law*. For men had neither eres to see, nor eares to heare withall, as long as so horrible a iudgement lasted: for all were so terrified and amased, that none could vnderstand. But when the plagues & miseries should cease, then the Lord would opē the eies of that ẏ were his, to the end they might see & imbrace ẏ goodnes of God. For this is the true way to effect the restauration of the Church; namely, in giuing *sight to the blind, and hearing to the deafe:* which Iesus Christ, as we know, not onely effected vpon mens bodies, but especially vpon their soules: Iohn 9. We through Gods infinit mercy haue had experience hereof euen in our times, who haue been drawne out of that grosse darknesse of ignorance into which wee were plunged, and hath brought vs out into the true light: for our *eyes* haue receiued sight, and our *eares*, which before were close stopped vp, haue been opened to vnderstand, because the Lord hath pierced them, to fit vs for his seruice.

It is an happie thing when temporall blessings and inward renouation go together.

Men are not so fit to receiue cōfort in the day of distresse, as when the storme is ouer.

Wherein the true meanes of the Churches restauration cōsists.

Psal. 40.

True it is that the blessing which he mentioned in the 17. verse, concerning the renuing of the earth, was vnto them a good testimonie of their reconciliation: but the *illumination* whereof he now speakes, is much more excellent; for without that, all the gifts of God will not onely vanish away, but will also turne to our ruine and destruction. Now the Lord iustly attributes to himselfe alone, so excellent and great a worke: for it is not possible that those which are blind and deafe, should recouer their sight and hearing by their owne power. It appeares therefore that this is promised in particular to the elect onely; because the greatest part of men doe alwaies lie wallowing and weltering in darknesse.

All Gods benefits will turne to our ruin, without we be borne anew.

*Or, Then the, &c.

Vers. 19. **The meeke in the Lord shall receiue ioy againe; and the poore men shall reioyce in the holie one of Israel.*

THen the humble shall againe bee glad in the Lord.] I translate this place thus: whereas others expound; The meeke shall continue to reioyce: for the Prophet speakes not of the continuance of ioy, but rather of a new ioy. As if he should say; Notwithstanding they be heauie and sorrowfull now, yet I will giue them cause of gladnesse, that they shall bee *once againe* filled with ioy.

He speakes of the *humble*: in which, note that we are prepared by afflictions to receiue Gods grace: for the Lord casts vs downe and humbles vs, that hee may afterwards raise vs vp. When he corrects his children then, we ought not to bee discouraged; but rather to meditate on this and the like sentences, and to hope stil aboue hope. And to cōclude, that after we haue suffered a little while, God will in the end giue his Church ioy and consolation. Moreouer, we hence gather that which I touched before; to wit, that the grace of illumination is not common to all indifferently: for albeit all dranke of the same cuppe of affliction, yet affliction *humbled* but a few, to make them truely poore in spirit.

Afflictions prepares vs to receiue Gods grace.

Heauinesse may indure for a night, but ioy comes in the morning.

All receiue not benefit alike by afflictions.

Vers. 20. *For the cruell man shall cease, and the scornefull men shall be consumed: and all that hasted to iniquitie shall be cut off.*

NOw he expounds that more fully, which was said in the former verse; to wit, that the restauration of the Church should consist in rearing vp those that were *humbled*, and in shewing compassion to the *poore*. But first of all that purgation of the Church whereof we haue spoken, was necessarie: for as long as God defers to execute his iudgements vpon the wicked, that are mingled among the good; they beare all the sway in the Church, all things are corrupt and out of order, God is neither worshipped nor serued as hee ought, and religion it selfe is trodden vnder foote. When the wicked then are either taken away, or represſed, then the Church recouers her first beauty; and the faithfull feeling themselues disburthened of so manie miseries and calamities, doe begin to leape for ioy.

In the first place he calles the *cruell*, *Arrogant*: which word is diuersly expounded: but the Prophet, as I thinke, makes a distinction betweene those who were not ashamed to commit their wickednesse openly; and such, who although they had some shew of goodnesse, yet in the meane while were no better then the rest, because they despised God in their hearts. It may be also that he giues them two differing titles, in regard that as theeues among men, they spoiled, oppressed, and vexed, giuing themselues leaue to commit what them listed. And thus they were not restrained by any feare or awe of God, because they esteemed of religion but as a fable. He also comprehends other wickednesses in adding, that they *rose betimes to doe euill*: for he speakes not of the Caldeans or Assyrians, but of such as would bee held to be of the number of the faithfull, and boasted, *that they were the children of Abraham*.

Vers. 21. *Which made a man to sinne in the word, and tooke him in a snare: which reproued* them *in the gate, & made the iust to fall without cause.*

WE haue told you heretofore with whom the Prophet had to deale; namelie, with

with hypocrites, and prophane contemners, who eſteemed all the reprehenſions & threatnings of the Prophet but as wind, and had forged to themſelues a god of their owne deuiſing. For ſuch who only ſought libertie to liue as they liſted in their luſts and wicked courſes, were vtterlie vnable to beare the ſharp reproſes of ỹ Prophets, neither would they bee touched nor repreſſed by their good willes. For which cauſe they were diligent in noting and obſeruing their words, either to ſnarle at them, or to wreſt ſomething or other to their purpoſe. Neither do I doubt but he here taxeth the wicked who were offended at the plainnes of the Prophets, and with their ſharp and vehement rebukes, as if they meant to bring the necks of the people, princes, and prieſts vnder their girdles.

2 Thence it is that theſe calumniations and falſe accuſations are raiſed vp againſt the
3 faithfull ſeruants of God at this day: thence is it alſo that ſuch doubtfull and curious queſtions are propounded vnto them, euen as nets and ſnares to put the innocent in hazard of their liues, or elſe to plunge them into ſome imminent danger. And we ſee that the Scribes and Phariſes did the like euen to Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe, Matth. 21. 23. and 22. 17. Iohn 8. 6. The laſt member of the verſe which is added by way of expoſition, ſhewes, that this is not to be vnderſtood of ſlanders and other cunning deuiſes in generall, by which the ſubtle are wont to intrap the ſimple: for the Prophet rather more plainly condemnes the wicked conſpiracies by which the vnbeleeuers indeuor to exempt themſelues from all reprehenſions and cenſures. Now in regard that their aſſemblies were kept openlie for giuing ſentence in iudgement, and that the *gates* were alwaies repleniſhed with people, the Prophets tooke opportunitie from thence to reproue all ſorts, ſo as they ſpared not the Iudges themſelues. For the matters of life and death at that time were in the hands of ſuch wicked and godles wretches, that it was needfull to rebuke them very ſharplie. But inſtead of making any good vſe of theſe admonitions to come to amendment of life, they became ſo much the worſe, and raged againſt the Prophets, and laid ſnares to catch them, for as *Amos* ſaith, They hated him that reproued in the *gate*, and abhorred him that ſpake vprightlie, Amos 5. 10.

This appertaines to all, and eſpeciallie to Iudges and rulers in Common-wealths, who are the moſt impatient, and wil by no meanes abide the leaſt reproofe. They loue to reigne as Kings, and would be ſo eſteemed of others alſo, albeit they be worſe indeed then the meaneſt good ſubiect.

The expoſitors agree not in the expoſition of the verb *Iekoſhun*, which ſignifies to ſpread nets: for ſome take it to chide, others, to do wrong, as if the Prophet accuſed the malepertnes of thoſe who gaue ouer themſelues to violence, and by meanes thereof baniſhed ſuch out of their preſence as ſhould any way touch the in their reputations. But as I hope the readers will approue of that reading which I haue followed.

He alſo ſaith that the *iuſt was ouerthrowne without cauſe*, for they did what they could by craft and wicked practiſes to bring the iuſt into hatred, as if they had been the only wicked men in the world: but after they haue borne their ſcoffes and reproach for a while, their enemies at length ſhall come to deſtruction. *For this is the Conſolation which the Lord giues the faithfull*, to wit, *that he will not ſuffer the wicked to ſcape ſo ſcot-free but they alſo ſhall ſmart for it, and in the end ſhall be ſuppreſſed, howſoeuer for a time they had the world at will.* But we muſt haue patience to wait for the accompliſhment of theſe and the like promiſes. *Verſ. 20.*

Let patience haue her perfect worke.

Verſ. 22. *Therefore ſaith the Lord vnto the houſe of Iaacob, euen he that redeemed Abraham: Iaacob ſhall not now be confounded, neither now ſhall his face be pale.*

THis is the concluſion of the former ſentence, for he comforts the people, to the end they ſhould not deſpaire in this poore and wofull eſtate into which they ſhould be brought. It is alſo needfull to note the time vnto which theſe things ought to be referred, to wit, to the time of the captiuitie when the Temple was ouerthrowne, the ſacrifices aboliſhed, ſo as it ſeemed religion was wholie rooted out, and all hope of deliuerance taken frō them. There was great cauſe therefore why the hearts of the people ſhould be ſuſteined and vpheld by theſe propheſies, to the end that the wrack and ruine of all things being come vpon them, they might haue this planck (as it were) to ſaue themſelues from Ship-wrack, vpon which if they kept themſelues ſtirnely, they might by meanes thereof come ſafe to ỹ ſhore. By this let vs be warned alſo to imbrace the like promiſes by faith, and when all things ſhall ſeeme deſperate, yet let vs reſt vpon them with our whole hearts.

Now he ſpeakes of *the houſe of Iaacob*, in which we are to note, that the vertue of Gods word is perpetuall, and of ſuch efficacie, that it brings forth fruit as long as there is a people in the world which adores and ſtands in awe of him. For there are alwaies ſome whom God reſerues, becauſe he will not ſuffer the race of the faithfull to periſh. Hath the Lord ſpoken it then? let vs beleeue him, and doubteleſſe the time wil come in which we ſhal reape the fruit of our faith. For as his truth is firme and ſtable in it ſelfe, ſo if we reſt conſtant the vpon him, wee ſhall neuer be deſtitute of comfort.

Doubteleſſe there is an end, and thy hope ſhall not be cut off. Prou. 23. 18.

None that truſt in him ſhall be confounded. Pſal. 34. 22.

It is not without cauſe alſo that he addes, that God who now promiſeth to be mercifull vnto *Iaacob*, ſaith, that he *redeemed Abraham*: for he therein brings the people to the beginning of the Church, that cōſidering Gods power, which from time to time was manifeſted by ſo many famous examples, they might haue no occaſion at all to call his truth into queſtion. If ſo be then they gloried in that they were the children of *Abraham*, they were alſo therewithall to thinke from what place the Lord did firſt deliuer him, to wit, from the

Abrahams deliuerance.

seruice of idols which he and his father worshipped: Iosh.24.2. But he redeemed him often besides that; to wit, when he was in danger in Egypt and in Gerar: Gen. 12.17. & 20. 14. Also when he discomfited the kings: Gen. 14.16. Lastly, when God granted him issue euen at the time when hee was past power to beget any: Gen.21.2. For albeit the Prophet had a speciall respect to Gods adoption, when he commanded him to goe out of his fathers house: yet vnder this *redemption*, he comprehends also all the benefits which God bestowed vpon him: for we see that *Abraham* was not redeemed onely once: that is, from extrem dangers and perils of death. Now if the Lord raised vp his Church in the onely person of *Abraham*, and that in such a time as he had lost all strength to beget any children to conserue the same after him; will not the Lord preserue it for the time to come, when in mans iudgement it was as good as forlorne? What a miserable waste was there of the Church, at the comming of Christ? How many enemies were there which opposed the same? Yet did he set vp this his kingdome in despite of them all: the Church florished and made all the world to wonder at the glorie of it. Let vs not doubt then but that the Lord will in his due time manifest his power both in auenging himselfe vpo the enemies of his Church which oppresse it, and in restoring of her to her first beautie.

A singular consolation.

When he saith, *Iacob shall not be confounded*; we often see that the faithful are constrained to hang downe their heads with shame, as *Ieremie* witnesseth; I will put my mouth in the dust: Lament.3.29. Also *Micha* saith; The time is come, in which the wise shall put their hands vpon their mouth, and licke the dust: for when the Lord corrects his people so sharplie, the faithfull must needes bee *confounded* therewith. But the Prophet afterward shewes, that this shall not indure for euer. Let vs not dispaire then in aduersitie: for albeit the wicked make vs their laughing stockes, and lade vs with all the indignities in the world, yet will the Lord in the end draw vs out of this *shame and confusion of face*.

Mich.7.16.

Marken tō this O thou troubled soule, and know it for thy selfe. Iob.5.27.

Yet the Lord therewithall shewes, that this fauor belongs not vnto such proud ones, who either are obstinate, or oppose their hard heads against Gods blowes that hee laies vpon them; but that it onely belongs vnto the humble, who are bowed with shame, walking humbly with their heads bowed downe.

Obiect.

But may some obiect, how can it bee said that *Iacob shall not be confounded*, seeing he was dead long before? it seemes hee attributes some feeling to the dead, and then they know what we doe in this world: thence the Papists argue, that the dead know all that we doe. I

Ans.

answer, there is here the fayning of a person; which is often found in the Scriptures: in which sense *Ieremy* saith; That a voice was heard in Ramah, *Rachel* weeping for her children and would not be comforted for them, because they were not: Ier.31.15. For in that place he sets forth the desolation of the Tribe of *Beniamin*, by the lamentation of *Rachel*, which was the grandmother as it were. So *Isaiah* brings in *Iacob* couered with *shame* and *confusion*, in regard of the vices and wickednesses of his posteritie. For as a wise sonne is the glory of his father, so a foole is an heauinesse to his mother: Prou.10.1. Although mothers doe cocker their children most, yet are they *ashamed* when they see them offend. How much more fathers then, whose loue being guided by discretion, are chiefly carefull for the well ordering and instructing of their children. Must they not needs be much more grieued, in seeing them wax wicked and dissolute? But the Prophet meant here to touch the people to the quicke, in setting *Iacob* their father before them; who being adorned with such rare graces of God, was now dishonoured by his successors: so as if himselfe had been present to haue seene them, it would haue constrained him to *blush for shame*. He therefore taxeth the vnthankfulnesse of the people, who in stead of honouring, dishonored their father.

Simile.

Vers. 23. *"But when hee seeth his children, the worke of mine hands in the middest of him, they shall sanctifie my name, and sanctifie the holie one of Iacob, and shall feare the God of Israel.*

"Or, for when he shall see, &c.

THe particle *Ci*, is here to bee read in its proper signification; to wit, *For*; because the Prophet giues a reason why the shame of Israel should be taken away: that is, he should haue *children* raised vp vnto him againe, as it were from death to life. In that the Lord cals them the *worke of his hands*; I nothing doubt but he therein meant to expresse the admirable worke of their redemption: for he makes those *new men*, (as it were) whom hee adopts and ioines vnto him for his children; as it is said, Psal.102.19. *The people that shall be created, shall praise the Lord*: in which place the holie Ghost doth in like manner speake of the restauration of the Church. For there is no mention heere of that vniuersall creation of mankind, vnder which all good and bad are comprehended, as wee haue often said: but he now brings vs to the knowledge of his power, to the end we should not iudge of the saluation of the Church, by viewing her present estate. Here therefore wee must note diuers oppositions: first, betweene the deformitie of the Church, and her beautie or excellencie betweene glory and shame: secondly, betweene the people of God, and other nations: thirdly, betweene the worke of Gods hands, and the worke of men, (for the Church can no way be reestablished but by the onely hand of God:) fourthly, betweene her florishing estate, and that miserable waste by which she was pittifully rent in sunder before. For he calles the *middest* of her a perfect restauration; by which the people shall be so reunited and ioyned together, that she shall not only possesse the borders of the land, but

See chap.49. 7.

the

the middeſt and the chiefe place thereof alſo. Laſtly he ſhewes what the end of our redemption is, whē he ſaith, That they ſhal *ſanctifie* his name: for we are all created to the end Gods goodnes may be magnified amongſt vs. But becauſe the moſt part of men doe ſhun this end, God hath choſen his Church, in which his praiſes do ſound and continue, as it is ſaid in the Pſalme 65. 2. Praiſe waiteth for thee ô God in Zion. Now becauſe many ſheep in the flock grow corrupt, the Prophet aſſignes this office to ỹ *faithfull*, whom God miraculouſlie had preſerued.

The end of our redemption noted.

Praiſe waiteth for the Lord, but it is in Zion.

Moreouer, becauſe the hypocrites honour God with their lips, and are farre from him in their hearts, as we haue ſeene verſe 13. *Iſaiah* addes *feare* to praiſes: ſhewing by this, that *praiſes* are of no account with God, vnleſſe we truly and with our whole hearts doe ſubiect our ſelues vnto him: neither yet, vnleſſe our whole life teſtifies for vs that we take not vp his holie name fainedlie nor hypocriticallie.

Praiſes are of no account with God, vnleſſe they proceed from a reuerent feare of his Maieſtie.

Verſ. 24. *Then they that erred in ſpirit ſhal haue vnderſtanding, and they that murmured ſhall learne doctrine.*

HE yet againe repeates this promiſe which he touched in the 18. verſe: for whileſt mens vnderſtandings are poſſeſſed with ignorance and blindnes, deſtruction beſiegeth and enuirons them about, although they otherwiſe flow in abundance of all worldlie wealth. The Lord therefore minding to prepare for the reſtauration of his Church, begins to cleare and enlighten the *vnderſtandings* of thoſe who before erred in darknes by the light of his word. And this he doth by the ſecret inſtinct of the Holy Ghoſt: for it is to little purpoſe to be taught by the externall miniſtrie, vnleſſe he vouchſafe to teach vs by his working inwardlie in our hearts.

Externall teaching will be to little purpoſe, vnleſſe God works inwardly in vs by his holie Spirit.

In the ſecond member ſome tranſlate detracters, others vagabonds: but the word ſignifies, that thoſe who reſiſted the Prophets before, and could not beare their reproofes, ſhould now become teachable and obedient, and therefore I haue turned it *murmurers*. By this we ſee how admirable Gods mercie is, in that he thus brings ſuch home into the right way, which deſerued no ſuch fauor; and not only that, but makes them partakers of his greateſt benefits. But let euery one lay this to his owne heart: for which of vs is it that hath not ſometimes or other *murmured* againſt God, and deſpiſed his holy doctrine. Yea, if God ſhould not pacifie our murmuring thoughts and affections by ſtilling and fitting them for his ſeruice, the moſt of vs would periſh in our owne follies.

THE XXX. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Woe to the rebellious children, ſaith the Lord, that take counſell but not of me; and couer with a couering, but not by my ſpirit, that they may lay ſinne vpon ſinne.*

Certaine reaſons why the Prophet denounceth this woe againſt the Iewes.

THE Prophet heere denounceth a *woe* againſt the Iewes, who being impatient in ſuffring the aſſaults wherwith the Aſſyrians and other enemies preſſed them, did ſtraightway runne downe into Egypt to require help of them. But this reprehenſion may ſeeme ſomewhat too ſharp, if we ſhall only conſider how lawfull it is for the diſtreſſed and weake to aske help euen of the wicked; eſpeciallie when they are vniuſtlie vexed: for it is naturall to all men to ſeeke protection and defence in time of danger. But if we looke vnto the firſt cauſe of this, we ſhall find that the fault which the Iewes committed in this behalfe, was not ſmall, nor yet to be endured. For firſt of all it is not a light ſinne, but rather a wicked rebellion for a man ſo to be the gouerner of himſelfe, that he deſpiſeth and contemneth to be vnder the yoke of Gods gouernment. Now the Lord had ſtraightlie forbidden them to haue any familiaritie, or to make any leagues with the Egyptians, of which there were two principall cauſes.

Nature teacheth vs to ſeeke reliefe in time of danger.

1 The firſt reaſon.

Exod. 23. 31. *Deut.* 17. 16.

The firſt was generall, and likewiſe had reference to other nations, with whom the Lord would not haue his people to conuerſe, nor to make any confederacies with them, leaſt they ſhould be corrupted by the ſuperſtitions of the Gentils. For it often falles out (I know not how) that by little and little we learne the vices of thoſe with whom we conuerſe and are familiar. And as we naturallie imitate their vices rather then their vertues, ſo are we by and by infected therewith, and afterwards the infection growes to ſpread it ſelfe inſtantlie. This is come to paſſe in this realme of France, which hath conuerſed with other nations: for hauing been too diligent in framing themſelues to follow their euill example, they haue now fraughted themſelues full of filthineſſes. Yea, this inordinate deſire of leagues & confederacies hath opened the dore for the Turks to enter into Aſia, and now hath giuen him paſſage into Europe: and howſoeuer they ſtill retaine their wonted frugalitie in meates and drinks, yet nothing remaines to all countries which they haue ouercome by force, but the villenies and pollutions which they haue left behind thē. The ſame may well be ſaid of our countrie of France, by hauing familiaritie with diuers other nations.

Two principall cauſes why God forbad the Iſraelites to haue any familiaritie with the Egyptians.

We ſooner imitate others vices, rather then their vertues.

France corrupted by hauing conuerſation with other nations. Turks.

The other cauſe was ſpeciall and peculiar to this people onlie: for the Lord hauing deliuered them out of Egypt, meant that they

2 The ſecond reaſon.

should euer retaine the remembrance of so great a benefit, and for that end gaue them in charge to haue no familiaritie with the Egyptians, fearing lest if they should fall into league with them, the memorie of so famous a deliuerance might easilie slip from them: by meanes whereof also, they might bee in danger to lose that freedome, in continuing to be thankfull for the same, which thankfulnesse was inioyned them by God. Was it not an vnworthy thing then to entertain friendship with so prophane a nation, and that to the dishonour of the Almightie? But especially seeing it was his will that his people should acknowledge him alone sufficient to preserue them in safetie, they should haue relied vpon this his promise, & freely haue disclaimed all other helpes. You see then that it was a very horrible sin thus to defraud God of the honour which to him belonged, and to labour after acquaintance from all parts with all prophane nations; for had they satisfied themselues with Gods onely protection, they needed not to haue bin so readie to *run downe* into Egypt.

Exod.13.3. 8.14.

Verse 2.

They were therefore iustly to bee conuinced of their infidelitie, in that they bestowed so much paines this way, and made such a stir in procuring their helpe. Neither is it to be doubted, but that the Prophet also was the more quicke and sharpe in speech against so sacrilegious a sinne; because thereby they bereaued God of the praise of his almightie power, in trotting thus vp and downe to get succour at the hands of strangers: for which cause the holy Ghost in an other place compares this lust to an inordinate loue; yea to most brutish whordomes. For *Ezechiel* shewes that their coniunction with the Egyptians in this behalfe, was no lesse then if a mans wife in her excessiue heate of lust, should not onelie runne after adulterers, but should euen desire to haue companie with Asses and horses.

Ezec.16.26. Ier.5.8.

I grant our Prophet doth not simply condemne al leagues with idolaters in this place, but hee respects that prohibition which was expressed in the very law of God it selfe; to wit, that they should haue no association with the Egyptians at all. Hee is thus moued to indignation against the Iewes therefore, chiefly in regard of this prohibition, because it could not bee but Gods dishonour must of necessitie be ioyned with this their running downe, as desperate men into Egypt.

Deut.17.16. Exod.13.17.

This is the cause why hee calles them peruerse and *rebellious children*, which phrase wee haue expounded in the first Chapter. His meaning is, that either they were men sunke deepe in their obstinacie, wittingly and willingly reuolting from God; or that they were so rooted in obstinacie, that there was no soundnesse nor integritie left in them. In the very entrance then hee chargeth them that they were men giuen vp to their owne counsels, and therewithall did cast off the Lord. Although some expound, To spread the effusion or shedding; and that it agrees with the Prophets meaning: yet others in mine owne opinion, haue turned it better; to wit, *who cover the secrets*: and this reading I haue followed. The reason is, because he speakes here of *counsels* and priuie plots, by which, in thinking to deceiue the Prophets, their meaning was indeed to flee from Gods presence.

Chap. 1.4.

Those which translate, That they may couer themselues with a couering, are grosly mistaken: for albeit the Iewes sought to the Egyptians for securitie; yet doth the Prophet rather aime at their wilie plottings; of which I spake erewhile, and both the expositions come all to one sense.

Now hee repeates one and the same thing by three phrases of speech: first, *that they couered their counsels from God*: secondly, *that they asked not counsell at his mouth*: and thirdly, *that they would not be gouerned by his Spirit*. For those that are caried away with a conceit of their owne wit, doe willingly giue themselues to cunning deuices, whereby they may couer their infidelitie and rebellion: and for as much as it was not their meaning to obey Gods word, therefore they neuer craued the direction of his Spirit. Thence comes that sorrowfull and wofull euent: for it cannot be auoided, but those counsels and determinations which the Lord gouernes not, must come to a miserable and fatall end. What wisdome is there but that which proceedes out of his mouth? Let vs seeke vnto it then; that is to say, let vs aske counsell of his word: so shall wee also haue the direction and gouernement of his Spirit, from whence proceedes all wisdome and counsell.

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Counsels that are not directed by God, must needes haue a fatall end.

They that take counsell from Gods word, shall be sure to be directed by Gods Spirit.

But wee are to note that the word and the Spirit are matched together: which crosseth those fantasticall spirits, who leaue the word forsooth, to aspire to Oracles and secret reuelations. And thus they would come vnto God, but they will not keepe the Kings high way, as they say; nay, rather despising it. What doe they else then, but striue to flie without wings, as the prouerb is? Let vs therefore hold vs fast to this principle, that whatsoeuer we consult or enterprise in the whole course of our life, without warrant from Gods word, will in the end deceiue vs, because we begin at the wrong end; for that onely ought to be our guide. And surely if we doe but well bethinke vs of our owne ignorance, or rather our great brutishnesse, wee may easilie bee brought to confesse that our madnes is worthy to be condemned; to wit, if we shal thinke our selues so wise as not to vouchsafe to inquire at Gods mouth.

Prouerbe. Principle.

If any obiect, that all things are not comprehended in the holy Scriptures; neither doth it in euerie small circumstance resolue our doubts: I answere, all things whatsoeuer that concerne the well ordering of our life, is fully conteined therein. Let vs then once conclude in our selues, that the word of God shall haue the rule ouer our thoughts and actions, and that we seeke to square them according vnto that; then may we be sure that God will neuer suffer vs to hang long in suspence, but will giue vs a way and passage out of all difficulties and incombrances. And yet it may be wee shall wait long for the accomplishment of this worke; but in the end it is certaine

Obiect.

Ans.

If we will yeeld our selues to be ruled by Gods word, he will not suffer vs long to linger in our doubtings.

certaine the Lord will deliuer and draw vs out of them all, if we be willing and readie to obey him. Be it therefore that we are carefull in laboring & ſeeking after ſuch meanes as may ſerue Gods prouidence: yet muſt we alwaies nouriſh this meditation in our breſt, to wit, that we begin nothing, till we be aſſured that the thing is well-pleaſing and acceptable in his ſight.

Begin nothing till thou beeſt aſſured that thou takeſt in hand is pleaſing to the Lord.

The Prophet we ſee then condemnes the boldnes of ſuch who ſeeke to ſuccour themſelues by vnlawfull cauſes, thinking that way to proſper beſt, when they vſe all meanes be it right or wrong, euen as if they meant thereby to be their owne ſauiours. Now it is certaine that this proceeds from infidelitie and diſtruſt, becauſe they thinke God to be inſufficient to ſaue them, vnleſſe they yet runne to ſeeke help of ſtrangers, although it be flatlie forbidden them: From thence comes thoſe vnlawfull contracts and craftie conueyances, by meanes whereof men thinke their affaires ſhall haue better ſucceſſe, then if they walked honeſtlie and vprightlie one with another. Wee for our parts doe ſee infinite examples of this vnbeliefe in all the parts of mens liues: for they thinke themſelues as good as vndone, if they ſhould make it their reſolution to be content with the only bleſſing of Almightie God, and to deale truly and iuſtly with men.

Men for the moſt part thinke themſelues vndone, vnleſſe they liue by vnlawfull meanes.

But let vs know that we are not only caſt off and forſaken, but *curſed* of God, as ſoone as we bend our ſelues to ſeeke defence from vnlawful helps. Let all our enterpriſes, counſels and ſtudies therefore begin at Gods reuealed will. It is our dutie alwaies to waigh with our ſelues what he commands or forbids, that ſo being whollie deuoted to his ſeruice, and to the obedience of his Commandements, we may ſuffer our ſelues to be guided by his Spirit, which if we refuſe to do, then ſhall our preſumption coſt vs the ſetting on, as they ſay.

He ſaith, that they *laid ſinne vpon ſinne*, becauſe the Iewes did nothing elſe by their goodly preparations wherwith they thought to furniſh themſelues, but daſht their foot againſt the ſame ſtone, and of one euill made twaine, which was too great alreadie: for the fault is much more blame-worthie and to be condemned when by vnlawfull ſhifts we labor to flee from vnder the hand of God.

A third reaſon.

But we are here to obſerue one thing more ſpeciall as touching the Iewes, who by the help of the Egyptians would put the Aſſyrians to flight, and yet themſelues had called the Aſſyrians to help them againſt the Iſraelites and Syrians. *Aſſhur* preſſed the Iewes very ſore, and doubtleſſe it was a iuſt puniſhment of God vpon them for their incredulitie, who ſought for help of men rather then of God. And this we ſee hath been the practiſe of many others alſo, who haue not ſtuck to ſeeke help euen from the Turke. Well, the Iewes were ſo farre off from repenting themſelues of their ſinne, or acknowledging God to be iuſt in the puniſhment thereof: that they *added ſinne to ſinne*, as if the committing of one offence had made amends for the committing of another. Theſe are the cauſes then why our Prophet deales ſo roughlie with them: for thoſe that goe on ſo in their wickednes, and do violétlie ruſh againſt God himſelfe, and will not ſuffer themſelues to be brought into the right way, neither by admonitions nor corrections, are worthie to be puniſhed with the greater ſeueritie & rigor.

2. *King.* 16. 7.
2. *King.* 17. 4
2. *King.* 18. 21.

Verſ. 2. *Which walke forth to goe downe into Egypt, (and haue not asked at my mouth) to ſtrengthen themſelues with the ſtrength of Pharoh, and truſt in the ſhadow of Egypt.*

WE haue told you before why the Prophet blames this *deſcent*, or *going downe*. But becauſe ſo groſſe a rebellion did much amplifie their ſinne, he once againe repeates it, that they did this *without conſulting with his mouth*, nay expreſly againſt his inhibition. He alſo brings them to the fountaine of this euill, when he tels them that they did it to *ſtrengthen themſelues*, becauſe they relied vpon the ſtrength of the Egyptians. From hence then ſprung that peruerſe deſire of theirs to make a league with them, in which they ſufficientlie ſhewed that they made ſlight account of Gods power, not much caring whether they truſted in him or not; and thus made their impietie manifeſt to all the world.

Obiect.

But ſome might obiect, that men are Gods ſeruants, and that euery man may lawfullie vſe their help when he needs the ſame. I anſwere, mans help muſt be vſed, yet ſo, that in the meane while we reſt and depend vpon the alone help of God. But there was a ſpeciall cauſe to blame the Iewes, in regard they knew well that God had forbidden them to ſeeke for any help of the Egyptians: and therfore in this their fact they tooke ſo much from God, as they attributed to *Pharaoh* and his hoſt. It is not without cauſe therfore that our Prophet doth here make a flat oppoſition betweene *Pharoah and God*: for the creatures are ſet as oppoſite againſt him in battell, either when they exalt themſelues againſt him, or when men abuſe them, and truſt in them, or deſire them more then is permitted vnto them.

Anſ.

It is lawfull to vſe the help of man, prouided that wee whollie depend vpon God for a bleſſing.

Deut. 17. 16.
Exod. 13. 17.

How God and the creatures are ſaid to fight one againſt another.

Verſ. 3. *But the ſtrength of Pharaoh ſhall be your ſhame: and the truſt in the ſhadow of Egypt your confuſion.*

NOw he ſhewes what the end of the wicked ſhall be that deſpiſed God and his word, and followed ſuch counſels as themſelues liked: to wit, that all their enterpriſes whatſoeuer ſhould turne to their ouerthrow. He alſo threatens them that they ſhall not not only be left fruſtrate of their hope, but that they ſhall alſo goe to ſeeke that with great loſſe and confuſion, which ſhould bring them nothing in the end but ſhame and ſorrow.

This muſt be alwaies the lot of the wicked, for howſoeuer for a time they ſeeme to be whollie at their eaſe, and that all things fall

out

out according to their desire; yet in the end the same things shall turne to their ruine. This is the iust reward of their presumption, when they dare to passe the bounds of Gods word: for things attained by vnlawful means, shall neuer bring profit to the possessors. He speakes of the *strength of Pharaoh*, by way of yeelding or granting: as if hee should say; You verily thinke *Pharaohs* strength is your safetie: but be better aduised, for it shall bring you nothing but *shame* and dishonour. *The shadow of Egypt* vnder which you hope to shrowd your selues, shall cause you to be cast downe with confusion of face. These two words of *confusion* and *ignominie*, are to be taken both in one sense; but the latter is added by way of amplification, because it carries greater weight with it then the former.

Things attained by vnlawfull meanes, shall neuer bring profit to the possessors.

Vers. 4. *For his Princes were at Zoan, and his Ambassadours came vnto Hanes.*

WEe may see by the Prophets words, that the Iewes not onely desired the aide of the Egyptians, calling them to aide and succour them: but he expresseth somewhat more, to wit, that they obtained not the same without *great cost and labour*. For it could not be auoided, but they must needes make *long iournies, take much paines*, and be at *extraordinarie charges*, to goe *laden with their presents* to the furthest Cities of Egypt, which he here names. For they sent no common persons on these ambassages, but *Lords* and great *Princes*. The reprehension therefore is the sharper, because they had basely sought succour of the Egyptians, trotting vp and down like poore suters. We are also to note ỹ antithesis here which we spake of before; to wit, that God was ready at hand, and neere to be found; so as they needed not to trauell far, nor to be at any great expences to call vpon his name: for he tied himselfe vnto them by this promise; This is my rest: Psal. 132. 14. and had told them that in that place hee would be found of them. But these poore wretches in despising God, did rather choose to vex themselues, by running to the vttermost parts of the world, then to inioy that present helpe which was offred them within the walles of their owne Citie.

Vers. 5. *They shall be ashamed of the people that cannot profit them, nor helpe nor doe them good; but* shall be *a shame and also a reproch.*

HE confirmes the former sentence: for it was a wonderfull hard matter to perswade the obstinate sort amongst the Iewes, that all things which they tooke in hand without the expresse warrant of Gods word, should turne to their ouerthrow. Now to the end they might be the more seuerely punished, God suffered them sometimes to prosper in their wicked courses; that so, being more and more seduced, they might in the end breake their owne neckes: for it came to passe by his iust iudgement, that Satan drew them on by little and little with his sweete baites, till hee had caught them fast in his nets. But in the end it was euident that they were not onely depriued of that succour which they expected, but were also sharplie corrected for their presumption and infidelitie.

Men may sometimes prosper in bad and euill courses, but it is to make their downfall the greater in the end.

The Prophet threatens them then that the Egyptians shall not onely deceiue them, (as it often falles out that the wicked either giue vs the slip when we haue most neede, or doe treacherously betray those whom they haue set a gog with faire promises) but that they should stand them in no stead, although they did their best indeuours to keepe that faith which they had promised. For let men do the vtmost they can for vs, yet in as much as the issues of all things rests in the hands of God, we shall receiue no benefit thereby, vnlesse God bee pleased to adde his blessing. When the Prophet spake this, it was verie doubtfull and hard to bee beleeued, that so mightie a people should bee vnable to giue them *helpe*: but we ought to hold it for a sure principle, that all the comforts which the world is able to set before vs, shall turne but to smoke, vnlesse the Lord be fauourable and mercifull vnto vs.

Men can doe vs no good further then it pleaseth God to blesse their indeuors for our good.

A Principle.

Vers. 6. *The burthen of the beasts of the South in a land of trouble and anguish, from whence shall come the young and old Lion, the Viper, and fierie flying Serpent* against them *that shall beare their riches vpon the shoulders of the Coltes, and their treasures vpon the bunches of the Camels, to a people that cannot profit.*

HAuing inueied against the consultations of the Iewes, in seeking helpe from the Egyptians, he now scornes them for the large expences, and great paines which they were at to bring this about: and therefore he denounceth the same curse which he did in the beginning of the Chapter; because they foolishly busied themselues much in trangressing Gods commandement. He mentions the *South*, because they passed thorow the South Country, wherein Egypt was situated from Iudea. And in regard of the way thereunto, he calles the *beasts*, and speakes to them: the rather to shame men, who were become sensleſse, and would heare no admonitions at all. He therefore shewes that the effect of this propheeie shall extend it selfe to the very *brute beasts*, seeing men did shut their eares against it. For seeing this people did proudly contemne these threatnings, the Prophet doth for good cause direct his speech to the *Horses* and Camels, who though they were destitute of reason, yet should they perceiue that God spake not in vaine.

Furthermore, the Prophet shewes that *Egypt* (vpon which this people thought to build

build their perfect happineſſe) ſhould proue *a land of trouble* and affliction, euen to the verie beaſts. The way was long and tedious, yet they ſpared no coſt to ſatisfie their inordinate luſts: yea they were ſo violently ouerſwayed and caried away therewith, that no diſtance of place, nor length of way could poſſibly coole or abate the ſame.

Now *Iſaiah* threatens them with a ſpeciall iudgement, (beſides the former incumbrances) which ſhould catch hold vpon them; to wit, that wild and cruell beaſts, that is, the *young and old Lion*, ſhould meete them. Which was no new nor extraordinary accident vnto them that trauelled betweene Iudea and Egypt. Therefore hee heere notes out ſome thing more rare and dangerous; to wit, that beſides the ſore trauaile, diſcommodities, and charges which they ſhould be at, God in his iuſtice would meete them with ſuch misfortunes, that in the end they ſhould miſerably periſh. This doctrine ought to be applied vnto vs, who are too much wedded to the verie ſame vice: for as ſoone as any ſhew of danger ariſeth, wee by and by haſten to vnlawfull ſhifts, imagining that they ſhall doe vs good, albeit we know they be condemned of God. Is it not great reaſon then, that if wee will needes partake with this people in their ſin, that wee alſo ſhould ſhare with them in their puniſhment, vnleſſe we preuent the ſame by repreſſing our ſtubburnneſſe and vnbeliefe by Gods word? We ought alſo to obſerue and take heede of this folly, which caries vs away in ſuch wiſe, that we care for no coſt, nor refuſe any paines whatſoeuer, to ſatisfie and accompliſh our ouer great fond and furious luſt. Whileſt we were captiues vnder the Papacie, we had too woſull experience hereof, trotting hither and thither, and made long and wearieſome pilgrimages to diuers Saints, when as yet the moſt tedious iournies were eaſie and light vnto vs: but now when wee ſhould yeeld obedience vnto God, and beare the light yoke of Chriſt, wee can indure no paines at all.

Men will take great paines to fulfill their owne luſts, but none at al in yeelding obedience to the Goſpell.

Verſ. 7. **For the Egyptians are vanitie, and they ſhall helpe in vaine. Therefore haue I cried vnto her: their ſtrength is to ſit ſtill.*

*Or, Surely.

THis verſe containes in it the expoſition of the former ſentence; for he denounceth and repeates but the ſame thing as it were; to wit, that the Egyptians ſhall ſtand the Iewes in no ſtead, albeit they weary their bodies, and empty their purſes neuer ſo much in ſeeking helpe at their hands. As if hee ſhould ſay; Egypts ſtrength ſhall be vnprofitable vnto you, notwithſtanding they ſhould do their vttermoſt, and imploy all their power to that end. Thus the Iewes ſhould be vtterly fruſtrated of their hopes, and to their great griefe ſhould find themſelues much deceiued. The letter *Vau*, here ſignifies For, or, Surely, as I haue tranſlated it.

In the next place he ſhewes that the Iewes haue nothing to ſay for themſelues, in that they were thus giddy headed to runne into Egypt, and that they were vtterly vnworthy of pardon, in regard they would not repent, but wilfully and wittingly poſted downe thither, albeit they had been admoniſhed to tarrie at home. For I refer this *crying vnto Ieruſalem*, to the perſō of God: wherein he complaines that he did but loſe his labour, in ſeeking to reclaime them by ſo many and plaine admonitions: therewithall ſhewing, that it was not without good cauſe that he had forewarned them to *ſit ſtill*; for he therein ſought to preuent the afflictions and calamities which otherwiſe he foreſaw would ſurely fall vpon them. But whence, I pray you, ſprang this vnquietneſſe? Truely from this, that Ieruſalem would not beleeue the word of the Lord. In a word, he ſhewes that meere rebellion of heart pricked them forward to trot into Egypt. Why ſo? Becauſe they might haue liued in ſafetie, if they would haue tarried at home.

The verbe to *crie*, ſignifies that they were not onely admoniſhed by words, but alſo by ſtripes: whence it appeares, that their obſtinacie and rebellion was the greater. He takes *ſitting ſtill* here, to remaine and to reſt quietly in the houſe: for he will ſhew afterward, that it had been their parts to haue been of a quiet ſpirit. See now the fountaine from whence this vnquietneſſe and ſtirring, yea, this their madneſſe and giddineſſe of head ſprang. Oh! They thought that the Lord was too weake for their defence, vnleſſe the *ſtrength of Egypt* were alſo added thereunto. For it is the propertie of infidelitie, to ſollicite the hearts of ſuch as giue not honour enough to the power of God, to be in continuall vexation of ſpirit, without anie reſt at all.

The nature of infidelitie.

Verſ. 8. *Now goe, and write it before them in a table, and note it in a booke; that it may be for the laſt day for euer and euer.*

HAuing conuinced the Iewes of manifeſt incredulitie, now he would haue it ſigned and ſealed as it were vpon perpetuall record for a witneſſe vnto all poſteritie, to the end thoſe which ſhould ſucceed might know both how obſtinate & rebellious this people were; as alſo how iuſtlie God inflicted his puniſhmeſits vpon them. We haue told you before that the Prophets were wont to gather their Sermons into certaine chiefe heads, and afterwards to faſten them vpon the gates of the Temple: which being read and viewed of all at leiſure, the Miniſters tooke them thence and laid them vp ſafely in Cheſts in the Temple: and thus the booke of the Prophets were conſerued, and afterward gathered orderlie into volumes. But when among the reſt there was ſome rare and excellent propheſie and worthie of memorie; then the Lord commanded that it ſhould be written in greater letters, the better to draw the people to ỹ reading of it, that they might mark it the more diligentlie. The Lord now commands

See chap. 8. 1.

mands the Prophet to doe the like, thereby shewing that this was no ordinarie matter, but the whole to be carefullie written, and very attentiuely read. Yea, that it should not only be read, but also so ingrauen as it were in mens memories, that it might neuer be raced out.

No doubt but the Prophet got great hatred of all hands by this propheſie, in regard he was not afraid to bring them thus vpon the open ſtage, not only to ſhame them among thoſe that then liued, but among the poſteritie alſo, and that from generation to generation. For what can men leſſe indure, then to haue their wickednesſes publiſhed, or that the ſame ſhould ſtand as it were vpon record in the minds of men? oh! they can not abide that; they deteſt and abhorre it, accounting it a moſt vnworthie fact. Yet the Prophet notwithſtanding was to goe thorow with it, and to yeeld obedience vnto God, albeit he thereby got the hatred of men, yea and it may be put his life alſo in danger: which conſtancie of his we are carefullie to obſerue, in regard that he nothing feared the feare of men when the queſtion was of his obedience to his God, and the diſcharge of his dutie. Then he contemned hatreds, enuie, hurlie burlies, threats, falſe alarums, and all dangers, that ſo he might the more freely and boldly performe that charge which was impoſed vpon him. In which reſpect it is our parts to follow and imitate his worthie example if we meane to giue eare and to follow Gods call.

Iſaiahs conſtancie worthie to be obſerued & followed.

Before them.] Others tranſlate, with them. But the word Before, agrees beſt, for he meant to prouoke the Iewes *in the ſight of all*, by ſetting forth this propheſie written in a *Table*. And hence may we gather that wicked men ought to be ſeuerelie reprehended, and that *in the preſence of all*, albeit they ſtorme neuer ſo much at it; as being a thing which at no hand they can away withall: for howſoeuer ſuch reprehenſions and threatnings doe them little or no good, yet others peraduenture may be warned thereby, when they ſhall ſee them ſo branded with perpetuall ſhame and infamie.

Wicked perſons muſt be ſharplie reprooued, though they ſtorme neuer ſo much at it.

Iere.17.1. That which is recorded elſewhere, to wit, the ſinne of Iudah is written with the penne of a diamond, and grauen vpon the table of their hearts, ſhall be fulfilled in them. Neither ought they once to imagin that they ſhall eſcape, albeit they contemne the propheſies by ſtopping their eares at the publiſhing of them: for their wickednes ſhall be manifeſt to the view of men and Angels. Furthermore, in regard they did neuer willinglie repent themſelues, nor were aſhamed of their ſinnes, the Lord commands a ſpectacle of their infamie to be erected, and ſet vp before the eies of all: for as they were wont to engraue victories, or ſome notable things in tables of braſſe, ſo would God haue their ſhame noted in publike tables, which the Iewes notwithſtanding labored to hide and couer by their cauils. For this was an extraordinarie matter as I ſaid erewhile, that the Prophet was charged to defame his owne nation by ſo ſolemne an edict, for which cauſe it is added, that it ſhould be for the *laſt day*, that ſo they might be had in deteſtation for euer; or, becauſe that when the great Iudge ſhall appeere and ſit in Iudgement, and that all bookes ſhall be opened, then the ſinnes of the wicked ſhall be truly diſcouered: for then the things which before lay hid and buried as it were in obſcure darkenes, ſhall be diſcouered and brought to light.

Let vs heere obſerue diligentlie that the propheſies were not written for the men of one age alone, but alſo for their children and all poſterities which ſhould be inſtructed, to the end they might learne to eſchew that hardnes of heart which was in their forefathers, Pſal.78.6.7.8. and 95.8. And that which S. *Paul* ſaith of the whole Scripture, that it is profitable to teach, to admoniſh & comfort, agrees alſo to this propheſie: for we know that theſe points are needfull to be knowne in all times, 2.Tim.3.16. Let vs reiect then the imaginations of thoſe franticke ſpirits and bad companions, who affirme, that this doctrine was fit for that time, and not for this. Let ỹ faithfull, I ſay, learne to ſtop their eares at ſuch blaſphemies, and to driue them farre away from them: for albeit our Prophet be now dead, yet muſt his doctrine ſtill liue and bring forth fruit amongſt vs.

Note that the propheſies were not only written for them of former times, but to inſtruct vs and our poſteritie after vs.

Verſ. 9. **That it is a rebellious people, lying children*, and *children that would not heare the law of the Lord.*

* Or, For.

THe particle For, ſerues as an expoſition, in regard the Prophet now explanes that which the Lord would haue publiſhed to all poſteritie, namely, that the obſtinacie of this people was paſt cure, becauſe they would not ſuffer themſelues to be brought into any good order, notwithſtanding they were dayly taught and inſtructed. Beſides, we may from their vaine bragges gather how much theſe goodly Epithites did pierce and gall ỹ hearts as well of ſmall as great: for they gloried they were the holie poſteritie, and how they iſſued out of *Abrahams* loines, as if Gods adoption had ſerued for a vaile to couer all their groſſe and palpable wickednesſes, though they were neuer ſo manifeſt. Nay, God meant to lay them open, and to publiſh their wickednesſes with ſound of trumpet, as it were. For in accuſing them to be ſuch as refuſed *to heare the law of the Lord*, he therein opens the fountaine whence all preſumption flowes, to wit, *the contempt of the word*, which diſcouered their impietie in deſpiſing euen of God himſelfe: *for they lie* who ſay they will ſerue God, and yet will not be in ſubiection to his Commandements.

Iſaiah alſo aggrauates their offence for reiecting the medicine that ſhould haue cured their maladies, which medicine was offred them in his (wholeſome) doctrine. For this cauſe he calles them *rebellious*, vntamed, or wild; as alſo *liers*, or diſloyall, in regard that whoſoeuer will not ſubmit himſelfe to *Gods word*, doth openly turne his back vpon him, no leſſe then if God plaid the tyrant in exacting

He that refuſeth to ſubmit himſelfe vnder the cenſure of the word, taxeth God of tyrannie, is bewitched of Satan, and hates integritie.

acting ſome vnreaſonable thing at his hand: and therewithall doth alſo ſhew, that hee is bewitched with the illuſions of the diuell, and giuen vp to the vanity of his own heart, ſo as he hates all integritie.

Verſ. 10. *Which ſay vnto the Seers, See not; and vnto the Prophets, Prophecy not vnto vs right things: but ſpeake flattering things vnto vs; propheſie errors.*

HE now in plainer termes, ſets forth and ſhewes as in liuely colours, what that obſtinacie & contempt of the word is, whereof hee ſpake before: for the wicked not onely ſcorne all inſtruction, but doe alſo furiouſly reſiſt it; yea, they wiſh it were vtterly aboliſhed and buried in euerlaſting forgetfulnes. This is it which *Iſaiah* meant to ſay; to wit, that they did not onely turne their eares, eyes, and all their ſenſes from holy doctrine, but could very well haue found in their hearts that it had been vtterly extinct and aboliſhed: for the wicked are euermore pricked forward with ſuch rage, that they would haue no mention at all made of that which they cannot abide to heare of. For the power and efficacie of the word ſo galles and ſtings them, that they ſhew themſelues to be no better then furious wild beaſts in rage and crueltie. Faine would they eſcape, but they are compelled in deſpite of them to heare God ſpeake; yea and to tremble before his Maieſtie.

1 Now it vſually falles out that after this bitternes againſt the word, in the next place they fall to hate the Prophets that haue bin 2 the Miniſters of it: and not onely that, but to lay ſnares, and to vex them with perſecutions, baniſhments, and oft times with death it ſelfe. By meanes whereof, they thinke vtterly to roote out & race from off the earth, both the doctrine, and Doctors alſo that teach it. For men had rather heare dreames and fables, then to bee faithfullie taught.

The Prophet ſets not down here the verie words which they ſpake; to wit, as if they had openly pronounced them; but hee ſhewes what was in their hearts: for hee had not to deale with ſuch fooles as would goe blaze their impieties to the whole world: no, they were growne to the height of hypocriſie. For they made the world beleeue, they were ſuch as ſerued God deuoutly, and therefore complained as if the Prophets did them great wrong, ſo to diffame them. But *Iſaiah* pluckes off this viſard wherewith they couered themſelues, and lets the world ſee what they were indeed; ſeeing they would not be brought to giue place to the trueth. For whence (I pray you) proceeded their murmurings againſt the Prophets, but that they neither could nor would hearken to the voice of God?

The Prophets were called *Seers*, becauſe the Lord reueale that vnto them, which they were afterwards to reueale vnto others: for they were as beacons ſet vpon an hil, and as watchmen, thence to diſcouer a farre off tidings either of that good or euil which was by and by to inſue. But the people could not abide to heare of troubles; and therfore they hated the Prophets, who by laying their ſins cloſe vnto their conſciences, were therewithall proclaimers of Gods vengeance which was ready to ſeaze vpon them. To this appertaines theſe words, *ſee not, propheſie not right things*: not that they vttered theſe things indeed, as we haue ſhewed before; but becauſe they thought thus in their hearts, in which they wiſhed the Prophets would be leſſe ſeuere. For it went againſt the haire (as they ſay) to bee ſo ſharply dealt withall. Doubtleſſe none of them would once ſhew themſelues ſo impudent, as in plaine termes to deſire they might be ſeduced; or to ſay, that they would reſiſt the trueth: for in outward profeſſion, they made the world beleeue they ſought to promote the ſame with all diligence, as all our aduerſaries the Papiſts doe at this day: but they denied that the ſermons of *Iſaiah*, or of the other Prophets, were the word of the Lord. They were not afraid to tell *Ieremiah* that he was a lier; and not onely that, but gaue him threatning words ſaying, Thou ſhalt not prophecy in the name of the Lord, leſt thou die by our hands: Ier. 11. 21. Thus we ſee the publiſhing of the truth was to them a thing intollerable. Now in turning their eares from it, what could they elſe beleeue but lies? See then *how they ſought to be ſeduced and deceiued wittingly.*

But hee diſcouers the fountaine from whence all this ſprang, when hee ſaith, they deſired to be *flattered*. For they would haue been moſt readie to haue heard and receiued flattering words, and could well haue found in their hearts that their eares might haue been tickled in the name of the Lord forſooth. What is the reaſon then why the world is not onely ſubiect to bee gugled by impoſtures, but alſo that it earneſtly ſeekes and receiues the ſame? Surely becauſe all men naturally deſire nothing more, then that they might be ſuffered to rot in their filthineſſe, through flatteries. But the meſſengers of God muſt of neceſſitie bee ſharpe in their reprehenſions for all that, if they meane to approue themſelues vnto God. Whence it followes, that worldly men cauill fooliſhly and childiſhly when they ſay, we could bee content to bee Gods diſciples with all our hearts, if hee would not deale too ſeuerelie with vs. Which is all one, as if for their ſakes they would cauſe him to alter his nature, and to denie himſelfe: as alſo *Micheas* ſaith, that the Iewes cared for no Prophets, but ſuch as would propheſie vnto them of wine & ſtrong drinke: Mich. 2. 11.

Verſ. 11. *Depart out of the way: goe aſide out of the path: cauſe the holy one of Iſrael to ceaſe from vs.*

THE ſumme is, that when the Prophets are deſpiſed, God himſelfe is therewithall deſpiſed and reiected, ſo as he hath no more audience. This the wicked cunningly diſſem-

ble, because they are ashamed to confesse so great a wickednesse against themselues: but it goes neuer the better with them for all that. For God wil be heard by those to whom he hath giuen commandement to speake vnto vs, and to publish that doctrine which is contained in his word. Ought he then to be heard? Is any reuerence due vnto him? Let vs shew it in imbracing his word, as it is contained in the writings of the Prophets and Euangelists. Which I wish should be well noted, to vphold the credit of the word: for those that reiect it, doe as much as if they denied God to haue any being.

Would wee obey God? let vs shew it by our obedience to the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles.

Againe, the cause of such impietie is here touched, which doubles the fault; to wit, because *God flatters vs not in our sinnes*, but performes the office of a good and expert Physitian. Men desire to be flattered, and cannot willingly indure that God should threaten them: thence proceedes this hatred and reiection of the word: thence comes that furious war which they raise vp against the Prophets, whose threats and reprehensions they can by no meanes indure. For what cause should men haue to reuolt from God, and from vnder his rule and gouernment; were it not that they please themselues with the mists of *errors*, and hate the *right way*? The Prophet therefore fitly ioynes these two thigs together: first, the contempt of heauenlie doctrine: secondly, the hatred of vprightnesse. 1 2

Vers. 12. *Therefore thus saith the holy one of Israel; Because you haue cast off this Word, and trust in violence and wickednesse, and stay thereupon:*

HE addes the chastisement of this impiety; to wit, that they should not escape vnpunished, because they refused to heare the Lord speaking vnto them: which contempt he expresseth the more fully by the verbe to Reiect, or, to disgorge. He calles it *this word*, vsing therein a word demonstratiue, in regard that men willingly forge vnto themselues a *word* agreeable to the manner and course of their owne life: but they will giue God no audience when hee speakes. Afterwards hee opposeth Gods milde summoning of them, and an exhortation to a *quiet rest*, against their turbulent enterprises, saying; *You trust in violence and stay thereupon.* The word *Osek*, signifies rapine and extortion, in things appertaining to mens substance: others translate, Riches ill gotten: others, Slander, or, misreporting: but they expresse not the Prophets meaning sufficiently. For mine owne part I refer it not to Riches gotten by wicked practises; but rather to the pride and rebellion, wherewith this people were puffed vp.

Violence and wickednesse.

The word *iniquitie*, afterwards added, is not to be restrained to iudgement; because as I thinke, it hath a larger scope: for by these two words, the Prophet meant to set forth the impudencie of the wicked, who proudly and insolently exalted themselues against God. Why so? Because they would alwaies do what them listed, and withstood him and his sacred will. And as the Poets fained that the Giants made war with God, so these resisted him when he threatned, perswading themselues that they were able to make his force to recoile by their pride and ouerweening. A fiction of Poets.

Vers. 13. *Therefore this iniquitie shall be vnto you as a breach that falleth, or a swelling in an high wall, whose breaking commeth suddenly in a moment.*

THis is the sentence touching their punishment, which *Isaiah* sets forth by a goodly similitude: for he compares the wicked to a *wall* that is cracked or *swollen*. Now as the swelling of a wall, shewes that it is readie to fall, because it cannot long stand vpright, vnlesse all the parts be equally knit together; so the pride and insolencie of the wicked, is an infallible signe & token of their present destruction: for the more they are puffed vp, the more sudden shall their downfall be. And as they are full of wind, so it is not possible, but being ouercharged therewith, they must forthwith breake in sunder. Hee bids them therefore to exalt themselues and to behaue themselues malapertly against God, if they will: but in conclusion, hee will quickly *ouerturne* your pride & presumption; for it is nothing else but a bubble ful of wind. Hence we are to be admonished, that there is nothing better for vs, then that wee wholly submit our selues vnder God: and so to gather in all our spirits, that we bind our selues perpetually to doe him seruice. For whosoeuer hee be that shakes off this humilitie, and growes proud, must needes breake in sunder with gathering in ouer much wind. The Lord indeed for a time suffers the wicked to *swell*, and make their great risings and ouerflowings appeare, that in the end they might pull ruine and destruction vpon themselues, by their pride and vaine boastings.

Vers. 14. *And the breaking thereof is like the breaking of a Potters pot, which is broken without pitie: and in the breaking thereof, there is not found so much as a shard to take fire out of the harth, or to take water out of the pit.*

WHen a wall falles downe, yet there remaines some remnants of the ruines thereof; and besides, the stones will serue for some good vses; yea, that which is fallen may be reedified. But our Prophet prophecieth here, that those which shall behaue themselues thus rebelliously and proudly against God, shall perish in such sort, that they *shall neuer be healed*; so that the remainder shall be *vtterly vnprofitable*. He therefore vseth a similitude taken from an *earthen vessel*, whose broken peeces can neither be *made vp, nor gathered together againe*. Which threatnings ought

ought greatlie to moue vs to imbrace ỹ word of God with all reuerẽce, when we heare that ſo horrible punishmentes are prepared for thoſe which deſpiſe the ſame: for the Prophet ſhewes that they ſhall be whollie deſtroyed and vtterlie confounded, and takes away all hope of their reſtauration. And good reaſon: For wee ſee how the contemners of God ceaſe not dayly to ſet vp their Creaſts, notwithſtãding they haue had the foile three or foure times: Why ſo? Becauſe nothing is more difficult then to pluck from out of their hearts that falſe confidence which was faſt rooted therein.

Verſ. 15. *For thus ſaith the Lord God the holie one of Iſrael, In reſt and in quietnes ſhall ye be ſaued; in quietnes and in confidence ſhall be your ſtrength: but yee would not.*

HEre the Prophet ſhewes one ſpeciall touching the contempt of God. For when hypocrites are generallie admoniſhed, it toucheth them little or nothing at all: the Prophets therefore vnto their generall doctrines adde particular applications; touching in a ſpeciall maner the conuerſation of thoſe with whom they had to doe, and ſo alwaies aimed at ſome certaine marke, or end. For his aduerſaries might thus cauill and ſay, Wherefore doeſt thou accuſe vs of ſo great an impietie, as if we meant to reiect the word of the Lord?

The prophets are wont to deſcend from generall doctrines to particular applications.

This particular therefore is alledged to preſſe vpon their conſciences, and to cut off all occaſions of vaine cauillations. As if he ſhould ſay, Did not the Lord tell you that in *reſt and ſilence* ſhould be your confidence? Why ſtaid you not vpon this counſell of God? To what purpoſe haue you kept ſuch fiskings to and fro? Thus the Prophet conuinced them with ſuch forcible argumẽts, that without extreame impudencie they were vnable any way to excuſe themſelues: or if they did, yet he went away with the victorie, as they ſay.

He calles the Lord *the holie one of Iſrael*, the rather to reproach them the more for their vnthankfulnes, that ſo they might the better know what ſuccour they might haue had frõ him who would haue been their gardian, and as their protector. But hauing once deſpiſed him, their diſtruſt caried them away to ſeeke help of the Egyptians; which queſtionles was a wickednes vtterly inſupportable. This Epithite then conteins vnder it a bitter complaint, in regard they had ſtopped vp the paſſage againſt the Lord, who drew neere vnto them for their good.

Some tranſlate the word *Shnuah* Repentance; others, whom I had rather follow, Reſt: for I thinke the Prophet meant often to tell the people that the Lord required nothing of them but to *reſt themſelues quietly* in him. Neither is it ſuperfluous that he recites one and the ſame thing in two words: for of ſet purpoſe he hath put theſe words *reſt* and *ſilence* together, that he might the better reproue the diſtruſt and incredulitie of the people.

Moreouer this ſentence conteins two parts, to wit, a Commandement, and a promiſe: for he commands the people *to ſit ſtill*; in the ſecond place he promiſeth an aſſured deliuerance. In regard the people gaue no credit to this promiſe, they therefore obeyed not the commandemẽt: for how ſhould they obey him, in whom they beleeue not, or vpõ whoſe promiſes they *reſt* not themſelues? We need not maruell then if they be depriued of peace and *reſt*, which without faith can haue no place; neither can faith be without the promiſes: which being receiued, then, and not before, the troubled and perplexed minds come to be quieted. Infidelitie then only is it that begets this trouble, and therefore the Prophet hath iuſt cauſe to reproue it, ſhewing, that it is the fountaine from whence all their miſerie ſprang.

A Commandement, and a promiſe.

In theſe words, Shall ye be ſaued. No obedience without faith. No peace without faith. No faith without a promiſe. Only faith quiets perplexed conſciences. Infidelitie the mother of vnneceſſarie feares and diſtractions.

Now albeit our condition be not altogether like to that of the Iewes; yet God would haue vs *quietly* to wait for his ſuccour, to the end we ſhould not be troubled or perplexed, but to hope in his promiſes. This doctrine ought to be common to all the faithfull, for Satan inuẽts nothing elſe but how to trouble and vex them, and to cauſe them to fall from that happie eſtate in which they are. *Moſes* long ſince gaue this admonition, *ſtand you ſtill*, and the Lord ſhall fight for you, Exod. 14. 14. Not that he meant they ſhould fall aſleepe, or be idle, but he only required they would keepe this peace in their hearts, Coloſſ. 3. 15. which if we inioy, we ſhall finde by experience that it alone will ſuffice vs for our ſuccour; but without it we ſhall be ſure to be puniſhed for our lightnes and preſumption.

This doctrine belongs to vs.

A peaceable and quiet conſcience will giue ſufficient comfort in all diſtreſſes.

Verſ. 16. *For ye haue ſaid, No, but we will flee away vpon horſes, therefore ſhall yee flee: We will ride vpon the ſwifteſt, therefore ſhall your perſecutors be ſwifter.*

HE ſhewes how they would by no meanes quietlie wait for the ſaluation of ỹ Lord, for they choſe rather to haue help from the Egyptians. But there is heere a goodly meeting together of words, whereby he turnes againſt themſelues their owne ſpeeches that were ſo full of vaine confidence: for in the firſt place he takes the word *to flee*, to eſcape, and in the ſecond place, to take their *flight*. The Iewes ſaid it was much better for them to preuent the preſent danger in fit and conuenient time, and therefore promiſed themſelues good ſucceſſe if they vſed the aid of the Egyptians. Truly ſaith *Iſaiah*, I denie not but you ſhall *flee*, yet not for your ſafetie; for you ſhall turne your backs vpon your enemies, and ſhall be purſued of *horſes much ſwifter then your owne*.

But wee ſhall perceiue yet more cleerely what vice it is which *Iſaiah* here taxeth the Iewes withall, by their preſumptuous anſwer, *No*: to wit, that they obſtinatlie refuſed to yeeld obedience to that counſell which God gaue them by his Prophets, and thought it

Horrible preſumption to oppoſe our no, to Gods yea.

safer for them to prouide for their owne defence by some other meanes. Thus in contemning God, they esteemed the false conceit touching the meanes of their saluation, which they had forged in their owne heads, (before that which he had prescribed them.)

To trust in God whilest outward helps faile vs, manifests that we haue faith.

Let vs in any wise therefore turne away our eyes from beholding present things, and from relying vpon humane helpes, that so we may wholly depend vpon God; for then wee shew whether we trust in him or no indeede, when outward means faile vs. I grant it is verie lawfull for vs to vse the things of this life: but alas, wee are of such a crooked nature, that in vsing of them, for the most part wee leaue and forsake God, and wholly abuse those his good gifts. Besides, we are to obserue how wofull their end is, who trust more in outward helpes then in God. For all things must needes goe backward, and fall out against their expectations: for example, wee see that whilest these Iewes imagined to *saue themselues*, they are constrained to *flee away with shame and disgrace*, and in the meane while did themselues *no good at all*. It may so fall out, I grant, that things may haue some outward shew of good successe in the beginning; but it is onely to the end, that the change when it comes, might bee the more cumbersome and heauier to beare. *Isaiah* denies not but Egypt might afford them some helpe: but withall he tells the Iewes, that God would finde meanes enough so to crosse and ouerthrow that helpe, that they should no way escape his hand. For though the whole world should doe their vtmost, yet shal they neuer be able to defeat God of that which he hath determined.

A hard matter to vse this world as if we vsed it not.

All things must of necessitie succeed ill with them that trust more in the creature, then in the Creator.

An heritage is hastily gotten at the beginning, but the end thereof shall not be blessed. Pro. 20.21.

Vers. 17. *A thousand* as *one* shall flee *at the rebuke of one: at the rebuke of fiue shall yee flee, till yee bee left as a shippe mast vpon the toppe of a mountaine, and as a beacon vpon an hill.*

BEcause the Iewes trusted in their strength, in regard of their multitude, (which men are apt to do when they see and behold their power) the Prophet plainly tells them, that all the strength they are able to make at home, shall doe them no more good, then if it were far remote from them. Why so? Because the Lord would so breake and so daunt their courage, that all their forces should stand them in no stead. For to what purpose serue weapons or an host of men; yea what good can garrisons or fortresses doe, when mens hearts are appalled in them with feare? Alas! all our power is but weakenesse, except the Lord fortifie and strengthen vs with the power of his holy Spirit. This sentence is often found in the law; to wit, that when they haue forsaken the Lord, many of them shall bee put to flight before a few of their enemies: Deut. 28.62. But the diuersitie betweene the Law and the Prophets, is this; the Prophets apply that to some particular vse, which *Moses* deliuered generally, as we haue shewed elsewhere.

No strength but from the power of Gods holy Spirit.

The difference betweene the Law and the Prophets.

Wee haue therefore to note three things here. First, that we shal haue no more strength then that which is giuen vs of God. For if he sustaine vs not by his almightie power, wee shall forthwith be out of heart. Secondly, it comes to passe by Gods iust iudgement, that men should make vs afraid, when hee cannot obtaine so much of vs, as to write his feare in our hearts. For it is equall that mens words and threats should quaile vs, when we despise the voice and threats of the Lord. We may also note in the third place, that the Lord hath no neede of any great preparations to correct vs; for if he lift vp but his least finger against vs, we are forthwith vndone: he needs not an host of men to ouerthrow vs, bee wee neuer so well fitted and furnished to withstand him. Moreouer, he tels them that their calamitie shall last vntill they be brought to nought: so as there shall onely remaine some small markes of Gods mercy, amidst so great a waste and destruction of the land.

1

2

It is iust with God to feare vs with the wordes of men, when we will not tremble at his voice.

3

Where he saith, *as the mast of a ship in the top of a mountaine*, it may be expounded two waies. Some thinke the similitude is taken from a wood or forrest cut downe: for when men do so, they leaue certaine taire and high trees standing, which may serue for ships. But the word *Har*, is taken for a rocke, or rocky place against which ships vse to wracke themselues; after which, there is espied a mast, or some such thing, as witnes of that shipwracke. The Prophet yet addes another similitude taken from the signes of victorie, which are vsually erected and set vp after the discomfiture of the enemie. In a word, hee shewes that there shall bee so small a remainder of men, that it shall much resemble a generall waste and desolation. As if he should say; This great multitude now dazles your eyes, but there shall come such an ebbe and scattering of them, that there shall not bee left so much as the face of any people. By this are we admonished, how humble, modest, and meeke wee ought to bee notwithstanding our great riches and strength: for if we lift vp our hearts, the Lord hath skill to take vs downe by and by, and to make vs become more dastardly then women or little children: so as we shall not dare to looke one of our enemies in the face; and if wee doe, yet all our forces shall melt away as snow (before the sunne.)

The first Simile.

The second Simile.

As a beacon.

Let not the strong man glory in his strength. Ier. 9.23.

Vers. 18. *Yet therefore will the Lord wait, that hee may haue mercy vpon you: therefore will he be exalted, that hee may haue compassion vpon you: for the Lord is the God of iudgement. Blessed are all they that wait for him.*

THe Prophet now addes a consolation: for hitherunto hee hath so terrified them, that all the faithfull amongst them might haue been driuen to dispaire. His meaning is therefore, to comfort their hearts; that so hauing tasted how pitifull and gracious the Lord

Still the Lord in wrath remembers mercy. Hab. 3.2.

Lord is: in the middes of theſe their calamities they might notwithſtãding poſſeſſe their ſoules in patience, and vphold their faith by the power of the promiſes. This *waiting* hee oppoſeth then to that ouer-great *haſt*, againſt which hee cried in the beginning of the Chapter. For there hee reproued the people for their poſting downe into Egypt, and condemned therein their infidelitie: but now contrariwiſe to their reproach he tels them, that the Lord will not render like for like, albeit they haue much diſhonored him; neither wil he haſten to puniſh them. Others expound, He commands you to wait; or, He will make you wait. But as I thinke the ſenſe which I haue giuen agrees beſt.

Our God will not render like for like. Pſal.103.10. 12. 13.

Now that we may the better cleare this ſentence, we muſt lay this foundation, to wit, that God alwaies keeps a meaſure in his corrections: the reaſon is, becauſe he is inclined to mercie, which we gather from the word *Iudgement*: for the Prophets meaning therein is, that the Lord not only chaſtiſeth, but alſo euermore vſeth a moderation in his chaſtiſements, according to that in *Ieremiah*, Correct me ô Lord, not in thy wrath, leſt I be conſumed and brought to nought, Iere.10.24. Alſo in another place, I will not vtterlie cut thee off, but will correct thee in iudgement, Iere.30.11. Thus *Iudgement* is oppoſed to ſeueritie; the Lord ſo moderating his blowes in ſmiting the faithfull, that he cuts not off from them all hope of their ſaluation, for of that he alwaies hath a moſt tender reſpect. And therefore as *Abacuk* ſaith, In the middes of his wrath he euermore remembers mercie. He is not like one of vs then, to take the aduantage preſentlie, and to flie vpõ vs. Alas! ſo we ſhould be brought to nought by and by. No, he attends vs with patience.

God keeps a meaſure in his corrections, becauſe he is inclined to mercie.

God not only chaſtiſeth, but keeps a moderation in his chaſtiſements.

Iudgement In this place oppoſed to ſeueritie.

The Lord is patient towards vs becauſe he would haue none of vs to periſh. 2.Pet.3.9.

Moreouer, it is a confirmation of no ſmall weight, when he addes, that God will ſhew *a ſigne of his glorie* in pardoning his people. Where I haue tranſlated, *He will be exalted, that he may be mercifull*; others turne it, When he ſhall be mercifull. But I thinke the firſt tranſlation ſutes beſt. It ſeemes to vs ſometimes that the Lord either ſits idle in heauen, or ſleeps when he permits the wicked to offer violence to his people? and the ordinarie phraſe of the Scripture is, that he ſits ſtill, or is farre off when he defends not his Church. When therfore he had let looſe the raines to the Chaldeans to oppreſſe the Iewes, they might haue thought he had beene aſleepe. Wherefore the Prophet ſaith, that the Lord will *exalt* or raiſe himſelfe againe, and wil goe vp into his Iudgement ſeate. What to doe? That he may ſhew you *mercie*.

Where he ſaith, *Bleſſed are all thoſe that wait for him*, this flowes from the former part of the ſentence, wherein he called the Lord *the God of Iudgement*. When the Prophet ſpeakes thus graciouſly of him, it is that he might perſwade and exhort the Iewes to hope and patience, for the people were full of diffidence, and were toſſed to and fro with a marueilous vnquietnes, and vexation of ſpirit: Why ſo? *Their infidelitie peſtered them ſo miſerablie, that they were not able with quiet minds to wait vpon God.* Well, to remedie this vice, he exhorts them to *wait*, that is, to hope. Now hope is nothing elſe but the perſeuerance of faith, when we peaceablie wait for the accompliſhment of Gods promiſes. Where he ſaith, Thoſe ſhall be *bleſſed* that *wait* for him, on the cõtrarie he ſignifies, that ſuch as ſuffer themſelues to be ouerſwayed with impatiencie, and haue their refuge to wicked ſhifts, ſhall be *accurſed*, and in the end ſhall periſh: for without hope in God, there is neither ſaluation nor happines.

Hope and patience.

A definition of hope.

If they be bleſſed that wait for God, theſe muſt needs be accurſed that flee from him. Without hope, no happines nor ſaluation.

Verſ. 19. *Surely a people ſhall dwell in Zion* and *in Ieruſalem: thou ſhalt weepe no more: he will certainlie haue mercie vpon thee at the voice of thy crie: When he heareth thee, he will anſwer thee.*

HE confirmes the former ſentence, to wit, that the people ſhall indeed be afflicted, but yet that in the end they ſhall *returne vnto Zion*. But this was a matter very incredible, eſpecialle after the ruin of Ieruſalem and the whole land, for then it ſeemed that all the people were cõſumed: yet the Prophet giues them a promiſe that the Church ſhall continue ſafe. He begins at *Mount Zion* where the Temple was erected, and ſaith, that the Lord ſhall yet be there *called vpon*: then he addes, that it ſhall be alſo in *Ieruſalem*: thereby vnderſtanding the ſpreading and increaſing of the Church; together with the reſtauration of ſuch things as before were ruinated. In the meane while he admoniſheth them that Ieruſalem ſhall be repeopled, becauſe God had his dwelling there.

We muſt dwell in Zion and in Ieruſalem if we will haue our requeſts heard and granted.

When he addes, *thou ſhalt weepe no more*, it is to ſhew that their lamentations ſhould not laſt alwaies. The Church, that is, all the faithfull, ſhould be in great heauineſſe whileſt they remained in ſo miſerable and in ſo wofull an eſtate; but *Iſaiah* tels them ỹ this their ſorrow ſhall haue an end: and in this ſenſe is it ſaid in Pſal.126.9. that thoſe which ſow in teares ſhall reape in ioy. The Lord often ſuffers vs to be preſſed with wonderfull anguiſhes, but in the end he will relieue vs, and giue vs matter of gladnes, to wit, *when he turnes the captiuitie of Zion*: for this is the true ioy of the faithfull. Moreouer, in as much as it is a thing very difficult to reioyce whilſt the tokens of Gods iudgements preſent themſelues to our view on euery ſide, the Prophet ſets the cauſe of ioy before vs in his *mercie*: for we may aſſure our ſelues that all ioy and reioycing ſhal returne and abound as ſoone as Gods anger ſhall be appeaſed towards vs, according as we haue before alledged that famous ſaying of the Prophet *Abacuck*, that in the middes of wrath the Lord remembers mercie: and neuer ſo farre afflicts his Church, but he limits, moderates, and meaſures his blowes by iudgement.

The returning of Zion captiuitie, the matter of our true ioy.

Our ioy flowes from Gods ſhewing of mercie.

Though God be moſt readie to ſhew mercie, yet will he be ſought vnto. Ezek.36 37.

Our Prophet likewiſe ſhewes by what meanes we may obtaine this grace, in ſaying, it ſhall be when God *ſhall heare the voice of thy cry*. For in theſe words hee incites and prouokes

To demand pardon of God without sense of sin, is the next way to deprive vs of this mercy here promised.

uokes the faithful to *prayers*, and ardent sighes and groanes: for if wee aske pardon of God, and be not touched with repentance and remorse for our sinnes; whence indeed this *cry* ought to proceed, we are vtterly vnworthy to haue any mercy shewed vs. Would wee then haue the Church deliuered from death, and restored vnto a prosperous estate, no lesse thē if she were raised vp out of her graue? Oh let vs *cry vnto the Lord*, that hee may heare the voice of our *cries*, sighes, and groanes. For alas! if wee be void of the affection of prayer, how can wee looke for any succour of him?

No looking for succour without the affection of prayer.

To answere here signifies nothing else but that God wil cause vs to feele by experience, both his helpe and fauour: for the Lord answers vs not by voice, but by the effects. And yet let vs not thinke he will forthwith answer our *cries*. Why so? Many times there is much weaknesse of ours mingled with them; so as they be disordered by reason of our vnbridled passions: he will assist vs when it shall be expedient for vs; so as wee shall proue by experience that hee hath respected our saluation.

Vers. 20. *And when the Lord hath giuen you the bread of aduersitie, and water of affliction, thy raine shall be no more kept backe, but thine eyes shall see thy raine.*

HEe continues on his former speech, confirming the hearts of the faithfull, lest they should faint: for patience alwaies begets hope of a better issue. He therefore instructs them patiently to beare the chastisement to come, because they should onely feele Gods wrath therein for a time; but soone after, the storme shall be blowne ouer; hee promiseth them that ioy and deliuerance shall bee at hand, because God will turne his anger away from them.

Patience begets hope of a good issue.

See Hos. 14. 5

I expound the latter *Vau*, After that: as if hee should say; After you haue been thus afflicted, then the Lord will blesse you; for hee will change your mourning into ioy. Whereas some take the word *Raine*, for Instructer, it agrees not with the text: for albeit the principall fruit of our reconciliation with God, stands in the inioying of faithfull *Teachers*, yet because the common people had suffered much want, *Isaiah* fitting his speech according to their weaknes, giues thē therin a taste as it were of Gods fatherly goodnes in mentioning great plenty of all things.

Psal. 30. 5.

By the words *bread* and *water*, hee signifies an extreme pouerty and want of outward things: and therefore hee addes *aduersitie* and *affliction*. Now in stead of this penurie, he promiseth to send them fruitfull increases, which he expresseth vnder the word *Raine*. For hee takes the cause for the effect: as if he should say; The earth shall be exceeding fruitfull: in which phrase of speech, the Prophet also had respect to the situation of that Country; which waited for no other meanes to make it fruitfull, but the *raine* which fell from heauen; for it was not watered by the ouerflowing of riuers or fountaines, but onely with raines. *Isaiah* therefore shewes that the Lord will send abundance of those fruits, which otherwise he could haue diminished or taken away by barrennesse. In any wise therefore let vs learne to comfort our soules with these and the like promises, when wee shall in anie sort feele the hand of our God heauie vpon vs.

See Deut. 11. 10.

Vers. 21. *And thine eares shall heare a voyce behind thee, saying; This is the way, walke yee in it, when thou turnest thee to the right hand, and when thou turnest thee to the left.*

THe fruitfulnesse of the land, whereof hee spake before, ought to bee esteemed a good blessing of God. But behold here the chiefest cause of ioy and gladnesse; to wit, when God vouchsafes vnto vs the wholsome & sincere milke of the word (for our soules.) For there is no famin of bread that ought so much to affect vs with feare and perplexitie, as the famin of Gods blessed word. And indeed looke how much more precious the soule is then the body, so much the more ought we to feare that famin aboue all other famin: as also another Prophet telles vs: Amos 8. 11. Our Prophet then promiseth vnto the Iewes a benefit, aboue all benefits the greatest. What is that? They shall now bee fed with the word of God, which had been exceeding scarce amongst them before. The false Prophets I deny not will boast, that they also haue the word; yea with greater boldnesse many times then the faithfull Teachers themselues. They forsooth will be taken and held for good guides, euen whilest they lead men into error, and at last, plunge them with themselues into euerlasting perdition. But the word which shewes vs the direct way, comes of God alone. And yet if he did not therewithall promise to giue *eares to heare it*, the word of it selfe shoud little auaile vs: for so he should indeed speake but to deafe eares, neither should we perceiue ought but a confused sound.

The famin of Gods word a famin of all famins.

But the inioying of it a benefit of all benefits.

False Prophets would be taken for the onely Doctors of the Church.

True doctrin it selfe shall auaile vs nothing at all, vnlesse God giue vs eares to heare it.

When he saith therefore that hee will be *behind vs* as a guide, wee may thereby perceiue, that God will not suffer his word to be spoken to vs in vaine, but will so worke inwardly vpon our iudgements and affections, that they shall bee bowed to a true and willing obedience. For all of vs naturally are vnteachable, so that we stand in need to bee wholly reformed by the worke of the Spirit. And therefore the word, *shall heare*, is of great weight in this place.

Now he compares God to a schoolemaster, who sets his scholl.ers before him that hee may the better teach them, and keepe them in order: wherein vndoubtedly, hee shewes the great affection and exceeding care which he hath ouer vs, in that he contents not himselfe to goe before vs, but also to watch vs at euerie turne with his gracious eye.

God not onely vouchsafes to teach vs, but to watch and attend vs with a gra-

Moreouer, the Prophet shewes, that those which

which follow God, ſhal neuer goe out of their way. For by the verbe exhortatiue, *walke yee in it*, hee addes ſome reliefe to helpe our perſeuerance leſt ſome difficultie or other might ſlake our courſe, as it often falles out.

But that which he addes of the *right hand and the left*, may ſeeme abſurd, in regard that when *Moſes* ſhewed the people the way in which they ſhould walke, hee therewithall forbad them to turne either to the right hand, or the left: Deut. 5. 32. & 17. 20. For that way is ſtraight, and no man ought to ſeeke out any by-waies. What might be the meaning of our Prophet then? I anſwere, hee mentions the *right hand and the left* in this place, in another ſenſe then *Moſes* doth. For it is taken here for all ſorts of counſels which wee ought to aduiſe of; which are diuers in regard of the diuerſitie of occaſions that we meete withall: and according as euerie one meetes with ſundry difficulties, and agreeable to his affaires and occaſions, heis to take aduice and deliberation.

Thus hee calles *right hand and left*, all the actions of life whatſoeuer; to the end that in all our enterpriſes, wee might haue the Lord for our guide, and that we might put nothing in execution, till wee haue called vpon his name, *whether we turne to the right hand, or to the left*. Hence we gather an exceeding comfort and conſolation; to wit, that the Lord will be with vs in our enterpriſes, and will direct our way before vs, whither ſoeuer wee turne, prouided that wee willingly ſtray not out of that path which he hath laid before vs.

Vers. 22. *And yee ſhall pollute the couering of the images of ſiluer, and the rich ornaments of thine images of gold, and caſt them away as a menſtruous cloth, and thou ſhalt ſay vnto it, get thee hence.*

HEnce it appeares, that this direction which God will giue vnto his Saints, ſhall not be in vaine: for hauing abandoned their falſe worſhip, they ſhall giue themſelues to the true. And the Prophet plainly mentions their externall profeſſion of pietie, when they ſhall make it appeare vnto all, that they haue *renounced idols*, and all idolatry. For ſeeing images are inſtruments of idolatrie and ſuperſtition; therefore thoſe who are truly conuerted vnto God, muſt needs abhorre and deteſt them: yea, and as much as in them is, *prophane and pollute* them; as we read *Iehu* did, who prophaned the Altars of *Baal*, and made a iakes of his Temple: 2. King. 10. 27. Faithfull Princes and Magiſtrates ought to follow his example, and ſuch as haue done the like, if they will giue any true teſtimonie of their ſound conuerſion. I grant repentance hath his ſeat in the heart, and hath God for a witneſſe of it; but wee can diſcerne it no way but by the fruits. And here vnder one kind, *Iſaiah* comprehends all. For in generall hee toucheth one note of true repentance; to wit, when men make it appeare, that they count all things cõtrary vnto Gods true worſhip abominable.

When he ſaith, that the idols are *prophaned*, his meaning is not, that euer they were *holy*. For how can that be eſteemed holy, which is erected to Gods diſhonour; which alſo polutes men with the filthineſſe of it? But in regard that men (being beſotted with a falſe opinion) attribute ſome holineſſe vnto them, therefore he ſaith, they are *polluted*, and that they ought to bee reiected and caſt away as filthy things of no worth.

Alſo in calling them *images* of *gold* and *ſiluer*; he therein ſhewes, that the faithfull ceaſe not to abhor idolatry, what loſſe or diſaduantage ſo euer come vnto them thereby. For many are loth to abandon idolles, becauſe they thinke thereby they ſhall loſe *gold*, *ſiluer*, or ſome ſuch like thing; and therefore had rather retaine them, then to ſuſtaine the leaſt incommoditie. Couetouſnes ſo holds & hampers them, that they thinke it ſafer wittingly to offend God, and to defile themſelus with ſuch abominations, then to loſe the paring of this or that trifle. But we ought to prefer Gods pure worſhip and ſeruice, before the moſt pretious things in the world. Let vs deſpiſe *gold* let vs caſt pearles frõ vs, & abhor whatſoeuer is deere vnto vs, rather thẽ to ſuffer our ſelues to bee polluted with ſuch vile traſh. In a word, there is not ỹ thing to be named for price & excellencie, which we ought not to eſteeme baſe & vile, when wee are to ouerturne the Kingdome of Satan, and to ſet vp the Kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, which conſiſts in his pure worſhip. For thus ſhall wee indeed make it manifeſt to all the world, whether the loue of true religion hath takẽ any place in our hearts yea or no; namely, when hauing indeed ſhewed our deteſtation againſt our owne peruerſe ignorance, we be alſo prouoked to put far away from vs all pollutions and defilings.

Vers. 23. *Then ſhall hee giue raine vnto thy ſeede, when thou ſhalt ſow thy grounꝺ; and bread of the increaſe of the earth; and it ſhal be fat and as oyle: in that day ſhall thy cattell bee fed in large paſtures.*

24. *The oxen alſo and the young aſſes that till the grounꝺ, ſhall eate cleane prouender, which is winnowed with the ſhouell and with the fan.*

AGaine he ſhewes by the effects, how deſirable a thing it is to be conuerted vnto God; ſeeing this is the fruit of true repentance, that God will receiue into his fauour the repentant; and will ſo bleſſe them, that nothing ſhall be wanting: nay, rather they ſhall be ſatisfied to the full with all ſorts of bleſſings. For as miſeries and calamities proceed from the wrath of God, which we ſet on fire by our ſinnes; ſo when he is at one againe with vs, all things fall out well, wee are inriched euery way; as wee may plainly ſee in the

dious eye whither ſoeuer we goe.

Obiect.

Anſ. What is meant by the right hand and the left in this place.

That cannot be eſteemed holy, which is ſet vp to diſhonour God withall.

Gods pure worſhippe muſt bee deerer to vs then the moſt pretious thing the world can afford vs.

Note.

How wee manifeſt that the loue of the truth is truely ſeated in our hearts.

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Images inſtruments of idolatry. Such as be truely conuerted vnto God, muſt of neceſſitie abhor and deteſt idols.

Faithfull Princes ought to imitate Iehues example, in polluting & prophaning idols and idolatrie.

Our ſinnes the matter that ſets Gods wrath on fire.

the Law. Deut. 28. Leuit. 26.

He ſpake before of the *raine* which ſhould make the earth fruitfull, but becauſe he obſerued no order in beginning with earthlie and temporall benefits, therefore he now ads to that doctrine which concerned the ſpirituall life, thoſe things which appertaine to the vſe of our naturall and corrupuble life. 1. *Tim.* 4. 8. *Mat.* 6. 33. For albeit godlines hath the promiſe both of this life and of that which is to come, yet in the firſt place it firſt aſpires to the kingdome of God.

Our proſperous ſucceſſes in all things depend wholly vpon Gods bleſſing.

Hence let vs learne, that men do but loſe their labour in tilling the earth, vnleſſe the Lord ſend his *raine* from heauen. It is he that muſt water the labours of our hands, and adde increaſe thereto, or otherwiſe we ſhall but tire and vexe our ſelues in vaine. From his bleſſing only muſt our *raine* come, and to it muſt wee aſcribe the abundance of the fruites of the earth which from time to time we receiue.

Nothing ſhall be wanting to the conuerted.

Let vs further note that nothing ſhall be wanting vnto vs, but we ſhal reape the fruite of our labors in moſt ample maner, if we conuert vnto God. Let vs alſo know that our ſinnes make vs often ſuffer want, becauſe we by our owne rebellion repell and beate back Gods bleſſing. Let vs no more then attribute the cauſe of famin and the barrennes to any thing elſe but to our owne vnthankfulnes. For the multitudes of people can not be ſo great, but the earth will be able to nouriſh and feed them: but we ſhut vp her womb by our miſdemeanours, which without them would be opened to giue vs all fruits in abundance, ſo as we ſhould liue both peaceablie and happilie.

The earth would neuer be wanting to vs in bringing forth her fruits, but that we cloſe vp her womb by our misbehauiours.

When God is angrie with men the poore dumb creatures fare the worſe: but being reconciled with man, they all fare the better by it. *Deut.* 28. 11.

That which he addes of the *Cattell*, ſerues much to ſet forth the goodnes of God, for he ſheds forth the ſame vpon the very brute beaſts. How much more thinke we will he do it vpon men, whom he hath created after his owne image? Now we neede not maruaile that beaſts ordeined for the vſe of man do indure famin as well as their maſters: and that on the contrarie they fare well when God is fauorable to men being reconciled vnto them, which the Prophet repeates and likewiſe confirmes in the words following, in promiſing that *oxen and aſſes ſhall eate cleane prouender*. For this ſentence is taken out of the Law: and the Prophets vſuallie do ſo, that in the euill plight & death of Cattell, we might behold Gods wrath: and frō the ſight thereof might be ſtirred vp ſo much the more earneſtlie and ſpeedilie to be at one with him, that our houſes might be filled with his liberalitie.

Verſ. 25. *And vpon euery high mountaine and vpon euery high hill ſhall there be riuers and ſtreames of waters in the day of the great ſlaughter, whē the towres ſhall fall.*

The prophets in deſcribing Chriſtes kingdome are wont to borrow ſimilitudes from things pertaining to our naturall life.

WHen the Prophets deſcribe the kingdome of Chriſt they are wont to borrow ſimilitudes from things appertaining to the life of man: for they could not otherwiſe expreſſe the true felicitie of Gods children vnleſſe they had done it by ſetting the ſame before vs in the image of thoſe things which are ſubiect to our ſenſes, by which men are wont to meaſure out an happie and floriſhing eſtate. The ſumme then is, that ſuch as obey God, and ſubmit themſelues to Chriſt their King, are happie people. But we muſt not iudge of this happineſſe by the abundance of outward things, whereof the faithfull many times haue little enough, and yet ceaſe not to be happie notwithſtanding. But theſe kinds of ſpeech are allegoricall, by which the Prophet applies himſelfe to our capacitie, that by the things which our ſenſes can comprehend, wee might conceiue ſomewhat of thoſe things which are beyond our comprehenſion, which being of ſuch an excellent nature, our vnderſtandings are too ſhallow to conceiue the leaſt part of them.

Happie people that ſubmit themſelues to Chriſt their King.

The faithfull ceaſe not to be happie though they ſuffer want.

Heauenlie things are of that ſupernaturall excellencie, that they can not now be comprehended of vs but vnder borrowed ſpeeches.

When he ſaith the *riuers in the mountaines*, it is further to ſet forth this ouerflowing of God his liberalitie, wherewith he would enrich his choſen. *Waters* vſuallie iſſue not out of the tops of mountaines, where nothing is ſeene but barrennes: I grant that valleys are moyſtned & watred with ẏ ſprings; but you ſhall ſeldome ſee *fountaines in the tops of hils*, yet the Lord promiſeth to bring this to paſſe, howſoeuer it ſeemes a thing vnpoſſible: But by this phraſe of ſpeech he meanes ẏ we ſhall be moſt happie that liue vnder the kingdome of Chriſt, ſo as there ſhall be no place whatſoeuer but he will repleniſh the ſame with all ſorts of benefits: Nothing ſo barren, but he by his goodnes will make it fruitfull, ſo as felicitie ſhall abound in all places. Our eyes ſhould ſee the performance of this promiſe if Chriſt might haue the full gouernment ouer vs, for wee ſhould behold his bleſſing on euery ſide if wee obeyed him with a pure and perfect heart. All things would then fall out to our wiſh: the world, and the vtmoſt bounds thereof ſhould be ſubiect vnto vs: but becauſe wee are farre off from ſuch a kind of obedience, therefore we receiue but a ſmall taſte of theſe benefits, and ſo much thereof doe we inioy, as we feele the growth of the new man in vs.

Happie men and women that liue vnder Chriſtes kingdome.

Note.

Our ſparing obedience prouokes God to be ſparing in beſtowing benefits vpon vs.

By the *day of the great ſlaughter*, he ſignifies and ſets before them another ſigne of Gods fauour. How? Hee will maintaine thoſe that are his in ſafetie, againſt the rage of the enemie: and thus the Prophet goes about to procure credit and authoritie to his former prophecie: for otherwiſe it had been almoſt incredible, that poore baniſhed exiles ſhould haue inioyed ſo many benefits. Hee ſpeakes here then of the *ſlaughter* of the wicked: as if he ſhould ſay; The Lord will not onely doe you good in ſauing you, but hee will alſo *deſtroy your enemies*.

All the expoſitors almoſt thinke the Prophet ſpeakes here of the diſcomfiture of that wicked King *Senacherib*, when he came to beſiege Ieruſalem: but when I weigh all things aduiſedly, I had rather refer it to the deſtruction of Babylon. For albeit there was a great ſlaughter whē *Senacherib* was with ſhame put

to flight: yet this people was not at that time deliuered. By this we are admoniſhed, that we bee not heartleſſe, though our enemies bee many in number, and haue greater ſtrength, fortreſſes, and more garriſons then wee: for the Lord can eaſily deſtroy them, and yet cõſerue his Church, although for the time he ſuffer them to triumph & to haue al things at their wiſh. Let neither their power nor rage daunt vs then: neither let our hearts faile vs, though we be but a ſmall number: for neither their munitiõs nor fortreſſes, neither yet their furie nor pride ſhall bee able to ſaue them from falling into the hands of the Lord.

Though the enemies of the Church be many and mighty, yet God's power will eaſilie ouermatch them.

Verſ. 26. *Moreouer, the light of the Moone ſhall bee as the light of the Sun; and the light of the Sunne ſhall be ſeuen fold, and like the light of ſeuen daies in the day that the Lord ſhall bind vp the breach of his people, and heale the ſtroke of their wound.*

THe Prophet contents not himſelfe to deſcribe an vſuall or ordinarie ſtate of happineſſe, except thereunto he adde ſomewhat that is extraordinarie. For hee ſaith, that the Lord will worke far aboue the order of nature, in this his liberalitie. Wee neuer read that the *light of the Sunne* was augmented, vnleſſe it were when it ſtaid it ſelfe in the daies of *Ioſhua*, that hee might haue leaſure to purſue his enemies: Ioſh. 10. 13. Alſo in the daies of *Hezekias*, at whoſe requeſt the Diall went backe ten degrees: 2. King. 20. 11. But our Prophet alludes now to none of theſe miracles. Nay, more then that, he meddles not with the lengthening of the courſe of the Sunne vpon our Horizon; but of the augmentation of *the light* thereof vnto *ſeuen fold more*. For he ſhews what the ſtate of the faithfull ſhall be vnder the raigne of Chriſt: otherwiſe, we know that the Lord makes the Sunne to ſhine, no leſſe vpon the wicked then vpon the good: but the queſtion is here, of ſuch a felicitie as the wicked cannot attaine vnto. There is difference between Godsliberality, which extends it ſelf vnto all, and that which is onely proper and peculiar vnto the faithfull; as it is ſaid in Pſal. 31. 20. Great are the benefits which thou haſt laid vp for thoſe that truſt in thee.

Iſaiah ſpeakes of this particular fauour: which that he might the better expreſſe, he takes ſimilitudes from things cõmon to euerie mans eye. And thus ſhewes, that God will *inlighten* the faithfull with ſuch a light, that the *beames of ſeuen ſunnes* put together, ſhall be far inferior thereunto. But to the end the ſharpneſſe of their miſeries, wherewith this people were ſoone after ouerwhelmed, might not leſſen the authoritie of this prophecie, he addes yet another promiſe; to wit, that God will (as a good Phyſitian) bind vp, or *heale the ſtroke* of his childrens *wounds*. Whence it followes, that there was a neceſſitie of this correction; that ſo by theſe roddes, the people might be prepared to come to repentance: yea, it was neceſſarie that they ſhould be *bruiſed and broken*, till they were in a manner brought to nothing.

He mentions their *ſtroke* then, to ſhew that the wound ſhall be great; for the people reſembled a body hurt with many wounds. If at any time then the Lord deales more roughly with vs then hee is wont, thinke, I pray you, vpon theſe prophecies: for the Lord will *bind vp our wounds*, which may otherwiſe ſeeme mortall and deadly. Now if any aske why the Lord deales thus ſeuerely with his children: I anſwer, wee ſeldome profit in his feare, when he vſeth vs mildely: for our vices are ſo rooted in vs, and cling ſo faſt to our bones, that they cannot bee cut off, vnleſſe God whet his razor verie ſharpe and keene. Queſt. Anſ.

Verſ. 27. *Behold, the name of the Lord commeth from farre, his face is burning, and the burthen thereof is heauie: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is as a deuouring fire.*

HEe foretels the deſtruction of the Aſſyrians, which were then the principall enemies of the Church. I grant the Iewes had almoſt no neighbours that were borderers, but they were againſt them: notwithſtanding in reſpect the Aſſyrians were the richeſt and mightieſt of all others, the Prophet ſcarcely mentions any but them and the Babylonians, who had bin Monarks ouer nations: although ſometimes by a figure called Synecdoche, the Caldeans are ſignified vnder the name of the Aſſyrians.

By the *name* of God, he meanes God himſelfe: but he vſeth this circumlocution, in regard the Aſſyrians and the reſt of the nations ſerued goddes of gold and ſiluer. For they mocked the Iews, as if they had worſhipped a God in name onely. Why ſo? Becauſe they repreſented him not forth by ſome ſhape or image: as we read of a certaine prophane Poet, who vſed to ſay of them in ſcorne, that they worſhipped the clouds, and a diuinitie that was ſhut vp in heauen. See how infidels and prophane perſons iudge of God according to their outward ſenſes: but our Prophet brings the faithfull to this *name* of God. As if he ſhould ſay; This God which hath manifeſted himſelfe vnto you by his *name*; this God whom you neither touch nor ſee, *ſhall come*, and ſhall auenge the wrongs done vnto you. A prophane Poet. The God whom wee neither feele nor ſee with outward ſenſes, is ſufficient to auenge the wrongs done to his church.

From farre.] He addes this by way of yeelding or granting ſo much as it were vnto the idolaters. For as long as the wicked feele not the hand of God, they thinke him *far off*; and in the meane while deride the faithfull, as if they truſted in vanitie. The prophet therefore ſpeaking according to the opinion of the vnbeleeuers, ſhewes that that ſame God whom they eſteeme ſo *far off, ſhall come*: or rather that hee is already come, and is hard at hand. This he ſignifies by the particle *Behold*, which he oppoſeth to the word *farre off*: and therein admoniſhing the faithfull alſo to paſſe ouer all impediments, that they may

come

come to the hope of this promiſed redemption.

His face is burning.

Now to ſhew that Gods *name* is not worſhipped in vaine nor without fruit in Iudeah, the Prophet ſets before them his fearefull power, which he will manifeſt for the ouerthrow of the enemies of his Church. For when he ſpeakes to the faithfull, he ſets him forth gentle, louing, patient, ſlow to anger, and pitifull, to put life as it were into them: but to the vnbeleeuers he propoſeth nothing but horrors and terrors. So that where the wicked tremble at the very naming of God, the faithfull being allured by the ſenſe of his bountie & goodnes, do ſweetlie repoſe themſelues vnder the ſhadow of his wings, and are not oppreſſed with ſuch feares. Hence we are taught alwaies to keepe our hearts in a reuerent awe of God, leſt we finde him ſuch a one to vs, as the Prophet here deſcribes him to the wicked.

Where he ſaith, *the burthen of the Lord is heauie to beare*, his meaning is, that God will bring ſuch heauie calamities with him when he *comes*, that the wicked ſhall ſinke vnder them: for by this *weight*, he vnderſtands the ſtrokes which they ſhall receiue. He alſo expreſſeth the ſame thing in mentioning *the lips and tongue*. But wherefore did he rather name them then his hands? Surely the wicked mock at all the threatnings which are publiſhed vnto thé out of Gods word, and eſteeme whatſoeuer ſ Prophets ſay, no better then fables. But they ſhall feele one day to their coſt that this ſound which proceeds out of Gods ſacred mouth is no vaine word, neither yet a thunder which only ſtrikes the eares, but they ſhall in the end feele the force of this word which they haue deſpiſed.

Queſt. Anſ.

Verſ. 28. *And his ſpirit is as a riuer that ouerfloweth vp to the neck: it deuideth aſunder to fanne the nations with the fanne of vanitie, and there ſhall be a bridle to cauſe them to erre in the charetz of the people.*

HE goes on with the denunciation which he began in the 27. verſe, as if he ſhould ſay, The Church in deed muſt paſſe vnder the rod: yet ſo, as the Aſſyrians in the end ſhall vtterlie come to nought. For he ſaith, that they ſhall be *ſwallowed vp of the Spirit of the Lord*, which he compares to a *deepe riuer*. Others take the word *Spirit* for Breath, ſo as it ſhould be an alluſion to the whirlewind, or to ſome boiſterous tempeſt. In the next place he vſeth the ſimilitude of a *fanne*, which is very frequent in the ſcriptures; and ſaith, that he wil *fanne* the Aſſyrians to ſhake them out, and to ſcatter them. For this cauſe alſo he addes the word *vanitie*, that is to ſay, an vnprofitable Fanne, which cannot retaine or keepe any thing, but loſeth whatſoeuer is put within it. For we know God is wont ſometimes to ſift and *fanne* his owne deere children, but it is to gather thé into his floore as good wheate.

First ſimilitude, of a deepe Riuer.

Second ſimilitude, of a Fanne.

The third, of a Bridle.

The third ſimilitude is taken from a *bridle*, whereby the Lord vſeth ſometimes to tame the pride and fiercenes of the wicked: in a word, to ſhew that he is their Iudge. I denie not but he alſo *bridles* and curbs his ſeruants and children, but it is to bring them to tractablenes: for the wicked, he raines them vp ſo hard that he tumbles them into perdition, and that is the meaning of this clauſe where he ſaith *is in a bridle to cauſe them to erre*. For fierce horſes are tugged this way and that way by their riders; and the more they wince the more they ſpurre them: God likewiſe keepes the wicked ſhort, and handles them ſo roughlie, that they *erre* at euery blow hee giues them, as *Dauid* well deſcribes it, Pſal. 32. 10. Now the end of theſe ſimilitudes is to teach vs, that there is no dallying with God. For albeit he forbeares vs for a time, yet at the laſt we ſhall prooue the Prophets words true, to wit, that his *ſpirit* or breath ſhall be enough *to ſwallow vp* the wicked, and ſuddenlie to conſume them, no leſſe then if a *flood had paſſed ouer their heads*. To conclude, ſeeing he ſhewes that the nations were to be fanned in the *fanne of vanitie*, let vs feare leſt if the Lord find nought in vs but chaffe, he alſo caſt vs vpó the dunghill. Note alſo the difference betweene the children of God and the wicked, both are chaſtiſed alike, but yet diuerſlie. How ſo? The one to be kept and preſerued as pure gold, the other as droſſe to be burnt vp and conſumed.

The end why the Prophet vſeth theſe ſimilitudes.

The wicked and the godly corrected alike: but the one as droſſe to be burnt vp, the other as pure gold to be preſerued for the Lords vſe.

Verſ. 29. *But there ſhall be a ſong vnto you as in the night when a ſolemne feaſt is kept: and gladnes of heart, as he that commeth with a pipe to go vnto the mount of the Lord, to the mightie one of Iſrael.*

HE ſhewes, that all the euils wherewith he threatned the Aſſyrians ſhould turne to the ſaluation of the Church. Why ſo? Becauſe God would no leſſe ſeuerely puniſh the iniuries done to his children, then if they had been done to himſelfe. And thus he ſets forth his fatherlie loue and his inеſtimable good will towards vs, in that he vouchſafes to take armes euen in his owne perſon as it were for our defence. Whence we may gather, that all the menaces ſo frequent in the holy Scriptures, ſerue much for the conſolation of the faithfull.

Threatnings pronounced againſt the wicked in the holy Scriptures ſerue greatly for the comfort of the faithfull.

In the next place he ſaith, that this ſhall be an holie *ſong*; and compares it to thoſe that were vſed in *ſolemne feaſts*: the rather to ſtirre the faithfull vp to thankſgiuing, and to teach them how to order their ioy and reioycing. For it is not enough to reioyce, vnleſſe our ioy be directlie in the Lord, whoſe glorie ſhould alwaies be the marke and end we aime at therein: otherwiſe, our ioy ſhould neither be good, nor acceptable vnto him, but rather prophane and vaine.

If our ioy be not in the Lord, it is a vaine and profane ioy.

Now becauſe the Iewes began their feaſt dáies at the ſun ſetting, and therefore began to celebrate them as ſoone as it was euening, he ſaith, that this ſong ſhall be *as in the night*. And he yet further expreſſeth the manner of their ioy; to wit, that they ſhall not leape nor skip after the cuſtome of prophane perſons;

The Iewes vſed to begin to celebrate their feaſts the euening before.

but

but ſhall lift vp *their hearts vnto God*, reſting in him alone, whom they ſhall acknowledge the ſole author of all benefits.

By the *mount*, he meanes the Temple which was built vpon it. He calles God the *ſtrength of Iſrael*, becauſe the Iewes receiued their redemption from his out ſtretched arme; as alſo becauſe they dwelt in quietneſſe vnder his mighty protection: herein aduertiſing them, that they could haue no ſafetie for the time to come, but by putting their truſt in his ſtrength. For alas! as ſoone as we perſwade our ſelues that wee haue any ſtrength of our owne, we forthwith bereaue God of this title; which indeed, none but the humble & meeke can giue vnto him, who are ſtripped of all their owne ſtrength and power.

The mightie one of Iſrael.

Verſ. 30. *And the Lord ſhall cauſe his glorious voice to be heard, and ſhall declare the lighting downe of his arme, with the anger of his countenance and flame of a deuouring fire, with ſcattering and tempeſt, and haile ſtones.*

HE confirmes that which he ſaid before of the iudgement of God againſt the Aſſyrians, and deſcribes it vnder a figure, as hee and the reſt of the Prophets are wont to do. For whileſt God ſeemes to hold his peace, and plagues not the wicked forthwith, either we thinke he ſleepes, or that he wants ſufficient power: and thus wee are diſtracted with diuers and doubtfull thoughts. And albeit he ſhewes vs ſome one example of his iudgement, yet by reaſon of this ſottiſhneſſe, or rather vnthankfulneſſe, which naturally poſſeſſeth vs, we wittingly put a vaile betweene, by one deuice or other, to darken the glory of God. For either we attribute it vnto fortune, or to the policies and ſubtile inuentions of mans braine: ſo as we will neuer in good earneſt aſcribe the ſame wholly vnto God, vnleſſe he conſtraines vs vnto it by force. This is the cauſe why the Prophet contents not himſelfe to haue once affirmed, that Gods vengeance ſhould fall vpon the Aſſyrians, but alſo in this place is diligent to paint out the ſame in liuely colours, repeating the ſame thing with greater vehemencie.

His meaning is then, that this deſtruction of the enemie ſhall bee ſo famous, that men ſhall be conſtrained to *heare the voice of God*: that is to ſay, to acknowledge his iudgmẽts, and to confeſſe that this deſolation indeede was from his hand, euen as if himſelfe had vttered the ſame from heauen with his liuely voice in all mens hearing. The ſum is then, that the matter ſhall bee ſo euident, that all ſhall confeſſe this deſtruction came from the mouth of God; to wit, from his ordinance.

1 He begins with the *voice of God*, to the end we might know that he gouernes whatſoeuer is done in the earth. And therewithall he extolles the efficacie of his doctrine, in which the people were to reſt, till it ſhould bring
2 forth theſe effects in the appointed time. But for as much as the effect incontinently follows this ordinance and voice of God, therfore the Prophet addes, *the lighting downe of his arme*. For theſe two things muſt alwaies bee ioyned together, it being vnlawfull once to imagin that God is like vnto men, who ſuddenly taking a thing in hand, in the end leaue it vnperfected. No, looke what he ordaines, that he executes: for his hand or *arme* is neuer ſeparated from the words of his mouth. On the contrary, hee neuer doth any thing raſhly, but that which hee hath ordained before: ſo as all the croſſes which hee ſends, are ſo many documents to vs of his equall and iuſt dealing.

Gods voice, and the lighting downe of his arme, goe together.

In the end of the verſe, hee ſets forth this vengeance of God vnder figures; that by the horrour thereof, the Iewes might raiſe vp their faith on high with ſo much the more courage: for it was a great conſolation vnto them (notwithſtanding the ſharpe ſcourges which they felt) to know that their enemies ſoone after ſhould drinke off this cup, euen to the very dregs. But away with the dreames of the Rabbines, who from this place gather, that the Aſſyrians were indeed ſmitten with thunder; for ſuch a coniecture is moſt friuolous. The Prophet keeps his ordinary courſe, and by theſe ſimilitudes deſcribes Gods fearfull iudgements, in regard that wee are too ſlow; yea altogether vnfit to comprehend them. Therefore to awaken our dulneſſe, wee had need to heare of *deuouring fire, of thunders, floods*, and *deluges of water*: which becauſe they are things abhorring to nature, they vſually touch vs the more to the quicke: in which reſpect the Prophets doe the more willingly draw their ſimilitudes from them, to the end wee may apprehend the fearefull reuenging hand of God againſt the wicked.

The vſe of the former ſimilitudes.

Verſ. 31. *For with the voice of the Lord ſhall Aſſur be deſtroied which ſmote with the rod.*

HE addes this for two cauſes: Firſt, to ſhew why the Aſſyrian was to be broken. For ſeeing hee behaued himſelfe cruelly and ſauagely towards others, it was good reaſon he ſhould receiue like for like. This we know is the vſuall courſe which God takes with tyrants, as our Prophet will tell vs, Chap. 33. Woe to thee that ſpoiledſt, when thou waſt not ſpoiled, &c. Secondly, the Aſſyrians power ſeemed too great to be vanquiſhed. But albeit he was euery way ſo well fortified, that he was not only able to defend himſelfe, but alſo to annoy others; yet the Prophet tels him, Gods onely *voice* ſhall ſhake him in peeces. By this wee may learne, how vaine the confidence of the wicked is, who haue nothing to truſt vnto but their outward forces; altogether deſpiſing God, as if they were not liable to the ſtrokes of his hand. But the Lord needs no better weapons then his *voice* to ſcatter all their munitions; for hee will conſume them with the very beck of his countenance. Neither are wee to doubt but the Prophet alſo meant by this meanes, to withdraw the

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ſenſes

senses of the faithfull from looking to these helpes, lest they should stand to inquire how it might come to passe, but should onely content themselues with Gods promise, who is of power sufficient to execute his counsels as soone as he hath spoken the word.

Vers. 32. *And in euerie place that the staffe shall passe, it shall cleaue fast, which the Lord shall lay vpon him with tabrets and harpes: and with battels, and lifting vp of* hands *shall hee fight against it.*

HIs meaning is, that the Assyrians will trie all meanes to flie from Gods hand, but all in vaine; for it shall pursue them *whithersoeuer they shall turne them*, bee it forwards or backward. Touching these words of the *staffe digging*, I willingly cõsent to their opiniõ, who thinke it to bee a similitude taken from those that haue laid on so long, till the traces and prints thereof appeare a great while after: as if a whip or staffe had been let into the flesh. Vnlesse any had rather vnderstand that the plague should cleaue fast to the backs of the Assyrian, euen as a foundatiõ is laid fast into the earth. For that which is not rooted in the ground, may be taken away and transported to another place: but hee shewes that this staffe shall *cleaue so fast*, that there shall bee no remouing of it; neither shall any be able to plucke it away. For God suffers the weight of his wrath to fall vpõ the reprobates which vtterly ouercharge th them: and lest they might dreame of any starting holes, the Prophet cuts off al hope thereof in this word *euery place*. For so ought the text to be resolued; to wit, *whersoeuer the staffe shall light, it shall cleaue fast.*

When he mentions the *tabrets*, it is to shew, that the issue of the war shall not bee vncertain, as it is when forces are of equall strẽgth; but his meanig is, that the Lord shall haue the victory. Why so? Because he shall no sooner vndertake the war, but hee brings that with him ẏ shall do the deed. For *tabrets, harps, and hands lifted vp*, doe signifie the ioy which they make that haue gotten the conquest, whilest they cry, victorie, victorie.

If the Lord goe into the field, hee will surely conquer.

Some refer that to the host, which he addes in the feminin gender, *shall fight against it:* but the truth is, hee meant to expresse a greater thing then it; to wit, Babylon, the head Citie of the Kingdome, opposing it to Ierusalem, which hee had noted out before by a like relatiue, vers. 29. From whence we may gather, that the wicked must needes be consumed at the last, notwithstanding the great shew of meanes which they haue to escape the same: for which way soeuer they turne them, or whither so euer they flee, yet the *staffe* of the Lord shall pursue them, yea and *cleaue fast* to their backes: they shall neuer bee able to shun his hand, nor beat backe his blowes.

Wee also are now and then corrected by this hand of God, but his blowes shall not alwaies cleaue vnto vs; our wounds shall bee mollified and eased, and our sorrow shall bee turned into ioy. Moreouer, the Lord so fights against the wicked, that they are not able to make their party good, nor yet gaine anie thing by their resistance. He fights with thẽ, but as one that is sure of the victory before he giues the first blow: sometimes hee giues them a little scope indeed, but he takes down their pride whensoeuer it pleaseth him. If we then fight vnder his ensigne, wee may assure our selues of a prosperous victorie: for vnder his leading, we shall be safe from danger, and shall haue certaine hope of conquest in the end.

Vers. 33. *For Topheth is prepared of* [a] *olde: it is euen prepared for the King: hee hath made it deepe and large: the burning thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord like a riuer of brimstone doth kindle it.*

[a] Or before yesterday. [b] Or, his heap is fire.

Isaiah continues his description of Gods seuere punishments, wherein he shewes, that the wicked shall not onely haue their portion of plagues in this life, but shall bee vexed therewith for euer and euer. Why so? Because *hell* is prepared and made ready for them; not for the poorer sort alone, but for those in great places, euen for *Kings* & Princes. By *Topheth*, no doubt he meanes hell: not as though we should imagin there were some place where the wicked are shut vp after their death as in a prison, there to suffer the torments which they haue deserued: but hee thereby signifies their miserable condition and extreame torments. In the booke of the Kings, this word *Topheth* is taken for the place where the Iewes sacrificed their sonnes to Moloch: 2. King. 23. 10. whereof *Ieremiah* also maketh mention: Ier. 19. 6. Now this place was destroied by *Iosiah*, in regard of the horrible murthers and superstitions which were there committed.

For mine owne part, I am out of doubt that the Prophets meant to apply the name of this place, to those exquisite torments which the wicked indure; to the end the faithfull might shudder and shake at the onely hearing of it: as also that euery one might learne to haue idolatrie in the greater detestation.

Let vs learne to make good vse of this doctrine. I 2

This very etymologie agrees to the word Hell: for the valley of Hinnon was taken for hell it selfe, because of the execrable sacrilegies which were there committed. Now because we thinke the wicked shall escape scotfree, when we see them prosper and haue all things at their wish, the Prophet to take away this conceit, saith, that before *yesterday*, that is to say, from the foundations of the earth, the Lord hath foreordeined what punishments hee will inflict vpon the vngodly. For howsoeuer this decree be hidden from vs for a time; yet it is stable and vnmoueable. Let vs not thẽ iudge of the estate of the wicked by outward appearances, but let vs wait vpon our God, who will take them tardie well

well enough in miſchiefes which they plot, and that in his appointed houre. In ſ meane while let vs not be ouer-haſtie to thinke God hath forgotten to be iuſt, for he concluded that which he meant to do, and that long ere we had abilitie to thinke of it: neither can we poſſiblie be ſo ſwift in wiſhing the ſpeedie cutting off of the wicked, but the Lord hath preuented our thoughts and deſires long before, becauſe he hath concluded in himſelfe from the beginning what paines and torméts he will lay vpon them.

Some thinke this place ſhould anſwere to that in the Hebrues, Chriſt yeſterday, and to day, &c. Heb.13.8. But for mine owne part, I ſimply oppoſe *yeſterday* here to our thoughts, to the end we ſhould not take our ſelues wiſe enough to foreſee & preuent God: for none of his Counſels are conceiued raſhlie, but were eſtabliſhed and grounded in himſelfe from all eternitie. Now he ſpeakes as I haue alreadie ſaid of the torments to come, wherewith the wicked ſhall be plagued; beſides thoſe which are inflicted vpon them in this life. In which regard we may iuſtlie wonder how the Saduces ſhould be ſo beſotted and blockiſh as to reſtraine the rewards and due puniſhments of ſinnes to the afflictions of this life preſent, as if Gods Iudgements reached only to this life preſent. For thus, the phraſes of ſpeech which follow would not agree to bodilie and temporall puniſhments: and the name of *Tophet* taken by a figure, ſhould only extend it ſelfe to ſome extreame curſe of God.

Saduces.

Now he ſhewes that euen *Kings* themſelues (whom men commonlie thinke to be priuiledged in regard of their maieſtie and power) ſhall not be exempt from this puniſhment. Their Greatnes dazles the eies of the ſimple, but this ſhall be no ſhelter to keepe them from Gods iuſt reuenging hand in plaguing them according to that which they haue deſerued. He ſaith, they ſhall be caſt into a *deepe* place, to giue vs to vnderſtand that they ſhall be ſafe enough for euer erauling out thence. He alſo calles Hell *large* to teach vs, that whoſoeuer they be that conſult together in miſchiefe ſhall periſh, although their number be infinite: for the Lord will not wax wearie in puniſhing of thé, neither ſhal he be ſtreighted of *ſufficient roomth* to ſhut vp all his enemies in.

Deepe.

Large.

His heape is fire.] Vnder a figure he ſpeakes of the ruine of ſ wicked, becauſe we can not otherwiſe ſufficientlie comprehend the ſame: as on the other ſide, without ſome borrowed ſpeeches, we were not able to conceiue of that bleſſed Immortalitie which is reſerued for vs in heauen: by ſuch ſimilitudes theſe things muſt be applied to our ſenſes. Whence it appeares how fondlie and ridiculouſlie the Sophiſters deale, who goe about too ſubtillie to diſpute forſooth of the nature and qualitie of this *fire*, and buſie their braines very much to make it appeere what it ſhould be. But let vs reiect ſuch groſſe imaginations, ſeeing we know that the Prophet ſpeakes here figuratiuely, as hereafter we ſhall ſee that to this *fire* he ioynes the worme that neuer dyes, Chap.66.24.

Sophiſters ridiculous in diſputing about the qualitie of this fire.

THE XXXI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Woe vnto them that goe downe into Egypt for help, and ſtay vpon horſes, and truſt in charets becauſe they are many, and in horſemen becauſe they be very ſtrong: but they looke not vnto the holie one of Iſraell, nor ſeeke vnto the Lord.*

HE now returnes to that which he handled in the beginning of the former Chapter: for he lifts vp his voice againe againſt ſ Iewes, who were accuſtomed whé they were in any danger to ſlee rather to *Egipt* for ſuccor then to the Lord. Wee haue declared before why this was ſo diſpleaſing a thing in Gods ſight. And to be ſhort, there are two reaſons wherefore the Prophet doth ſo ſharplie reprooue this ſinne. Firſt, becauſe it is vnpoſſible wee ſhould put our truſt in creatures and in God togither, touching the meanes of our ſafetie: for aſ ſoone as we once fixe our eies vpon them, it follows by good conſequence that we therewithall turne them away from God. Beſides, God had ſtraightlie forbidden them to make any contract or league with the Egyptians. Thus there was rebellion mixed with a diſloyall confidence, as if they meant wittinglie and willinglie to pronide for their owne welfare, by deſpiſing and forſaking of God. It behoues vs therefore to conſider from whence this ſinne ſprang if we would vnderſtand the Prophets meaning aright.

Two reaſons ſhewing why the Prophet is ſo ſeuere in reprooving this ſinne of the Iewes.

We can no ſooner relie vpon creatures, but we therewith turne away from the Creator.

Rebellion mixed with their diſloyall confidéce.

Here is a ſecond reaſon which is more particular (which we haue touched before) why the Lord would not haue the Iewes to be acquainted with the Egyptians, to wit, leaſt ſo vnlawfull leagues might in the end aboliſh the memorie of their deliuerance out of Egypt; as alſo leaſt they ſhould marre and corrupt themſelues with the ſuperſtitions and Idolatries of the Egyptians. But theſe reaſons could beare no ſway with them: Gods inhibiting of them could not hinder them from running downe to their confederates, prouiding a buckler thereof to runne againſt the hand of God. In which reſpect it is no maruell that our Prophet is ſo earneſt in rebuking of them for ſo monſtrous an outrage. Their very *going downe into Egipt* ſimplie conſidered in it ſelfe deſerued a ſharp reprehenſion, becauſe God had forbidde thé ſo to do, Deut.17.16.28. but the offence was much more intollerable through a falſe truſt they had in bereauing

God of that glorie which appertained vnto him, to giue it vnto mortall men.

Now that hee might the better shew how God was robbed of his right by this their fact, hee not onely accuseth them that they leaned and staied themselues vpon the Egyptians, but also hee reproacheth them on the other side, that they *looked not to the holy one of Israel.* Whence we may more euidently perceiue the cause wherefore *Isaiah* doth so sharply taxe this disloyaltie of the Iewes. For otherwise the Lord forbids vs not to vse lawfull meanes; as bread, & other sorts of meates, which he hath appointed to serue for our vse. And thus if a man being in danger, shal seeke those helpes which are not forbidden, but ordinary and lawfull, such a one deserues no reproofe, if so be hee therein derogates nothing from Gods power. But it is vtterly abominable and damnable, if we suffer our selues so to bee intangled in these outward helpes, as thereby vtterly to neglect *seeking vnto God:* and in distrusting his gracious promises, to desire to trust in vnlawfull meanes.

It is lafull for thee to vse those helpes and meanes which God hath ordained for thy reliefe and comfort: but beware of Asa his sin, recorded in 2. Chro. 16. 12.

The word *to looke*, signifies often in the Scriptures, This trust and confidence; because wee are wont to looke wishly towards them, from whom we looke for succor: Act. 3. 5. To be short, wee are here taught to put the trust of our saluation in none but in God alone: that so wholly resting our selues vpon his promises, we may goe with boldnesse, and aske whatsoeuer is to be desired. He permits vs lawfully to vse all things which he hath ordained for our good; yet so, that all the powers of our soules doe stay vpon him alone.

In calling him *the holy one of Israel*, hee sets forth the frowardnesse and vnthankfulnesse of this people, that being receiued into Gods faithfull protection, they cared not to contemne so gracious a protector and guardian of their saluation, but chose rather to runne after the lusts of their owne hearts. In adding forthwith the name of God; hee shewes that they could not bee kept in awe, neither by the power nor goodnesse of so louing a Father. Now since it pleaseth him at this day to allure vs by no lesse fauourable kindnesses to come vnto him, wee shall play the rebels egregiously, if we looke any other way, or if we refuse to rest in him onely. Looke whatsoeuer it is then that turnes the eyes of our mindes from looking directly vnto God, shall bee the same to vs as Egypt was to the Iewes.

In the last word of the verse.

Verse. 2. *But yet hee is *wiseſt. Therefore hee will bring euill, and not turne backe his word: but hee will rise against the house of the wicked, and against the helpe of them that worke vanitie.*

*Or, wise also.

WHere he calles God *wise*, hee adornes him not with a perpetuall epithite, but taxeth the craft and subtiltie of those whom hee saw to please themselues in their *wisdome* more then was meete. Hee told them a little before, that they digged deepe to couer their counsels, when by their close and secret practises they thought to flee; and yet to bleare the eyes of the Lord. Now in taunting wise hee derides their follie: as if hee should say; No doubt but you thought your selues to be iollie *wise* men in so doing: yea, but you haue to deale with a God that hath *wisdome also* to espie your plots well enough. Wherein hee priuily taxeth them for such as imagined that God could not charge them with any thing, or as if hee had bin one that was vtterly vnacquainted with their doings. In a word, it is as much as if hee should haue said; What will become of this goodly *wisdome* of yours in the end; will it bereaue God of his Spirit? Nay, contrariwise in reproouing you for your deceit and vanitie, he will shew by the effects, that hee catcheth the wise in their craftinesse. 1. Cor. 3. 19.

Chap. 29. 15

Iob. 5. 19. 1. Cor. 3. 19.

Hence wee may gather a doctrine that is well enough knowne; to wit, that whosoeuer they be that couer their doings by crafty and close practises, shall be so far off from benefiting themselues any thing at all thereby, that they shall so much the more inflame the iust displeasure of God against them. An euill conscience alwaies flees from the iudgement of God, and seekes out corners wherein to burie it selfe (if it were possible) out of his sight. The wicked deuise many waies to defend their sinnes, and to make their partie good against God; pleasing themselues in their wisdome and subtilties, albeit in so doing, they haue no cloke or maske to hide themselues vnder that is of any value. Others being blinded with their owne greatnesse, are bold to despise God and all his threatnings. And therefore when the prophet saith, that God is *wise also*, he toucheth the soare to the quicke, to the end they might nourish no such good conceit of their craftie deuices, as if they could thereby ouerreach the Lord.

Chap. 30. 1. An euill conscience alwaies flees Gods presence.

Now in regard they were vnworthy that *Isaiah* should stand ouer-long to pleade the case with them: therefore he tels them flatly, that God hath store of arguments ready to snare these politike heads withall. For first of all, they imagined that God tooke little or no heede how things went in the world, because they, forsooth, were left to sinke or swim (as they say) in the middest of so many dangers. And secondly, they esteemed his menaces to be nought else but so many scarcrowes. Taking it as a thing granted therefore, that it was lawfull for euery one to prouide for his owne safetie: from hence sprang this headines to run any way, and that boldnesse to bee still plotting new deuices. The Prophet shewes then that God will auenge the wrongs which were done vnto him, and that all things are in a readinesse for the execution thereof: moreouer, that his word could not bee violated or ouerthrowne by no deuices nor subtile practises of men.

1.

2.

He calles them *workers of vanitie*, because they indeuored to fortifie themselues against Gods vengeance, with a vaine and vnlawfull defence: that is to say, with the helpe of the Egyptians.

Egyptians. In the firſt clauſe of this verſe he ſeemed after a ſort to yeeld them the title of wiſe men, becauſe hee oppoſed thereunto the wiſdome of God: but now hauing diſperſed their miſts, hee diſcouers to the whole world their iuſt ſhame and reproch. Hence wee are taught, that it is ſafeſt for vs to renounce our owne reaſon, and to ſubiect it onely to the will of God. Why ſo? Becauſe there is no ſtabilitie nor ſtedfaſtneſſe at all in the plottings of vnbeleeuers: nay, they rather wittingly incenſe and prouoke Gods wrath to burne againſt them by theſe their wittie deuices.

Verſ. 3. *Now the Egyptians* are *men, and not God; and their horſes fleſh, and not ſpirit: and when the Lord ſhall ſtretch forth his hand, the helper ſhall fall, and they ſhall altogether faile.*

IT ſeemes that *Iſaiah* vtters nothing here but that which euery one knowes, neither would any man ſtand to call the truth thereof into queſtion. For who would be ſo mad as to affirme either that ỹ Egyptians were *God*, or to denie that they were *men*? This was out of controuerſie; and therefore euery one would willingly aſſent vnto it for the generall. But to come to particularities; there, they were ſo blockiſh, or ſtood in ſuch a mammering, that they called that truth into queſtion, of which before they were fully reſolued.

Thus they waxed proud, taking themſelues to be no more *men*; and that they might vtterly free themſelues from yeelding obedience vnto God. For this cauſe we are often admoniſhed in the holy Scriptures, not to truſt in *man*, becauſe nothing is more vain thē he: Pſa. 146.3. Curſed be he (ſaith *Ieremiah*) that truſts in man, and makes *fleſh* his arme: Ier. 17.5. Yet we ſee that all, none excepted, determine and conclude of matters in themſelues, as if they were able to bring their deſignes to paſſe an hundred yeeres after, which they haue plotted in their braine: yea, as if they could rule both heauen, earth, and ſeas, and could gouerne all things euen as they liſted. Seeing there is ſuch pride in all of vs, let vs not maruell that the Prophet proclaimes, that the Egyptians *are not God, but men*. For the Iewes attributed that vnto *them*, which appertained vnto *God*. What is that? Euen the protection and ſafegard of the Church; which he ſo reſerues to himſelfe, that he will haue none to meddle with this office. *Iſaiah* doth therefore tauntingly taxe the Iewes in this place with the contempt of God, and their falſe confidence wherewith they were puffed vp.

The pride of mans heart intollerable.

And thus we may ſee how great difference there is betweene *God* and *men*. Men can doe nothing of themſelues, but ſo far forth as God ſhall giue them power. Come we to ſpeake of the nature and excellencie of man, wee may well praiſe the great graces which he hath receiued of God; but oppoſe him once againſt his Creator, then muſt he be accounted leſſe then nothing. For is it poſſible to attribute any thing vnto man, but wee ſhall thereby take ſo much honour from God? This is the cauſe why wee can neuer conſent vnto the Papiſts, when we come to diſpute of the cauſe of our ſaluation, of free will, and of the dignitie of merits and workes: for in as much as *men* and *God*, are in theſe things oppoſed one againſt the other, it muſt needs be, that whatſoeuer is attributed to man, is taken from God. But they part ſtakes in ſuch wiſe, as they giue part to God, and part to men: we on the contrary affirme, that the ſole & whole cauſe of our ſaluation, ought to be attributed vnto God: as alſo, that it cannot bee giuen to anie other, but we ſhall therein commit moſt abominable ſacrilege. In a word, let vs know that in this oppoſition, nothing can bee left to man which is worthy of any praiſe.

Why there can be no pacifications betweene the Papiſts and vs.

The great difference that is betweene God and men.

By the word *fleſh*, he means imbecillity and weakneſſe: for what is in fleſh but onely corruption? He ſpeakes of *horſes*, but the ſame or the like weaknes agrees alſo to the Egyptiās. As if he ſhould ſay; *They and all the forces they can make, are not worth a ruſh.* For albeit the Egyptians had a *ſoule* as well as a *body*, yet becauſe they were earthly creatures, and dwelt in houſes of clay, they muſt downe. As if hee ſhould ſay; I am ſure you haue no ſpirituall nor celeſtiall power. To which purpoſe the Prophet ſaith, Pſal. 146.3. Truſt not in Princes, nor in any child of man: for his breath departeth, and then all his thoughts periſh.

Now albeit this word *fleſh*, properly belongs to horſes; yet it is no maruell if men be ſent to take a view of the rotteneſſe thereof, there to learne their owne tranſitorineſſe. But from the threatning that is added, to wit, that this wickedneſſe ſhall not goe ſcotfree; we may learne a generall doctrine. For the Lord will not indure to haue that giuen to the creature, which belongs to himſelfe: nor, that any ſhould repoſe that truſt in men, which ought to be reſerued for him alone. He threatens then as well thoſe which ſhould giue their ſuccour, and ſhould be the cauſe of this vaine confidence, as thoſe which ſhould be ſuccoured, & ſhould ſtay the hope of their ſafetie thereupon. Now if the Lord cannot abide this peruerſe truſt, as touching things belonging to our temporary ſaluation; how inſupportable are thoſe, thinke we, who to obtaine eternall ſaluation, forge diuers truſts, according to their owne fantaſie? For in ſo doing, they exalt the power of men, to ſet it vp in the place of God.

God threatēs both the ſuccourers and the ſuccoured.

If God cānot indure we ſhould leane vpon creatures for ſaluation in matters belonging to this life preſent, much leſſe can he indure vs ſo to doe in things appertaining to life eternall.

Verſ. 4. *For thus the Lord hath ſaid vnto me; As the lion and the lions whelpe roare after their pray; againſt whom if a multitude of ſheepheards liſt vp their voice, they will not bee moued, nor will humble themſelues at their cry: ſo the Lord of hoſtes will come downe to fight for mount Zion, and for the ſide of it.*

THe Prophet adds this verſe, to ſhew that the Lord is not minded to leaue his

God neuer forbids vs to truſt in creatures, but he therewithall leaues ſufficient arguments for our faith to relie vpō himſelf.

Church deſtitute of neceſſarie helps. For if whilſt in forbidding vs to truſt in creatures he ſhould promiſe vs no ſupplie otherwaies, we might haue ſome cauſe to complaine, as if he offred vs matter of deſpaire rather then of comfort. For as we haue ſeene a little before, men are ouer-carefull, becauſe they thinke themſelues not halfe wiſe enough if they vtterlie abſteine from meanes forbidden, to content themſelues with God alone. Seeing hee promiſeth them *Gods faithfull protection* then, he takes away all excuſe: for what pretext can ſerue vs if we deſpiſe that ſaluation which he of his owne accord offers vnto vs? It is all one therefore as if he had ſaid, *It is the Lord that aſſiſts, and will ſtill aſſiſt you; Goe not downe into Egypt then to ſeeke help there.*

The firſt ſimile ſetting forth Gods power, which is readie preſt to preſerue his Church.

But he vſeth a very apt ſimilitude, wherein he ſhewes both the power, and louing affection which was preſt for their defence: for he cōpares himſelfe to a Lion which is ſtrong and greedie of his pray. Notwithſtanding he inſiſts vpon the ſecond part, to wit, that the Lord takes hold of vs with great courage, keepes and preſerues vs ſafe in his hands againſt all dangers. In the meane while the Prophet ſets forth his power and might, againſt which no forces nor *multitudes* of men can reſiſt. *Moreouer*, ſimilitudes hang not together in all points touching the matter in hand, neither is there any neceſſitie of it: but they muſt be applied ſo farre-forth as the preſent occaſion will permit. When we ſee then that the Lord loues vs ſo dearely, and hath ſo tender a care ouer vs, are we not more then mad if we deſpiſe him to ſeeke other helps, which will be ſo farre off from doing vs good, that they ſhall turne to our great hurt? It is not without cauſe that he addes the *ſide* of Zion, becauſe the Temple in which God would be called vpon was ſituated there. Looke where Gods pure ſeruice is then, there we may be bold to expect aſſured ſafetie, for he can not be called vpon in vaine. Let vs therefore be his people, and he will not faile to ſhew himſelfe our God.

Verſ. 5. *The Lord of hoſts will defend Ieruſalem as the birds that flie: he will deliuer it in defending it, and in paſſing further he will ſaue it.*

The ſecond ſimile ſetting forth Gods tender affectiō towards his Church.

THis is another ſimilitude, in which the Prophet ſhews the ſingular care the Lord hath ouer vs, and how diligent and watchfull he is to keepe vs. It is taken from *birds*, who are exceeding carefull in preſeruing their yong ones: for they will ſtarue themſelues almoſt, and wil feare no danger at all, to yeeld ſuccor and defence vnto them. *Moſes* vſeth the like ſimilitude, Deut. 32. 11. where he reprocheth the Iewes for their ingratitude: he compares the Lord to an Eagle which trims vp her neſt, ſtretcheth out her wings, flutters ouer her young, and beares them vpon her wings. Chriſt alſo takes vp this complaint ouer Ieruſalem, Oh Ieruſalem, Ieruſalem, how oftē would I haue gathered thee together as a hen gathers her chickens vnder her wings, but you would not! Mat. 23. 37. The ſumme of this place is, *That the Lord will be ſtrong enough to conſerue his people, which he loues right dearely, and tenderly cares for them.* For *Iſaiah* promiſeth that God will alwaies performe that for his people, which *Moſes* ſaith he did for them for a time, becauſe he will neuer forſake thoſe whom he hath once receiued into his loue. To the end therefore the Iewes might not thinke that Gods care only appertained to thoſe of that time, he expreſſie ſaith that God will *ſpread his wings ouer Ieruſalem* to defend it. *Verſe 4.* *Verſe 5.*

Verſ. 6. *O yee children of Iſrael returne you, for you are ſunck deepe in reuolting.*

THis verſe is diuerſlie expounded, for the Hebrues expound it thus, Returne vnto the Lord, for you haue multiplied reuolts. But as I thinke it ſhould ſimplie be read thus, *Returne yet, in as much as you are ſunke deepe in reuolting.* His meaning is, that the greatnes of their diſloyaltie ſhould nothing hinder them frō hauing acceſſe vnto God, if they brought repentant hearts with them, and that hee would forgiue them, notwithſtanding they were *ſunck very deepe* in rebellion; and yet he therewithall galles them to the quick with this ſpurre, to prick them forward to a true ſorrow, and hatred of their ſinnes, to the end they ſhould not bring a fained or halfe repentance as men for the moſt part doe. He ſtirres them vp then diligentlie to conſider how violentlie they haue *plunged* themſelues into perdition, that they might mourne according to the meaſure of their offences. 1

In the firſt place note that the Prophet extenuates not the fault of this people: for it is requiſit that ſuch as are to be drawne to the Lord ſhould be touched home with the liuely feeling of their ſinnes: for thoſe that flatter themſelues in their vices are farre off from hope of pardon, therefore we can not take a better courſe then to diſcouer at large the foulenes of our ſores, when the medicine is to be applied vnto them.

Such as flatter themſelues in their vices, are farre off from any hope of pardon.

2

And yet leſt mens hearts ſhould quaile within them, they muſt be cheered and comforted by ſetting the promiſes of life and ſaluation before them: for Satan aimes at nothing more, then to ſteale from vs all hope of pardon. Therefore *Iſaiah* tels vs that God is readie to *forgiue*, albeit by their reuolt they had plunged themſelues into the gulfe of hell: and therewithall wee may ſee that the Lord at no time allures vs to repentance in vaine, but forthwith offers vs free remiſſion of all our tranſgreſſions, which is the cauſe why the ſcriptures alwaies ioines promiſes of grace to ſuch exhortations as theſe, to the end that when we are called to repentance, we might know that forgiuenes is alſo at hand.

The oyle of the Goſpell muſt bee mingled with the biting wine of the Law, leſt Satan ſhould make vs his prey.

God neuer allures vs to repentance in vaine, but forthwith offers vs pardon.

The Scriptures alwaies coupleth exhortations to repētance, and hope of pardon together.

Where wee haue tranſlated *you are fallen deepe*, ſome expound the word *Amag*, which ſignifies, To be deepe, To multiplie; as if it were a ſimilitude taken from heapes, and ſo it ſhould be read in this ſenſe, As you haue heaped vp ſinnes, ſo now returne. But the firſt expoſition ſeemes to agree beſt. The word

Sarah

Serah, ſignifies reuolt: others take it here for frowardnes; but the other ſignificatiō agrees beſt. And therfore ỹ Prophet ſummons thē to return to ỹ Lord. He cals them *children of Iſrael*, not to honour them; but in reproach of their ingratitude. For they were *rebellious* children, which had turned away from that fidelitie and obedience which their fathers yeelded: this title therefore containes in it a diſgracefull quipping of them. In the meane while, our Prophet meanes, that the Lord forgat not the couenant which he made with their fathers, although by their diſloialtie they were far degenerate. For he teſtifies, that hee acknowledgeth them for the *children of Iſrael*, and will make them partakers of that which hee promiſed to *Abraham* and the reſt of the fathers, if they wil *conuert* vnto him with their whole hearts.

Verſ. 7. *For in that day euery one ſhall caſt away his images of ſiluer, and his idols of gold, the ſin which your hands haue made.*

In the former verſe they were exhorted to repentance, in this verſe the Prophet manifeſts the fruits of their repentance. Repentance is inward in the heart: it muſt therefore diſcouer it ſelfe by outward actions, euen as the goodneſſe of a tree is knowne by the fruits.

HE continues on his ſpeech begun in the former verſe: yet there is this difference, that in the former hee exhorted them to repentance; but in this, hee ſhewes the fruit of it: which manner of teaching is vſuall in the Scriptures. For repentance being a thing wrought in the heart, wherein it hath his ſeate, it muſt ſhew and manifeſt it ſelfe afterwards by the effects and workes, euen as the goodneſſe of a tree within is knowne by the fruits; repentance is ſet here forth by the effects.

Where he ſpeakes onely of *idols*, it is according to the cuſtome of the Scripture, which often takes a part for the whole. For there is no queſtion but the Prophet meanes the whole conuerſion of men: but becauſe it had bin too long for him to haue numbred vp all the parts of it, he briefly comprehends them vnder this one kind. Now the beginning of repentance is the change of the heart: in the ſecond place we muſt come to the outward fruits; that is to ſay, to the works.

But aboue all, we muſt note the cauſe why he preached repentance; to wit, in regard the Lord had promiſed them a ſpeedie deliuerance: now to the end he might be capable of it, he exhorts them to conuert. Here alſo obſerue, that we reſiſt God by our wickednes-ſes, when we goe on ſtill therein: and thus we hinder the courſe of Gods grace from deſcending downe vpon vs, ſo as hee cannot helpe vs. That his helpe may haue place in our miſeries therefore, he requires that we turne vnto him.

The neatway to procure Gods aid in our miſeries, is to turne vnto him from our ſinnes and iniquities.

He mentions *idols of ſiluer*, as we haue ſhewed before, becauſe thoſe that repent in good earneſt, are touched effectually with the ſenſe of their ſins. So as they cannot behold the traces of their ſuperſtitions in which God was diſhonoured, without great horror. They therefore abhor ſuch things, and are glad to ſuffer the loſſe of their gold and ſiluer, to teſtifie their vnfained faith & repentance. For whoſoeuer hath truely renounced all his ſuperſtitions, will ſpare nothing to make profeſſion of Gods pure worſhip. And this is the Prophets drift when he mentions *gold & ſiluer*, rather then wood and ſtones. Now the loſſe of any thing whatſoeuer, be it neuer ſo pretious, is infinit gaine when we are ſeparated and cleanſed from ſuch curſed pollutions.

See chap. 30. verſ. 22.

Why the Prophet mētions gold and ſiluer, rather then wood or ſtones.

As for thoſe who ſtill retaine them, they ſhew themſelues to be intangled with ſuperſtitions, howſoeuer they ſeeme to profeſſe Chriſtianity: and thereby may we know, that their hearts doe as yet remaine vnreformed. Away therefore with the excuſes of hypocrits, who will not wholly renounce idolatry; to wit, what would you haue me doe? How ſhould I liue? Indeede I know that this gold, theſe reuenues are abominable before God, becauſe they proceede from idolatry: but alas! we muſt liue ſome way or other. Away, I ſay, with ſuch childiſh excuſes: for where repentance is wrought effectually in the heart, there forthwith all things that cannot be kept without diſhonouring of God, muſt be caſt away.

Their ſound conuerſion to be ſuſpected, that retaine their ſuperſtitions for lucres ſake.

Which your hands haue made.] The Prophet preſſeth them, that they might the rather acknowledge their ſinne. For when men are accuſed, they would willingly caſt the fault vpon ſome other, and are very loth to confeſſe their guiltineſſe: as for example, the common ſort are ready to accuſe the Prieſts, but few will lay the blame of their ſinnes vpon themſelues. Therefore the Prophet calles them the workes of *their* hands, that they might know that themſelues were the authors of ſuch abominations. And yet therewithall he lets them ſee how their infidelitie hath cunningly ſeduced them, whileſt they were the forgers of their owne goddes. Hence we may gather, that God reiects all our inuentions; neither can he accept in good part, that ſeruice whereof our ſelues are the authors. I take the word *ſinne*, appellatiuely: as if hee ſhould ſay; When you behold your idols, then looke vpon your *ſin*, acknowledge the ſignes of your diſloyaltie, and reuolt. If you bee indeed conuerted vnto God, then ſhew it by the effects, in reiecting your idols, and in renouncing your ſuperſtitions: for this ſhall bee the true triall of your ſound conuerſion.

Men are loth to confeſſe their guiltineſſe.

God reiects our inuentions in his ſeruice.

Verſ. 8. *Then Aſſur ſhall fall by the ſword, not of man: and the ſword ſhall deuoure, not that of man: hee ſhall flee from the preſence of the ſword; and his young men ſhall melt, or conſume away.*

THe letter *Vau*, may better be tranſlated into an aduerbe of time; Then Aſſur ſhall fall: that is to ſay, when you ſhall be conuerted vnto the Lord, and that your good conuerſation manifeſts your ſouud conuerſion; then the enemy ſhall fall. For looke how the Aſſyrian was raiſed vp of the Lord, to puniſh

Our good conuerſation muſt manifeſt our ſoūd conuerſion.

niſh the Iewes for their wickedneſſes, and chiefly for their Idolatrie; ſo God alſo promiſeth that this enemie ſhall be cut off when they ſhall ceaſe to ſinne and to ſerue Idols. Thus wee ſee that our obſtinacie is the cauſe why the Lord addes plague vnto plague, and doubles his blowes in purſuing vs more and more. For we ſtill giue him new occaſions of enflaming his wrath againſt vs. If we deſire that God ſhould ſtrike vs more ſoftlie, and that our enemies might at once be deſtroyed and neuer trouble vs more; let vs ſtudie by newnes of life to enter into his fauor againe, for he will by and by lay downe his rods, and take away the force and power of our enemies that they ſhall not hurt vs.

Reforme thy euil maners, and God wil redreſſe thy miſeries.

When it is ſaid that it ſhall not be by the *ſword of man*: the Prophet thereby meanes that the deliuerance of the Church is the peculiar worke of God: giuing the Iewes to vnderſtand, that albeit there appeered no help in earth, yet Gods ſecret power ſhould be ſufficient to redeeme them. Are our enemies confounded then; is their force repreſſed? Let vs know that this proceeds from the hand of God. Indeed he repelleth the force and furie of the wicked diuers waies; but it is his onely hand notwithſtanding whereby the Church is ſaued. For he ſo works by humane helps, that yet he keepes his choſen after a wonderfull and extraordinarie maner, as may be ſeene euen ſince the beginning of the world: and it is no leſſe eaſie to perceiue it now, if we were not hoodwinked. And yet this lets not, but the Lord may imploy ſome of his ſeruants in the deliuerance of his Church, but ſo, that ſtill his owne hand eſpeciallie ſhines in ſuch a worke.

The redemption of the Church, a peculiar worke of God.

Note.

God vſeth men as inſtruments in ſauing his Church, yet ſo, that his owne power only ſhines in this work. *Chap.37.36. 37.*

We know this propheſie of *Iſaiah* was fulfilled when the hoſt of *the Aſſyrians* was diſcomfited, and when *Sennacherib* fled. For men commonlie ſee not Gods hand therein, but the Lord manifeſts his power to the end we might know that he is the deliuerer of his Church. And when he freed Ieruſalem from the ſiege which was after laid before it, he did therein as in a glaſſe preſent alſo vnto the Iewes an image of their ſpiritual deliuerance. It is he alone then which will deſtroy our ſpirituall enemies. In vaine therefore ſhall we ſeeke other helps and remedies, and in vaine ſhall we reſt vpon our owne ſtrength which is nothing: for we ſhall neuer ouercome nor be Conquerors but by the leading and help of our God.

Our help ſtands only in the name of the Lord that made heauen and earth.

His yong men.] His meaning is, that the Lord will ſo manifeſt his might againſt the Aſſyrians, that the hearts of *young men* which are wont to be couragious ſhall quaile and *melt* as waxe. For in as much as yong men haue leſſe experience then thoſe that are old, they are more raſh and headie. But the Lord will eaſilie coole their heate when the houre is come in which he will deliuer his ſeruants. This is the cauſe why *Iſaiah* made ſpeciall mention of *yong men*, as if he had ſaid, the flower, or ſtrength.

See to this purpoſe Chap.40.30

Verſ. 9. *He ſhall flee for feare into his fortreſſe, and his Princes ſhall be feared with the banner, ſaith the Lord who hath a fire in Zion, and a furnace in Ieruſalem.*

NOw he ſpeakes of *Sennacherib*, who being ſwallowed vp with feare, ſhould ſhamefullie *flee into his fortreſſe* in Nineue, as into his neſt. He addes, that his *Princes* who ſhould incourage the reſt of the ſouldiours, ſhall be ſo ſurprized with aſtoniſhment, that they ſhall neither dare to take vp their weapons, nor to ioine iſſue, as they ſay, but ſhall flee the Standard. To conclude, he ſhewes that he is Gods Herald to proclaime this Edict, that the Iewes might in no wiſe doubt nor diſpute of the euent as they were wont: as alſo that they might not afterward forget ſo great a benefit; neither attribute it vnto fortune.

In the end of the verſe, if we reade as ſome tranſlate, Whoſe fire is in Zion, the ſenſe will be, that God hath a power of fire to deuoure his enemies. Notwithſtanding I thinke the relatiue *Aſher* is ſuperfluous: or ought to be tranſlated in the nominatiue *Qui*, becauſe God is properlie called *fire*, in reſpect of the Aſſyrian whom he will conſume. Now becauſe he ſpeakes of *fire*, ſome referre it to the Sacrifices: but this interpretation is farre fetched, neither hath it any good ground. For mine owne part I doubt not but his meaning is to ſay, That the Lord hath a *fire* to conſume the Aſſyrian, or that God himſelfe is as a *fire*, ſo as he cloſely compares the Aſſyrian to ſtraw, or ſtubble.

He alſo ſaith, that this fire is kindled and maintained *in Zion, and in Ieruſalem*, that is to ſay, in the middes of his people, to ſhew that the wicked ſhall not eſcape vnpuniſhed, for perſecuting the Church of God. For they ſhall one day feele him their Iudge, who ſtands in the middes of his Church, which for the moſt part is thought to be deſtitute of all help. The ſumme is, that Gods vengeance is prepared for the wicked which haue not ceaſed to moleſt his people, and that ỹ Lord will not reuenge for his owne ſake only, but for his elects ſake alſo. Let vs reioyce in this conſolation, and howſoeuer we ſeeme deſtitute of ſuccor and expoſed to all dangers, yet let vs euermore aſſure our ſelues that our God will be as a *conſuming fire* againſt our aduerſaries.

God will euermore be a conſuming fire, to conſume the aduerſaries of his Church.

THE

THE XXXII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1, *Behold a King ſhall reigne in righteouſneſſe, and the Princes ſhall gouerne in iudgement.*

The Churches glory begins at the eſtabliſhing of a well ordered ciuill policie.

HIs meaning is to ſay, that God will yet bee good vnto his church; ſo as he will reſtore it vnto the former eſtate. Now the beſt way to bring it thereunto, is when ciuill policie is rightly adminiſtred, and all things ordered according to iuſtice and equitie. No doubt this propheçie belongs to *Hezechias*, and to his reigne; vnder whom the Church was reformed and brought againe into her firſt glory: for before ſhe was miſerably ſcattered. That wicked and curſed hypocrit *Abaz*, had corrupted all after his own fantaſie, and had ouerthrowne both the ciuill and eccleſiaſticall policie. The Prophet therefore promiſeth another *King*, to wit, *Hezechias*, who by his iuſtice and equitie, ſhould ſet thoſe things in order, which before were confuſed. In a word, he here ſets forth the happie ſtate of the Church, as in a glaſſe: which ſeeing it cannot bee erected without Chriſt, it is therefore certaine that the things here ſpoken of, ought to be referred to him; of whom *Hezechias* was but a figure, both touching his office and Kingdome.

This propheçie extends it ſelfe firſt to Hezechias: Next, vnto Chriſt, of whom Hezechias was a figure.

He mentions *iuſtice and iudgement*, according to the vſuall phraſe of the Scripture, which by theſe two words vnderſtands a well ordered gouernment: for *iuſtice* ſignifies equitie and moderation: and vnder the word *iudgement*, is comprehended that part of equitie by which the good are maintained and preſerued from the violence of the wicked. It is very certaine that the office of a good Prince, ſtretcheth it ſelfe further then *iuſtice* and *iudgement*; for he ought principally to vphold the honour of God, and the purity of religion: but the Scripture is wont to expreſſe the whole obſeruation of the Law, vnder the duties of the ſecond table. For if we abſtaine from violence, if (as much as in vs lies) we labour to releeue the poore and oppreſſed, if we hold the band of peace one with another, wee therein giue good teſtimonie that the feare of God is in our hearts, from which ſuch fruits of faith doe ſpring forth. Vnder a part then the Prophet hath comprehended the whole.

A good Prince muſt carefully prouide for the flouriſhing eſtate both of Church and Commonwealth.

To abſtaine from offring violence, to releeue the poore, to be atpeace with our neighbours, good ſignes of the feare of God.

It is needfull for a good Prince to haue good counſellers about him. Nerua.

But it is not without cauſe that hee mentions *Princes*. Why ſo? It is not enough that he himſelfe bee a good *King*, vnleſſe hee alſo haue good gouernours & counſellers about his perſon. For it often falles out, that the people behaue themſelues leaudly vnder good *Kings*; as we reade of *Nerua*, vnder whoſe raigne, euery one might doe as he liſted: ſo as the condition of many was much worſe at that time, then in the daies of *Nero*; for the careleſneſſe of one onely, gaue occaſion to many to become wicked. Kings therefore ought to be furniſhed with good gouernors, which may be as eyes, eares, and hands to his body, in helping him to order things aright. If this bee wanting, a good King ſhall neuer be able ſo to aduance religion and iuſtice; but his officers will bee readie more or leſſe to foreſlow the courſe of good proceedings. And if there be not among the higheſt, ſuch a harmonie and agreement touching theſe things, as is in a well tuned inſtrument of muſicke, the Church & Commonwealth ſhall ſeldome proſper. The counſell therefore which *Ietbro* gaue *Moſes* his ſonne in law, is to bee hearkened vnto of euery good King; let him chuſe for his officers ſuch as bee men of courage, fearing God, and hating couetouſneſſe; yea, let him appoint ſuch for his Captaines ouer tens, fifties, and hundreds.

Nero.

Good gouernours, eies, eares, and hands to Kings.

Simile.

Exod. 18.

But now adaies, bawdes, ruffians, flatterers, and ieſters, are forſooth aduanced by Kings, to whom are aſſigned the chiefeſt dignities and places, as iuſt rewards of their flatteries and bawderies. Are we to wonder then when wee ſee commonwealths euery where almoſt fall to ruin, and come to nought, and all true adminiſtration of *iuſtice and iudgement* abandoned and reiected? No verily. For it is the iuſt puniſhment of our ſinnes; yea, and wee our ſelues deſerue to haue ſuch gouernours, becauſe wee will not ſuffer God to haue the gouernment of vs. How is it poſſible they ſhould inioy this ſo ſingular a benefit, which are knowne rebels, prophane or malicious hypocrits, who caſt the Lord and his heſts behind their backes, and will not indure the ſweet yoke of Chriſt, which would bring with it this happy and floriſhing eſtate of the Church here promiſed?

Our ſinnes the cauſe of all diſorders, both in ciuill and eccleſiaſticall gouernment.

Verſ. 2. *And he ſhall be as an hiding place from the wind, and as a ſhadow from the tempeſt, as the riuers of waters in a dry place, the ſhadow of a great rocke in the deſert land.*

IN this verſe hee lets vs ſee how exceeding needfull it is to haue a well ordered Commonwealth, when hee calles this *King* an *hiding place for the wind*; and the *ſhadow* from the tempeſt. For the world is neuer in ſuch good caſe, as when euery one willingly abſtaines from that which is euill, and when all quietly ſeeke the benefit of one another, without conſtraint. For as much then as many take libertie to offer violence to their neighbours, by reaſon of their intemperancie and vnruly paſſions, men ſhall be in continuall ſtrife and debate, if there bee not remedies at hand by law, and iudgement ſeates to ſtill and pacifie them: but becauſe many by their lordly au-

thoritie are readie rather to raise vp troubles then to allay them: it is not without cause that this good King is heere adorned with such titles.

And if this were rightlie spoken touching the person of *Hezekias*, how much more doth it fitlie appertaine to Christ, in whom wee haue our sure and only refuge in these *tempests*? amiddes which wee must be tossed as long as our conflicting dayes shall last in this world. Are we then parched with heate? Let vs learne to shroude vs vnder his *shadow*. Are we euer and anon tossed with waues, so as it seemes we shall be swallowed vp of them? Let vs runne to him as to our most safe and sure hauen. He will easily still and quiet all tempests. He will set all things in order which before were confused and out of frame.

Christ especiallie is this hiding place.

Christ our shadow and most sure hauen of safetie in the midst of sirie trials, and flouds of aduersities.

Vers. 3. *Then the eyes of the seeing shall not be shut, and the eares of them that heare shall hearken.*

4. *And the heart of the* * *foolish shall vnderstand knowledge, and the tongue of the stutterers shall be vnlosed to speake distinctlie.*

* Or rash, or giddie headed.

HEnce wee may yet better perceiue that the Prophet so sets forth the gouernmẽt and reigne of *Hezekias*, that his meaning therewithall is to leade vs higher. For he intreates here of the restauration of ỹ Church, whereof there was some resemblance vnder *Hezekias*, but the full accomplishment of it was vnder Iesus Christ. We know the Church neuer prospers well if it want iust and wise gouernours. But which way can this be attained vnlesse Christ reigne? It followes therefore that himselfe and his kingdome are here recommended vnto vs. Now this promise is opposed to that fearefull iudgement of *blinding*, mentioned in Chap. 29. 10. 11. Heere on the contrarie he promiseth that *true light*: so as those which were *blinded* before, shall now see clearely: the *deafe* shall begin to heare, the *foolish* shall *vnderstand knowledge*, and the *stutterers* shall speake distinctlie.

He calles them *seers* & *hearers*, which ought to haue taken heed to the word of the Lord when it was published vnto them: but they chose rather to remaine wilfullie *blinde* and *deafe*, and estranged both their minds and thoughts from wholesome doctrine. Now the Lord promiseth them that hee will restore *eyes, eares, tongue*, and *vnderstanding* vnto them. Sure it is that whatsoeuer is heere promised proceeds from the free grace of God: for the question is not now simplie what men shal do of themselues, but of that which God shall worke in them. These then are the speciall gifts of God: as on the contrarie, when he *shuts the eyes, takes away vnderstanding, and the right vse of speech*, and suffers ignorance and barbarousnes to reigne; these are to be accounted horrible iudgements, whereby God auengeth himselfe vpon the vnthankfulnes of men, and also of their contempt of his word.

The Prophet then promiseth that God taking pitie of his Church, will at the last restore that vnto her which before he had iustlie withheld, and that for the loue which he beares vnto Christ, from whom we must receiue a *tongue* to speake, *eyes* to see, *eares* to heare, and an heart to *vnderstand*, for till then, we are more then blockish, and smitten as it were with a fearefull sottishnes. Let vs know then that out of Christ there is no spirituall life in the world. Why so? Because euery mothers sonne of vs is *blind, deafe, dumb*, and *foolish*, vntill we be gathered into that bodie whereof he is the head: whence it followes, that all these benefits faile when his kingdome is defaced.

It is Christ only that giues vs eies, eares, a tongue, and an vnderstãding heart. No spirituall life in the world out of Christ.

We are also to note that the chiefest benefits which aboue all others we are especiallie to desire are here recommended vnto vs: for riches and the like, in the inioying whereof men vsuallie place their happines, ought to be esteemed as nothing in comparison of these things. Shall we not be more then miserable in the middes of all abundance, if the Lord denie vs these spiritual blessings whereof the Prophet speakes in this place? Take away these, and we may be sure Christ is gone; neither can wee haue any part in him. For from him doe these heauenlie graces flow, as S. *Paul* teacheth vs, Ephes. 1. 3. Seeing therefore we now enioy these benefits whereof we haue been so long depriued, let vs blush for shame that with our *tongues* we haue not rendred vnto Christ that glorie which is due vnto him; also that we haue neglected to applie the *vnderstanding* which he hath giuen vs to the aduancement of his kingdome, and to the furtherance of his seruice: for by neglecting these things, we haue manifested to all the world that his kingdome hath no place in vs. To conclude, for as much as fooles are wont to be *rash* and headie, therefore the Hebrues take *hastines* for *follie*: for wise men are commonlie warie and slow in that they take in hand.

No riches comparable with these benefits, which the Prophet here recommends vnto vs.

Vers. 5. *A niggard shall no more be called liberall, nor the churle rich.*

THe Prophets meaning is, that all things shall be brought into their order, that men should not esteeme vices vertues, as they did in times past. For where gouernment is confused, the couetous reigne as Lords; because men vsuallie iudge of vertue by power and riches. Let a poore man be neuer so honest, religious, yea, and *liberall*, according to his abilitie, yet he is generallie despised of all. In an ill gouerned Common-wealth therfore all things are out of frame, but the contrarie easily discouers all such iuglings. For let vertue once be in request, vice will forthwith be brought to light. The godly also haue greater libertie to represse the pride of such as before trode all iustice and equitie vnder foote.

Besides, in regard the Prophet speakes here touching the state and reformation of the Church, the gouernment whereof is spirituall, we must yet raise vp our minds a little higher,

higher, that wee may refer all this vnto Ieſus Chriſt, whoſe peculiar propertie it is to diſcouer the vices that are hid, and to take away the vailes & impediments which change the outward face of them: by reaſon whereof, they are for the moſt part praiſed no leſſe then if they were vertues indeed. This hee doth by the Goſpell. How ſo? Through the preaching thereof, he laies thoſe wickednesſes open, which before were cloſe and ſecret, and makes them appeare in their owne likeneſſe: ſo as none ſhall be beguiled by outward appearances, vnleſſe he will wittingly cloſe vp his eyes. Will yee ſee the reaſon then why the Goſpell is ſo generally hated of the world? No man would willingly haue his ſecret filthie thoughts and vile actions made manifeſt.

The Philoſophers diſpute very well in manie places touching *couetouſneſſe* and *liberalitie*, and in ſome ſort diſcouer the differences betweene them: but they gage not the conſciences to the bottome, neither doe they truly diſtinguiſh betweene the one and the other. This cannot bee done but by Chriſts light, when hee ſhines by his Goſpell, diſcouering the inmoſt ſecrets of our hearts, bringing vs to a ſpirituall and willing obedience. We are here therefore called to the iudgement ſeate of Chriſt, who onely vnmaskes hypocriſie, cauſing vs to ſee whether we be truly *liberall* or *niggardly*.

Verſ. 6. But the niggard will ſpeake of niggardneſſe, and his heart will worke iniquitie, and doe wickedly, and ſpeake falſly againſt the Lord, to make empty the hungry ſoule, and to cauſe the drinke of the thirſtie to faile.

WE may alſo tranſlate, The wicked will ſpeake wickedly: for the word *Nebalah*, ſignifies all manner of villanie or wickednes, which we commonly call, a man of no worth. We may alſo tranſlate, The foole will ſpeake wickedly: and thus there ſhould be ſome alluſion in the words *Nabal* and *Nebalah*; but the ſenſe would be diuers. Notwithſtanding, becauſe he vſed the verie ſame word in the former verſe, when he ſpake of lawleſſe perſons & niggards; I do the rather follow this interpretation. I take the word *Aoen*, for impietie; for he ſpeakes of a continued liberty to doe euill, as the ſequell ſufficiently ſhewes. Why ſo? Becauſe hee directs his ſpeech to ſuch as plunge themſelues into all manner of leaud behauiour; being without touch of breaſt, and as it were paſt feeling. They ieſt out all admonitions, and ſcorne both God and his meſſengers. But Chriſt drawes euen ſuch forth into the light, and laies that open to the view of their conſciences, which before lurked in ſecret: for to him it belongs to diuide (with his two edged ſword of the Goſpell) euen betweene the marrow and the bones, that euery thought may lie naked and bare before his iudgement ſeat.

Heb. 4.

Our Prophet then continues on the ſame matter which he began to handle in the former verſes. Others expound it otherwiſe, (yet not ſo properly as I thinke) for they take it to be a prouerbiall ſpeech, and expound it in the preſent tence; The villaine ſpeakes of villanie. But if I be not deceiued, the Prophet points out vnto vs an higher matter; to wit, that Chriſt who is the Iudge of the world, will aſcend into his iudgement ſeat to manifeſt what is in the heart of euery one. For as long as he forbeares to execute the office of a Iudge, all things run out of courſe: wicked men are applauded becauſe they carry a faire ſhew of vertue; and the godly are counted as the of-skowring of the world. But Chriſt will bring euery mans doings to the touchſtone that ſow wickedneſſe, which before caried ſome colour of vertue, might be diſcouered. For which cauſe it is ſaid, hee hath his fan in his hand to ſeparate the good corne from the chaffe. This fan is the Goſpell, whereby God as a iuſt Iudge, puts the wicked as it were vpon a racke, and maugre their teeth, makes them to vtter their inmoſt thoughts. Wee haue good proofe of this againe and againe, whileſt wee diſcouer that groſſe idolatry which was ſo masked vnder the papacie, that men tooke it for Gods true worſhip. Oh how wonderfully were the poore people wrapped in ſuperſtitions! Who would euer haue thought that there had lien ſuch horrible monſters (in thoſe times of darkneſſe) within the hearts of men: ſuch as they are now manifeſted to be. For the contempt of God ſo ouerflowed, that ſome ſhewed themſelues beaſts rather then men. But what doe the Papiſts? They cry out as if we by our doctrine had let looſe the bridle to men, and had ſet open the doore to epicuriſme; ſo as it ſhould be lawfull for any amongſt vs (without bluſhing) to doe what he liſt. But let them heare our Prophets anſwer; who telles them, that the truth of God being once brought to light, vile perſons will behaue themſelues vilely, and *the wicked will then ſpeake wickedly*: otherwiſe, how ſhould Chriſt be a ſpirituall Iudge, if he did not manifeſt the ſecrets of the hearts, and diſcouer the things that were moſt deeply hidden?

Mat. 3.

The Goſpell hath brought popiſh iugglings to light.

Popiſh ſlanderers.

But beſides the ſcoffes which the reprobates caſt forth againſt God, hee taxeth alſo their crueltie, namely, *They make emptie the hungry ſoule*. Wherein the Prophet orderly recites the ſinnes that are againſt the ſecond table. The wicked begin at the contempt of God: afterwards, they fall into their ſinnes; to wit, they ſpare not to exerciſe *crueltie* againſt their *poore neighbours*. What rigor can be greater then to depriue the *hungry* ſoule of his bread, and the *thirſtie* ſoule of his drinke? For the very inſtinct of nature muſt needes cauſe our bowels in cõpaſſion to yearne within vs. But when men are growne ſo yron hearted, and haue ſo far degenerated, that they are without ſenſe or feeling of their brethrens wants, doe they not ſhew themſelues worſe then ſauage or wild beaſts, who wil pitie their like?

*Verſ. 7. For the *weapons of the churle*

*Inſtruments or meaſures.

churle are *wicked: hee deuiseth wicked counsels to vndoe the poore with lying words, and to speake against the poore in iudgement.*

WEe must alwaies retaine the future tence, because he disputes not so much what couetous men are, as what they will be, when Christ by the light of his Gospell shall discouer their hypocrisie, lest they should deceiue any. For hee speakes of that heauenlie light which should breake forth to cause secret wickednesses appeare; as wee haue said. Christ then manifests the venome that is hid in the *couetous*, and shewes with what vnlawfull weapons they fence themselues. If any will interpret the word *Kelai*, Measures; I hinder him not: but the word *weapons* agrees best, and hath a larger sense; for vnder it are comprehended all sorts of instruments. He means then by a metaphor to set forth the cunning practises and subtile iuglings, wherewith the couetous *beguile* the simple, and snare them in their ginnes.

In the next place he shewes the reason of it; to wit, they are alwaies *hammering of wicked plots in their heads*. Surely hee here describes the maner of the wicked, who busie their braines about nothing else but how they may fill their purses; be it by right or wrong, it is no matter. Such people doth our Lord Iesus Christ here vnmaske, and lets all the world see their priuie packing. Our Prophet amplifies the indignitie of their fact yet further, by other circumstances. For is it not a more grieuous sinne to *circumuent the innocent* who are vnable to shift for themselues, then such as haue reaching heads? Againe, if with sweete baits, they deceiue vnder pretext of friendship? In the third place, if they do this to the *poore*, who had more neede to be deliuered? Lastly, if *snares* be spread euen in the open *iudgement* seates? No doubt the sinne is greater to spoile the poore vnder colour of iustice, then to set vpon them in the high way. For iudgement seates ought to bee like Cities of refuge for the distressed to flee vnto. What shall we say then, if such places bee made dennes of theeues? On the high way a man may happily shunne a theefe, and may wind himselfe out of his nets: but which way shall a man escape out of the snares which are laid in places of iustice? The circumstances of this text therefore ought diligently to be obserued.

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It is a greater sinne to rob the poore vnder colour of iustice, then to set vpon them by the high waies side. Iudgement seates ought to be as cities of refuge for the distressed to flee vnto.

Vers. 8. *But the liberall man will deuise of liberall things, and he will continue* his *liberalitie.*

WEe haue told you before that these sentences haue a more spiritual sense then our bare reason can attaine vnto: for the Prophet speakes not so much of Commonwealth matters, as of the reformation of the Church. These things therefore appertaine to the regenerate, ouer whom Christ raignes by the scepter of his word. For howsoeuer many bee called outwardly by the voice of the Gospell; yet few are brought by it to yeeld sound obedience vnto God, or to beare that sweete yoke. Those few doth the Lord make benefactors and truely *liberall*, in such wise, as they seeke not so much their owne things, as how to benefit the poore; and that not once or twice, and so away, but *continue* the same from day to day, so as their heate doth rather increase then decrease.

Many called by the external voice of the Gospell, but few are brought thereby to yeeld sound obedience thereunto.

This place is commonly translated otherwise; to wit, that those who are liberall, go on forward, and abound in well doing, because God inricheth them, & recompenceth them with greater benefits. This sense at the first, hath some shew of reason: but the Prophet rather meant, that the liberall shall neuer cease giuing. Why so? Because they shal grow more and more; they shall haue the same will and affections, and shall continue constant in their good course: as it is said, Psal. 112. 9. He hath distributed abroad, and giuen to the poore: his righteousnesse indureth for euer. Now this is added because it is an easie matter to counterfet the liberall person for a time: many also thinke they haue quit themselues well, when they haue giuen a little; but they grow faint hearted by & by, and change their mindes: whereas on the contrary, true liberalitie is not an houres bird, as wee say, but growes on to perfection. Those that are indued therewith, perseuere therein constantly: their liberalitie is not by fits & starts; neither are they like a seething pot, that is now ready to boile ouer, and by & by stands as still as a stone.

The way of the righteous like the light that shineth more and more vnto the perfect day: Prou. 4. 18.

2. Cor. 9. 9.

This is it which our Prophet meant to expresse by the verbe, *shall goe forward* or *continue*. Many things fall out often times, which cooles the heat, and hinders the course of our charitie. First, we meete with the strange ingratitudes of men; so as it seemes all our cost is ill bestowed. Againe, many are too greedie, like horseleeches, that still sucke in other mens blood. Yet let vs often and alwaies beare in minde what Saint *Paul* saith, Gal. 6. 9. to wit, that we shall reape in due season if we faint not. For the Lord exhorts vs not to such a kinde of liberalitie as should last for a day or a weeke, but for our whole life.

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Vers. 9. *Rise vp, yee women that are at ease: heare my voice ye careless daughters, hearken to my words.*

IT seemes there should bee no coherence betweene these words and the former. For before hee spake of the restitution of the Church; but now hee threatens that Gods iudgements are readie to seise vpon those who gaue themselues to a pompous, delicious, and an idle course of life. It should seeme therefore that *Isaiah* takes vp a new matter in this place. Yet will there be no great inconuenience, if this prophecie be ioyned to the former: for the Prophets vsually keepe this course; first, they lay forth promises of grace

The vsuall tenor which the Prophets hold in their sermons.

grace to the faithfull; then they direct their ſpeech to the hypocrits, teſtifying that the mercy which God promiſeth to his children, ſhall be ſo far off from benfiting of them, that they ſhall ſurely beare the reward of their ſinnes.

Wheras he bends the force of his ſpeech in particular againſt *women*, the Hebrews vnder this word (according to the vſe of their tong) vnderſtand Cities: but I thinke this ſhould be no figuratiue maner of ſpeech, and therefore I rather reſt in the bare letter. Now he ſpeaks to *women* rather then vnto men, to ſignifie the greatneſſe of this deſolation: for *women* and maidens are commonly ſpared in ſuch times, by reaſon of their ſex, being alſo deſtitute of warlike defences. Well, he ſaith the deſtruction ſhall be ſo barbarous, that none ſhall ſcape ſcotfree.

And note that he ſpeakes expreſly of *women of reſt*, who cómonly are the moſt delicate: for according to their abundance, ſo they may better ſhift for themſelues, and may more eaſilie eſcape dangers, when the poore muſt be faine to goe to the wall. But *Iſaiah* telles them that they ſhal be conſtrained to *riſe* and tremble: therein oppoſing this trembling, to that *reſt* and eaſe which they quietly inioyed. For he commands them to *ariſe*, as giuing them to vnderſtand, that it was no time for them now to *ſit ſtill*, becauſe the Lord was about to awaken them out of their ſecure couſe of life.

When he addes, *heare my voice yee daughters*: by *daughters*, the Rabbines vnderſtand Cities and Townes; but this ought to be taken litterally, as I ſaid before. Hee ſhewes whence this terror and violence ſhall proceed, which ſhall cauſe them thus to *ariſe* and tremble; to wit, from the iudgement of God. But he mentions the *voice*, to ſhew that this ſhall bee no vaine prophecie, becauſe this war was proclaimed againſt them by the commandement of God. As if he ſhould ſay; You ſhall one day feele by experience, what power and efficacie there is in the *word of God to awaken* you.

Now he blames their idleneſſe, ſecuritie, and delicacie ſo oft, not onely becauſe it ſhould be vnked for thoſe that had bin wont to be at their eaſe, to bee ſo rudely rouzed vp; but alſo in regard it is a thing almoſt vnpoſſible, that the world (in this corrupted and depraued eſtate of mans nature) ſhould not bee too careleſſe in abuſing reſt and abundance. For we then by little and little fall into a ſottiſhneſſe of mind, deceiuing our owne ſoules with vaine imaginations: ſo as all feare is abandoned of euery one: in which falſe ſecuritie, wee eaſily are drawne audaciouſly euen to ruſh againſt God himſelfe,

Verſ. 10. *Yee women that are careleſſe, ſhall bee in feare abouc a yeere in daies: for the vintage ſhall faile, and the gathering ſhall come no more.*

It is a great reliefe to a ſorrowfull

BY theſe words he meanes, that the calamitie ſhall laſt long: for it is a great reliefe to a ſorrowfull mind, when bee thinkes that the miſeries and afflictions which preſſe vpon him ſo neerly, ſhall laſt but a while. But when there is no hope left of ſome comfortable iſſue, nor promiſe of deliuerance, what can enſue thereof but deſpaire? Hee ſhewes then, that they ſhall not ſuffer this extremitie for a *yeere* onely, but that they muſt expect new afflictions, one in the necke of another. By the word *to feare*, hee priuily taxeth their drowſineſſe; ſhewing that they ſhall be led away with *terror and trembling*, ſeeing the ſweet and ſtill voice of wholſome doctrine was ſo tedious vnto them. And in as much as the Iewes were too much beſotted with the loue of earthly and tranſitorie things, hee threatens them with want of *bread* and *wine*. And thus hee applies himſelfe to their capacitie.

heart, when it perceiues that though afflictions be ſharpe, yet they are but ſhort.

If they had been better purged from their earthlineſſe, he would rather haue awakened them with the feare of that iudgement which *Ieremiah* bewailes, Lament. 1. 7. to wit, that the ſacrifices and feaſt daies ſhould ceaſe, and that the holy aſſemblies ſhould be aboliſhed. But becauſe they had plunged themſelues in voluptuous liuing, and had not ſo well profited as to eſteeme ſpiritual benefits, the Prophet applying himſelfe to their weakneſſe, addreſſeth his ſpeech rather to their bellies, then to their mindes.

Now he toucheth the *waſting of the fields*, which ſhould vndoubtedly follow this war: for abundance is the mother of idleneſſe and ſecuritie. It is therefore as if he had ſaid, The Lord will depriue you of your belly cheere, he will rouze you vp with a witneſſe, and will depriue you of all matter of reioycing. By this verſe then are we admoniſhed not to lie ſnorting in our proſperity; neither to dreame of ſuch a reſt, as if we were to inioy the ſame in this world for euer. No, let vs vſe the good things which God beſtowes vpon vs moderately, vnleſſe we meane that God ſhould awaken and ouerwhelme vs vnawares: and by this ſudden change which ſhall befall vs, vexe vs worſe then wee can expect or thinke of.

Abundance the mother of idleneſſe and ſecurite.

Verſ. 11. *Tee women that are at eaſe, be aſtonied: feare O yee careleſſe women: put off the clothes, make bare, and gird* ſackcloth *vpon the loines.*

THis is no ſuperfluous repetition, but rather an amplification of that which hee ſpake of before: for whileſt men are thus rocked aſleepe, hardly can they be awakened by the voice of Gods Prophets. It is needefull then to cry alowd, and to adde rebuke to rebuke. Therefore in that hee multiplies his threatning, he thereby ſhewes how great our ſecuritie is, when men are once blinded with proſperitie. It is almoſt a thing impoſſible for them to heare the voice of God when he admoniſheth them. And to ſpeake the truth, men are in much more danger by proſperitie, then by aduerſitie: for when all things fall out well, they are ready to flatter themſelues

ſelues; yea, and to be bewitched with their felicitie. This was the cauſe why he was faine to rebuke the Iewes ſo ſharply; euen to quicken them vp if it were poſſible out of their drowſineſſe. This exhortation then ought to be referred to the time to come: as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid; In the end you ſhall tremble, for I can aſſure you, your reſt ſhall not laſt alwaies.

Thus hee ſhewes that this calamitie which was to enſue, ſhould be as a ſeale ſet vnto his prophecie, whereby God would manifeſt by the effects, that theſe words ſhould not vaniſh away in the ayre. Where hee bids them to *make bare*, and to gird them with ſackcloth, he deſcribes the eſtate of mourners. For when aduerſitie preſſeth any, then they put on *ſackcloth*, and make the reſt of the parts of their bodies *naked*: and ſo by outward geſtures and garments, and the like, they manifeſt the inward dolour of their mindes. Hee calles the *women* then from their delicious and daintie fare, and voluptuous liuing wherein they plunged themſelues, to *ſackcloth* and other teſtimonies of ſorrow.

Verſ. 12. *Men ſhall lament for the teates; euen for the pleaſant fields and for the fruitfull vine.*

THis verſe is diuerſly expounded: for ſome without any figure, vnderſtand, that there ſhall bee ſuch great want of food, that women ſhall loſe their milke, and therefore that the infants ſhall weepe ouer the emptie and dried breaſts of their mothers: which we ſee to fall out when people are pined away in great famin. But the moſt receiued ſenſe, and that which agrees beſt, is; that by *teates*, vnder a figure we vnderſtand *fields* and *vineyardes*, which alſo is expreſſed in the very words of the text: becauſe from them, as from the teats of our mothers, we daily ſucke milke & blood as it were out of ỹ earth. His meaning is then, that the fruits of the earth ſhall faile, becauſe the Lord will ſo curſe her, ỹ ſhe ſhall not be able to yeeld any increaſe. Thus *men* ſhall *lament* in regard of this great penurie, as ouer the *teats* of their mother, which were wont to feede them with delicates. This ſenſe I take to be fitteſt, as beſt agreeing to the naturall ſcope of the text: for it was neceſſarie it ſhould ſerue as an expoſition to that which is afterward added, touching the *pleaſant field, and the fruitfull vines.*

Verſ. 13. *Vpon the land of my people ſhall grow thornes and briars: yea, vpon all the houſes of ioy in the Citie of reioycing.*

HEe now confirmes the former ſentence, and ſhewes that the cauſe of this famin and barrenneſſe ſhal be, in regard that *thornes* and *briars* ſhall grow vpon the land; that is to ſay, the fields ſhall bee laid fallow and barren, whereas before they were fat and fruitfull.

Now this muſt needs be an horrible change: for this Country, as we know, had the praiſe for fruitfulnes aboue any other; not ſo much in reſpect of the ſoile, as by Gods bleſſing, who had ſaid, I will giue you a land flowing with milke and hony: Exod. 3. 8. and 17. Hence (I ſay) came this fruitfulneſſe of that land.

Whereas he calles it *the land of his people*: he preuents an obiection which they might thus make; what reaſon haue we to feare the barrenneſſe of that land, or that it ſhould not yeerly yeeld vs fruit, ſeeing God who is good vnto all, will be much more a nurcing father to vs, and that in a more particular manner? They thought it then a thing vtterly vnpoſſible, that this *land* being beſtowed vpon them, who were the *children of Abraham*, ſhould euer be ouergrowne with *thornes* and *briars*. And thus the Prophet rebukes the Iewes the more ſharply, becauſe by their rebellion, they had not onely made void theſe bleſſings of God, but had alſo pulled downe his wrath ſo far vpon them, as to lay their fruitfull land waſte and barren.

The word *yea*, in the middle of the ſentence, amplifies the doctrine: albeit ſome expound it, For, reading it thus: For gladneſſe is in their houſes. But this ſenſe ſutes not wel, in regard the conſtruction of the words will not beare it. I rather thinke therefore that he inlargeth the ſentence, as if he meant to ſay, that this calamitie ſhall not onely ſeiſe vpon the vtmoſt bounds of the land, but euen vpon the *houſes of ioy* alſo; to wit, euen vpon thoſe which were ſumptuous and pleaſant, where they were alwaies wont to ſolace themſelues without let in times paſt.

But when the Prophet ſpake theſe things, I warrant you the people of that time laught a good (as we ſay) at him: neither could they heare ſuch vnſauorie newes amiddeſt ſo manie delights which bewitched them. Nay, they tooke foule ſcorne to be ſo dealt with all, becauſe of Gods promiſes, which they tooke to bee ſo ſure, that they thought no want could euer befal them: but *Iſaiahs* words haue all proued true for all that. By this example therefore let vs learne to vſe proſperitie with ſobriety, and ſo depend vpon Gods promiſes touching his bleſſings, to bee powred out vpon vs, that in the meane while we yeelde obedience to his word with a good conſcience.

Vſe proſperitie with ſobrietie.

Verſ. 14. **Becauſe the pallace ſhall bee forſaken, and the noiſe of the Citie ſhall bee left; the tower and fortreſſe ſhall bee dennes for euer, and the delight of wilde Aſſes, and a paſture for flockes.*

*Or, For the, &c.

HE yet ſets forth this deſolation more at large: for, hauing in the former verſe mentioned the houſe of magnificence; hee now addes the *pallaces* and *Cities*: meaning to ſhew, that nothing (be it neuer ſo glorious or excellent) could bee exempted from this

common

common deſolation. We ſee then that mens eies are dazeled with their owne glorie vntill they lift vp their eies towards heauen, and thus being ſweetly lulled aſleepe in their plentie, they grew feareleſſe and careleſſe of any thing. Therefore he tels them that all their pleaſant and gorgeous things in the land of Iudea, to wit, their *Cities, Pallaces, Caſtles & Forreſſes* ſhould be laid vpon heapes and brought to nothing.

By the word *euer*, he againe admoniſheth them (as I haue touched before) that this wound ſhall not be cloſed vp againe in a yeere, but ſhould be long in healing: which ſhould anſwere in proportion to the length of time in which they had hardened themſelues in their vices; for had not the hand of God preſſed them long according to their ſtubborne and rebellious nature, they would haue been readie forthwith to haue ruſhed into their iniquities afreſh.

Verſ. 10.

Verſ. 15. *Vntill the Spirit be powred vpon vs from aboue, and the wildernes become a fruitfull field, and* the plenteous field be counted as a forreſt.*

*Or, Carmel.

THe Prophet had to deale as we know with the Iewes, amongſt whom the Lord had planted his Church, it was needfull therefore to leaue them ſome hope of ſaluation, leaſt they ſhould diſpaire in the middes of ſo many calamities. For albeit the Lord handles hypocrits roughlie becauſe they falſely ſhroude themſelues vnder the title of being his people; yet is he inforced by one meanes or other to prouide for the good of his Saints. This promiſe is added therefore to put them in hope that God can not, nor will not forget his Couenant; howbeit for a time he ſcourgeth his children ſharplie with the rods of men; for he neuer ſo threatens, but he leaues hope and conſolation for the repentant to cheere vp and refreſh their hearts, and that euen when it ſeemes heauen and earth ſhall goe together.

God neuer threatens ſo ſharpely, but he ſtill leaues hope for the penitent.

And that they might the better taſte this conſolation which our Prophet ſets before them, he raiſeth vp their minds to the author of life. Wee ſee that when all things fadge well, many eate and drinke till their skins crack, as they ſay: If famin pinch, then God is forgotten, and men runne for ſuccor to the earth. It is not without cauſe then that *Iſaiah* ſaith, *the Spirit ſhall come from aboue*, which warming the earth, ſhall cauſe the ſame to floriſh with new frutefulnes. Neither do I doubt but he alludes to that ſentence of *Dauid*, Send forth thy *Spirit*, and they ſhall be created, and thou wilt renew the face of the earth, Pſal. 104. 30.

1 2

This word ſpirit hath two extents here: firſt, to the reſtauration of earthly benefits.

Now in regard that he alſo ſets before them this ſigne as a token that God was reconciled vnto them, he therewithall aduertiſeth them, that the reſtauration of ỹ Church flowes only from his free grace, who can abolith barrennes as ſoone as it pleaſeth him in his fauor to diſtill ſome ſweet dewes from *aboue*: yea, ỹ he can do it in an inſtant, becauſe at the firſt he created all things of nothing, as if they had been before.

The expoſitors doe diuerſlie tranſlate the latter part of this verſe, where he compares the deſert to *Carmell*: but as I haue ſhewed in the 29. Chapter verſ. 17. where there is the like phraſe of ſpeech, it ſeemes to me that the Prophet ſimplie ſets forth the effect of this reſtauration: to wit, that the abundance of all things ſhall teſtifie that God is indeed appeaſed towards his people. For the places which were deſerts before ſhould be as Carmell, which was a fat & frutefull ſoile, whence alſo it tooke his name.

Carmell alſo ſhall be as a deſert: that is to ſay, ſo frutefull, that if it be compared as it is now with that which it ſhal be one day, it may well be called a deſert: for it is an amplification of the extraordinarie frutefulnes of it; as if he ſhould ſay, The fields which now are laid fallow and beare nothing, ſhall bring forth frutes: and thoſe which are tilled, and are by nature apt to yeeld increaſe, ſhall wax ſo frutefull, that the abundance which is now vpon them is but barrennes in compariſon of that which ſhall be hereafter. As if we ſhould compare the grounds of Sauoy, with thoſe of Sicilia or Calabria, we would ſay that it were but a deſert. In a word, he ſignifies that there ſhall be an incomparable frutefulnes, which the faithfull ſhall enioy after they be reconciled vnto God; and all becauſe they may vnderſtand what loue he beares them by lading them with ſo many benefits.

Now *Iſaiah* ſo propheſieth here of *Hezekias* his kingdome, that therewithall he referres all things to the kingdome of Chriſt, as to the end and full accompliſhment thereof. Come we once to Chriſt, then muſt we expound all theſe things ſpirituallie, that ſo we may know we are renewed, as ſoone as the Lord *ſends downe his ſpirit from aboue into our hearts*, of barren ground, to make them frutefull. For till we be inſpired from *aboue* by this holy *Spirit*, we are rightlie compared to deſerts and parched grounds, ſeeing we bring forth nothing but thornes and buſhes, and are vnfit naturallie to bring forth any good fruite. Thoſe therefore which in times paſt were fruitleſſe, being now regenerated by the Spirit of God, ſhall begin in ſome meaſure to bring forth fruite vnto him: and thoſe who before had ſome outward ſhew of goodnes, ſhall become ſo frutefull after they be thus regenerated by the holy Ghoſt, that comparing the one eſtate with the other, the firſt will be iudged but as a deſert in reſpect of the latter: for all the goodly works that men do before Chriſt hath regenerated them, are but ſo many glorious ſinnes. Therefore when wee ſee the Church oppreſſed euen vnto death, and that her condition ſeemes very lamentable, let vs lift vp our eies to heauen, and depend whollie vpon theſe promiſes.

The ſecond extent.

Verſ. 16. *And Iudgement ſhall dwell in the deſart, and Iuſtice ſhall remaine in the frutefull field.*

Wherein the true glory of the Church conſiſts.

THe Prophet heere teacheth wherein the true glorie of the Church conſiſts, to wit,

when *Iuſtice* and *Iudgement* gets the vpper hand: for men are not to reſemble beaſts in ſeeking only after the abundance of earthlie and tranſitorie things. By this it appeares ſufficientlie, that the Iewes were not held by the doctrine of the law in the hope of temporarie benefits only, as ſome fantaſticall ſpirits affirme: but they were by it commanded to reſt in that which was the principall, to wit, that *Iuſtice* and *Iudgement* ſhould floriſh amongſt them: neither is it to be doubted but they knew well enough that true felicitie conſiſted therein. We are therefore firſt of all to ſeeke the kingdome of God, and the righteouſnes thereof, and not to place our ioy and happines in the abundance of wheat and wine, as hogges that feede in the trough. For as *Zacharie* ſings in Luk.1.75. The end of our deliuerance from ſinne and Satan, and of all the bleſſings we receiue from God, is, that we ſhould ſerue him in holines and in righteouſnes all the dayes of our life.

labour after an innocent life.

By *Iuſtice* and *Iudgement* then he vnderſtands all vprightnes, as we haue often ſhewed before. See verſ.1. Which albeit they properlie concerne the equitie which we ought to vſe one towards another: notwithſtanding, becauſe it is vſuall in the Scriptures by the duties of the ſecond table to vnderſtand the obſeruation of the whole law, the Prophet here vnder a part comprehends religion and the true ſeruice of God. But the Prophets are wont eſpeciallie to mention the duties of loue and thoſe things that concerne the ſecond table, becauſe we chieflie manifeſt vnto men thereby what affection and loue wee beare vnto God. Now where he ſaith, that Iuſtice and Iudgement ſhall alſo *dwell in the deſert* as well as in ŷ plowed fields: it ſo much the better appeares that ſuch plentie of bleſſings was promiſed, that the beholding therof ſhould put men in minde of that great increaſe which they had ſeene in the fields before, was but barrennes now in reſpect thereof.

Verſ. 17. *And the worke of Iuſtice ſhall be peace, euen the * worke of Iuſtice and quietnes, and aſſurance for euer.*

* Or, effect.

EVen now he enuaied againſt that peace in which the Iewes were lulled aſleepe. See verſe 9. 10. 11. But heere he promiſeth a *peace* contrarie to that, which ſhall be a teſtimonie of Gods loue towards them, who will keepe them faithfullie after he hath receiued them into his fauour. The cloſe oppoſition betweene that *bruitiſh peace*, which the wicked thought they had gotten when they committed all ſorts of wickednes, whileſt they lay ſnorting therein alſo without repentance, and *this peace* which the children of God enioy by a *godly* and *iuſt* life, is here to be noted. For *Iſaiah* ſtirres vs vp to couet after this latter; and teacheth vs to be aſſured that thoſe with whom God is appeaſed, ſhal enioy a *peace* that is bleſſed and happie in deed. Thus he ſets *integritie* before them for the obiect of their deſires, that ſo they may attaine that peace which paſſeth vnderſtanding: for there is no better meanes to liue ſuch a peaceable life as is free from anoyance, then in abſteining from euill, and doing of good, as S. *Peter* teſtifieth in his firſt Epiſtle, Chap.3. verſ.13.

They that would enioy an happie peace, muſt

But our Prophet leades them higher, to wit, that in liuing holilie and iuſtlie, they ſhall keepe themſelues in Gods fauour. For is it not a thing altogether vnreaſonable, that the wicked ſhould expect peace, when they themſelues will continuallie make warre againſt God? In deed there is none but deſires peace; yea, who is he that can not highlie extoll it? but in the meane while themſelues are the cauſe why enemies are raiſed vp againſt them, for they trouble heauen and earth by heapes as it were with their wickednesſes. Now in regard that this peace which God giues is *perpetuall*, *Iſaiah* compares it with that which laſts but for a moment.

The wicked would faine enioy peace, whileſt they make open war againſt God.

In that he calles peace *the effect of Iuſtice*, let vs thence learne that warres proceed frō Gods wrath, which we ſet on fire by our rebellion, whereas *peace* on the contrarie proceeds from his bleſſing. When therefore we ſee the enemies boile with rage, exalting themſelues furiouſlie againſt vs, let vs ſeeke no other matter to allay that heate then true conuerſion: for our God will eaſily calme and quiet tumults, we being at one with him: for he it is as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, which makes warres to ceaſe vnto the ends of the earth: he breakes the bow and knappeth the ſpeares in ſunder, and burnes the chariots with fire, Pſal.46.9. but we haue told you before that theſe things belong not only to the time of *Hezekias*, but ought alſo to be referred vnto Chriſt.

Warres proceed from Gods wrath, which we ſet on fire by our ſinnes. Our ſound and ſincere conuerſion, the onely meanes to ſtill and quiet the rage of our enemies.

Verſ. 18. *And my people ſhall dwell in the tabernacles of peace, and in ſure dwellings, and in * ſafe reſting-places.*

* Or, quiet refreſhings.

AS he hath ſhewed that ſpirituall *Iuſtice* is that which hath her ſeate in the hearts of men, the ſame muſt be ſaid of *peace*, which is the fruite of it. Thus when we heare of ſure *dwelling places*, and *refreſhings*, let vs remember what *Paul* ſaith, Rom.5.1. Being iuſtified by faith, wee haue *peace* with God. This peace Chriſt left with his Diſciples, which the world could not giue vnto them, Iohn 14.27. And what maruell? For as the ſame Apoſtle teacheth, Phil.4.7. This *peace* paſſeth all vnderſtanding. Hauing once obteined this *Iuſtice*, we ſhall be no more diſquieted with inward terrors, as we were whē we felt that God was angrie with vs. The wicked conſcience is alwaies at warres with it ſelfe, and in continuall anguiſhes. The wicked therefore muſt needs be toſſed to and fro with diuers garboiles: for he that is deſtitute of righteouſnes, can neuer be in any ſound peace of conſcience. But where Chriſt reignes, there only is the true peace to be found, which the faithfull haue in aſſurance, which makes thē come without feare before the heauenlie throne, not ſo much in reſpect of their owne pietie, as for that they reſt themſelues vpon the ſure rock of Gods mercies in Chriſt. Hence we gather, that Chriſt reignes not where conſcien-

Peace, the fruite of Iuſtice.

He that is deſtitute of the imputation of Chriſts righteouſnes, can neuer haue ſound peace.

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ces are troubled and toſſed to and fro with diuers doubtings; in which caſe the Papiſts muſt of neceſſitie be: yea, and all others that caſt not themſelues vpon the meritorious ſacrifices of Chriſt, and vpon that purgation which he hath purchaſed for vs.

Verſ. 19. *When it haileth, it ſhall fall on the forreſt, and the Citie ſhall be ſet in the lowar place.*

WE told you before, that the Prophets were often wont to ſet forth the kingdome of Chriſt vnder ſhadowes, becauſe they borrowed ſimilitudes from an earthly kingdome, for otherwiſe (in reſpect of our dulnes) we could hardly be brought to comprehend this ineſtimable treaſure of all good things. The meaning is, that the Lord will remoue far off from his people, all incombrances and diſcommodities, and will cauſe them to fall vpon others. Now becauſe *in* this world were ſubiect to diuers tempeſts and vexations, ſo as wee muſt indure raine, *haile*, windes, and whirle windes: he ſaith that God by his admirable prouidence will exempt vs from the harme we might receiue by theſe things, becauſe the violence thereof ſhall be driuen by him vpon thoſe of other places.

Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord deliuers thē out of all: Pſal. 34. 19.

By forreſts, hee meanes vaſt and deſert places, where none inhabits. By this we are aduertiſed, that being vnder the protection of Ieſus Chriſt, we are ſo freed from all dangers and inconueniences, that notwithſtanding there are many hailes and tempeſts readie to fall vpon our heads: but the Lord is our deliuerer, who either turnes away theſe eminent perils, or frees them who are in danger to take hurt by them. And that hee might the better confirme that which he ſaid touching *peace*; he ſaith, that the *Cities* which ſtood in the *plaine*, ſhall be out of danger; for they were wont then to build their Cities vpon high places, the rather to preuent aſſaults. Now hee ſaith, that God will ſo defend his people, that they ſhall neede none of theſe vſuall munitions, becauſe the *Cities* ſhall bee ſafe, though they ſtand in the *vallies*; neither ſhall they receiue any hurt, albeit they lie open to the furie of the enemie. Why ſo? For the hand of the Lord will ſaue and keepe them. Wil we be ſecure then? Let vs not truſt in horſes, nor chariots, nor yet in defenced Cities, leſt the Lord ſuddenly diſlodge vs: but ſeeing our good and heauenly Father vouchſafeth to take care of our ſaluation, let the protection of ſo good a gardian ſuffice vs.

Verſ. 20. *Bleſſed are yee that ſow vpon all waters, and driue thither the feet of the Oxe and the Aſſe.*

HE ſhewes how great the change ſhall be, when Chriſt begins to reigne. For hee ſaid before, that there ſhould be ſuch a deſolation, that *thornes* and *briars* ſhould couer the face of the holy land, *that ſtately houſes ſhould be laid on heapes, and the Cities and palaces vtterly ruined*. All theſe things were to fall out when the Country ſhould be ſpoiled by continuall incurſions of the enemie: but now he ſaith they ſhall be *bleſſed*, becauſe God will giue them the abundance of all things. He adorneth and decketh this fruitfulneſſe with figurative ſpeeches, which may be expounded in plaine words; to wit, *that they ſhall ſow in marriſh grounds, and ſhall feede their cattell in thoſe places without feare*. *Verſ.* 13. *Verſe* 14.

By *waters*, ſome vnderſtand a fat and fruitfull ſoile: but I take it otherwiſe, becauſe of the generallitie of the particle *All*: for in calling them *all waters*, it is as if hee had ſaid, that euen *thoſe places which were couered with waters, ſhould be fit for tillage*: ſo as they ſhall not need to feare the ſpoiling of their ſeede. It is our manner alſo to driue *Oxen*, *Aſſes*, and other beaſts out of the fields that are ſowen, leſt they ſhould crop off, or mar the corne. But he ſaith here, that it ſhall be ſo thicke and faire vpon the ground, that *Oxen* and *Aſſes* muſt be *driuen thither* to eate the firſt growth, as they vſually doe when corne is too ranke.

He calles them *bleſſed*, according to the vſuall Hebrew phraſe, becauſe their labour ſhould not be in vaine. If it be obiected that there was neuer ſeene ſuch a fruitfulneſſe of the earth, vnder the kingdome of Chriſt: I confeſſe that in the times wherein God hath prouided for his children in greateſt plenty, yet ſome tokens of his curſe might alwaies bee perceiued, wherein the whole race of mankind is wrapped, by reaſon of *Adams* reuolt. But becauſe the inheritance of this world was reſtored to the faithfull, by the meanes of Ieſus Chriſt, the Prophets vpon good reaſon affirme, that hee will renew the earth in ſuch wiſe, that it being purged againe from her filthineſſe, ſhee ſhall receiue her firſt beautie. Thoſe that reply, that this is not yet fulfilled, ought to take a view of themſelues, to ſee whether they be yet wholly cleanſed from all their ſinnes. And if they be as yet far off from that ſpirituall righteouſneſſe, ſpoken of verſ. 16 let vs bee contented to feele this *bleſſing*, according to the meaſure of our regeneration; which ſhall neuer be perfected in vs, till hauing put off the infirmitie of the fleſh, wee be fully renewed after the image of God, in true holineſſe and righteouſneſſe. Obiect. Anſ.

If thou ſee not the full accompliſhment of theſe promiſes, impute it onely to thy imperfect obedience: & be content to feele this bleſſing according to the meaſure of thy regeneration.

THE XXXIII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Woe to thee that spoilest and wast not spoiled; and dost wickedly, and they did not wickedly against thee: when thou shalt cease to spoile, thou shalt bee spoiled; when thou shalt make an end of doing wickedly.*

Whither this woe be pronounced against the Caldeans.

IF we expound this of the Caldeans, the scope of the place will very well beare it. For seeing in chap. 32. 15. hee promised freedome to the vanquished, it was high time for him now to direct his speech against the vanquishers. Not onely that, but the faithfull also stood in need to be confirmed in particular manner, to the end they might be drawne to beleeue this prophecie, which was almost incredible. It was verie vnlikely that such a Monarchie could suddenly be brought to nought; or that these poore prisoners, destitute of all hope, should by and by be set at libertie, to returne into their owne Country. The Iewes therefore you see, might very well haue fainted in waiting for any succour in such extremities, vnlesse the Prophet had preuented the same by this and the like instructions. He takes away the occasions then which might otherwise haue incited and prouoked them to dispaire, when the Caldeans led them captiue into Babylon; for they then saw no performance at all of these promises, but felt the cleane contrary.

Or, against the Assyrian.

Notwithstanding, because all are of opinion, that this is the beginning of a new sermon, and that these words are directed against *Senacherib* and his host, I also am drawn to admit, that the Prophet here threatens the Assyrians, with the chastisement of their vniust oppressions and cruelties by them committed, against their neighbours; that so comfort might bee giuen by meanes hereof, to the comfortlesse and oppressed. His meaning is then, that there shall be a wonderfull change when this florishing estate of Niniue shall be brought to ruin, albeit it seemed impregnable. Why so? Because the Caldeans should come against it, and should reuenge the cruelties which the Assyrians had exercised against so many Countries. And to the end his words might haue the greater efficacie, he addresseth his speech euen to the Assyrians, saying; *Ho, thou which spoilest*; as if he should say; *thou hast now libertie to range abroad as thy pleasure, no man dares resist thee; but a day will come, wherein others shall make their pray vpon thee, as thou hast done vpon them.*

The Caldeans sent to reuenge the cruelties committed by the Assyrians.

He speakes in the singular number, but it is by a noune collectiue; which is an vsuall phrase of speech. Others read it by an interrogation, Shalt thou not be spoiled? Thinkest thou thy violences shall escape vnpunished? No, they shall one day render thee like for like. But we may follow the vsuall interpretation, by which *Isaiah* amplifies the iniquitie of the enemie, who was so greedie after his pray, that he spared none: no not those *innocents which never wronged him.* Wherein we may behold a signe of extreme crueltie. I am very willing to receiue this exposition then; to wit, that in this first member, he describes the disposition of the Assyrians; shewing that they were mercilesse theeues and robbers: and further inlargeth their crueltie, in regard they vexed and spoiled those which neuer hurt the: and all to this end, that when the Iewes should behold such wickednesses, they might first bee brought to consider of Gods iustice therein; and in the secõd place, that hee would not suffer such barbaritie to escape vnpuhished. 1 2

When thou shalt cease.] This is the second part of this verse, in which the Prophet shewes, that the Assyrians do now spoile, because the Lord lets them run riot: but the time of their restraint drawes on, so as they shall haue no more power of doing hurt. If it were said; they shal cease to spoile, when they were able to spoile no longer; the sense would be too barré. Our Prophet therefore mounts higher; to wit, that the time will come, that they shall indeed *cease to spoile*, because *the Lord* will tame them, and take downe the pride of their power. Which is as much as if he had said; euen then, when thou shalt be at the highest. Hence we may learne, that tyrants haue their terme limitted, which they shall not passe. They rob and spoile whilest they haue run the length of their chaine, but when they are come to the end of it, they shall be constrained to stay there, as at their last exploit. Let this consolation then cheere vp our hearts, when we see tyrants take their swinge, and doe furiously band themselues against the poore Church: for the Lord will calme their rage well enough; and by how much the more they haue exercised their crueltie; so much the more shall God heape his wrath vpon them. The Lord will cut them off in a moment; for hee will *raise vp enemies* against them, which shall *sacke and spoile* them forthwith, and shall reward them that which they haue done to others.

Tyrants haue their terme prefixed, which they shall not passe.

Aconsolatiõ.

We are here also to note Gods prouidence in the change of kingdomes; for vnbeleeuers thinke that all things are hudled together by the hand of fortune: but it is our parts to looke higher; to wit, *that the Lord rewards the wicked according to their wickednesse*; so as in the end, they shall feele by the effects, that he wil not suffer the wrongs to goe vnrecompenced, which they haue done to the innocents.

Gods prouidence seen in the change of kingdoms.

The euents of things haue confirmed the truth of this prophecie: for soone after the *Caldeans* subdued *Niniue*, who by this meanes lost

The euents of things haue confirmed the truth of this prophecie.

loſt their Monarchie; yea, and in few yeares it was raced and brought into obliuion, that ſhe might loſe her name. Now in reſpect that *Babylon* which ſucceeded it, was no leſſe repleniſhed with robberies; the Prophet doth rightlie affirme that *other robbers* ſhall *deſtroy it*, and the Monarchie being ſubdued, they ſhall pill and take to themſelues that which the Chaldeans had purloined from others.

Verſ. 2. *O Lord, haue mercie vpon vs, we haue waited for thee: be thou*, which waſt *their arme in the morning, our help alſo in the time of trouble.*

THe Prophet addes this ſentence, to ſhew the faithfull whereunto they ſhould haue their refuge in ſuch diſtreſſes; yea, euen then when there ſeemed to be no hope of ſaluation: to wit, vnto *prayers*; *beſeeching God that theſe promiſes might take effect when they ſhould be in the greateſt miſerie, and the enemies power at the higheſt to oppreſſe them.* We haue neede to obſerue this order diligentlie, for the Prophet hath no ſooner propounded theſe promiſes vnto them, but he forthwith exhorts them vnto prayer. Yea, ſuddenlie breaking off his ſpeech, he comes abruptlie as it were vnto inuocation: for he ſaw how hard a thing it was for the Iewes who were in ſuch miſerie to ouercome that feare wherewith they were almoſt ouerwhelmed. It is not to be doubted but the Lord haſtens to performe the promiſes which he hath made to his children: yet for a while he deferres to do it, that he might thereby exerciſe our patience. But if it come once to *waiting*, no conſtancie nor perſeuerance at all is to be found in vs, for our hearts are by and by danted and broken in ſunder. Is it not needfull then to haue our recourſe vnto prayers? for therby are our ſpirits cheered and fortified, when we caſt our eye vpon the Lord, by whoſe only direction we get out of all the agonies and anguiſhes which preſſe vs, yet let vs patientlie *wait* in aſſured hope for that which he hath promiſed: for our God is a faithfull God, he neither will, nor can deceiue vs.

Gods promiſes ſhould forthwith kindle in vs an ardent affection of prayer.

Deut. 7. 9.

Our Prophet further admoniſheth the Iewes not only to conſider in generall the iudgement of God againſt the Aſſyrians, but alſo to behold therein his fatherlie loue towards his choſen people: as if he ſhould ſay, the Aſſyrians ſhall be *ſpoiled* in deed, yet not ſo much to receiue the iuſt reward of their couetouſnes and crueltie: as that God thereby meanes to ſhew what care he hath for the ſaluation of his Church. Moreouer when he exhorts them to cry for *mercie*, therein he ſets forth our miſerie. Then, to the end the faithful might incourage themſelues in ſeeking to obteine fauor, they teſtifie that they *waited* vpon this God on whom they called. For in deed, our prayers are vaine and friuolous, vnleſſe they be grounded on this principle, *Let thy mercie ô Lord be vpon vs* (ſaith *Dauid*) *as we haue truſted in thee*, Pſal. 33. 22. For it were preſumption otherwiſe to preſſe into the preſence of God, if he gaue vs not entrance by his call: who as he for his part graciouſlie inuites vs to come vnto him, ſo muſt we on the other ſide be readie to yeeld our ſelues obedient to his word as oft as we approch neere vnto him.

God iudgeth the enemies of his church not only to recompence the wrongs and crueltie they haue done her into their own boſoms, but alſo to manifeſt the care he hath of her ſaluation.

The promiſes begets faith, faith brings forth prayer. *Pſal. 50. 15.*

Next of all, patience muſt be ioined with faith, without which, we be vnworthie to be heard, becauſe wee call not vpon God with confidence. Now faith only is the mother of prayer, as ỹ Scripture often teſtifies in many places, without which what remaines but hypocriſie, a vice moſt deteſtable before God aboue all others. Hence it alſo appeares that Chriſtianitie is baniſhed out of the whole kingdome of Poperie: for if Gods chiefeſt ſeruice conſiſt in prayer, and they know not what true prayer is (becauſe they will haue men continuallie to doubt, and accuſe the faith of the Saints of preſumption) how can their ſeruice be acceptable vnto God? Can that be a lawfull prayer which is made in doubting and without reſting aſſuredly vpon Gods promiſes? Thoſe great Rabbins which will be called Doctors of Diuinitie (forſooth) are they not more ſimple in this matter then little children? Certainely our children vnderſtand what prayer is better then they, and haue more godly affection. Wee may alſo learne from this text that faith is proued by afflictions, and the true triall of it conſiſts in a conſtant vndergoing of all dangers and aſſaults, and in reſting ſecurely vpon the word and promiſe of God. For thus we make it manifeſt that we haue truly beleeued.

Patience muſt vnderprop faith and prayer.

Faith the mother of prayer.

Papiſts know not what true prayer is.

Faith is proued by afflictions.

As touching that which followes, *Thou which waſt their arme, &c.* Others tranſlate, as if it were a continued prayer; Be thou our arme in the morning, and our help in the time of trouble. And whereas the faithfull ſpeake in the third perſon, they take it for a change much vſed among the Hebrues. But I thinke the Prophet hath another meaning, that is, rather to ſet forth the ardent deſire which is conceiued from the conſideration of former benefits. And therefore me thinks theſe words *arme of the morning* are fitlie added; in which muſt be ſupplied, *Thou which waſt*, and ſo the faithfull ſet before them the fauours which God beſtowed vpon their fathers. As if he ſhould ſay, *Lord, thou haſt heard our fathers prayers; and when they cried vnto thee thou gaueſt them help. Be thou now our ſuccor and ſaluation in our afflictions.*

See Pſal. 22. 4. 5.

Arme and *Saluation*, differ in this; that *arme* is taken for the power which the Lord ſhewed in defending his Church before it was afflicted; and *ſaluation*, for the deliuerance thereof when ſhe ſeemed vtterlie waſted. He records the benefits then which the Lord had done to the fathers, that he might moue him to beſtow the like fauor vpon their children: as if he ſhould ſay, *Lord, thou haſt heretofore turned away the euils which were readie to ſeaze vpon thy Church; and by thy fauor ſhe floriſhed and proſpered: when ſhe was in trouble thou deliuereſt her: canſt thou now do leſſe for our ſakes, ſeeing it is thy propertie to relieue thy ſeruants when all hope in men is paſt.*

The particle *alſo* hath great force in it to confirme our faith, and to acertaine vs that

God, who alwaies continues like himselfe and neuer degenerates from his nature, being euer immutable, will deliuer vs *also*, for such a one the faithfull haue found him to be. Let vs remember therefore in all extremities how the Lord hath been helpfull vnto our fathers that trusted in his helpe, and hath deliuered them, that thence we may conclude, he will no more faile vs, then he hath done them.

Psal.22.4.

Vers. 3. *At the *noise of the tumult the *people fled: at thine exalting the nations were scattered.*

*Or, voice.
*Or, peoples.

Hee returnes now to the former doctrine; or rather continues it; hauing in the middest thereof placed a briefe exclamation. First, hee shewed that the Assyrians should be destroyed, albeit they then seemed out of danger. Now he calles forth the Iewes to be eye-witnesses of the same: for the multitudes of the enemies being in a maner infinit, euerie one quaked and thought them inuincible. *Isaiah* therefore sets before their eyes their fearfull ruin, and that no lesse then if it were alreadie come to passe. He speakes in the plurall number, calling them *peoples*, because the Monarchy of the Assyrians was compact of many nations, and their Campe was gathered out of many Countries. But be it their numbers were so infinit. What then? Yet they shall miserably perish, saith our Prophet.

Some expound the *exaltation*, Manifestation; whereby God did notably shew his power: but I take it more simply; to wit, that the Lord, who seemed before to sleep (as it were) whilest the Caldeans spoiled and pilled at their pleasure, shall notwithstanding suddenly awake, and come forth of his place. Neither is it to bee doubted, but the enemie proudly derided this his patience, as if the God of Israel had been subdued and ouercome: but in the end he rose vp, and being set in his throne, he reuenged himselfe vpon the wickednesse of his enemies to the full. There is here then a close opposition betweene this *exalting*, and that appearance of weakenesse which seemed to bee in the Lord for a time, whilest hee suffered his people to be *spoiled* and wasted.

By the *voice of the tumult*, some thinke the Lord would put his enemies to flight, onely with a *noise*: but I feare lest this interpretation should be more subtile then sound. I willingly take the word voice then, for the noise which should moue the Medes and Persians.

Vers. 4. *And your spoile shall be gathered like the gathering of caterpillers: and he shall goe against him like the leaping of the grashoppers.*

HE speakes here of the Assyrians. Vnlesse any had rather referre it vnto the Iewes, and so take the word *spoile*, in the actiue signification; albeit the first sense agrees best. Now this change of persons giues great vehemencie to the prophecie, in that he so plainly aduanceth himselfe against such proud aduersaries, and doth as it were name them. Yet some doubt whether he speakes heere of the finall destruction of this nation, or of that discomfiture in which the host of *Sennacherib* was destroied before the walles of Ierusalem, by the hand of the Angell. All expositors almost haue followed this latter opinió, which notwithstanding, as I think, is too much constrained. For it seemes the Prophet meant to say somewhat more in the beginning of the Chapter, when he spake of the destruction of this people. Yea, as I haue touched a little before, this prophecie may be extended further off; so as it may comprehend also the Caldeans, which were the last enemies of the Iewish Church. But not to stand much vpon it, it appeares sufficiently that the Prophet directs his speech against the Monarchy of the Niniuites.

Now hee compares this warlike people to *caterpillars*, because they should haue no power to resist, but shall tremble and be so ouertaken with feare, that they shall be taken vp by troopes and heapes. The similitude is verie fit: and *Nahum* vseth it, Chap. 3. 16. although somewhat in a different sense. Wee know that this kind of vermin do much hurt, especially to trees; so as they may well bee called the calamitie of the earth. But in regard they are void of defence, albeit they flie in troopes; we know that little children can easilie shake them downe, gather them vp, and kill them by heapes, as many as they meete withall. Our Prophet saith, that the like shall befall to these insatiable robbers: for albeit in that trade they had done much hurt a long time together, yet in the end they should bee easily ruinated, because being faint and feeble hearted, they shall fall into the hands of their enemies; in such wise, that the riches which were hoorded vp in Niniue by theft, should bee caried into Babylon.

The first Simile.

The other similitude of the *grashoppers* is added, to shew that the Caldeans shall come vp *leaping* as it were to deuoure the Country. For as these little wormes eate vp all before them; so they flie without ceasing, and in *leaping* nimbly vp and down, they mar all the fruits of the earth: whereas others refer this to the Assyrians, as if the Prophet compared them to *grashoppers*, because it was easie to scatter them one from another, it agrees not: for the Prophet sets *the armie of grashoppers* in battel aray as it were, who by their leaping should ouerspread the earth: and very fitly opposeth them to the caterpillers, respecting herein as well the insatiable couetousnesse as the multitudes of the Assyrians and Caldeans.

The second Simile.

Vers. 5. *The Lord is exalted, for hee dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with iudgement and iustice.*

*The Lord which dwels in the most high places is exalted. He hath, &c.

HE sets that forth at large, which he spake erewhile touching Gods exaltation, going

ing on with the ſame argument which was handled before; to wit, that in the deſtruction of ſo famous a Monarchy, men ſhould know how deere and precious the ſafetie of the Church is vnto him, ſeeing for her ſake he will roote out Ninive the Queene of Cities, with her inhabitants alſo. Now this aduertiſement is wonderfull neceſſarie: for hereby we perceiue, that God ſpares not the prophane & wicked; for in ſetting himſelfe againſt their rage, he mindes to let his elect ſee what tender care he hath ouer them.

Firſt hee ſaith, *the Lord is exalted on high:* whereas on the contrary, the wicked thought to haue beaten him downe to the ground, in the deſtruction of his people. But to the end they ſhould not thinke God to be like vnto thoſe, who being ouercome, recouer new ſtrength vnto them when things are in better plight (as often it falles out in the world, that ſuch win that at one time, which before they had loſt at another) he ſaith expreſly, ỳ God is *exalted* in the preſence of all, and that ſuch an high dignitie belongs vnto him, becauſe he *dwels in the heauen*. Whence it appeares, that he is neuer depriued of his diuine right, howſoeuer often times hee ſuffers his power to lie hid: but when it ſeemes beſt vnto him, he will manifeſt his greatneſſe in the view of the whole world: for *dwelling in heauen*, as wee know, ſignifies an imperial ſoueraignty vnder which the whole world is ſubiected. Thus he ſhewes, not onely that God can eaſily ouerthrow all the pride of fleſh; but alſo concludes from the nature of God, that hee muſt needes ſhew forth his glory at the laſt, when the wicked fall to deſpiſing of him: for otherwiſe he ſhould renounce himſelfe.

Where hee ſaith, that Zion was filled with *iudgement* and *iuſtice*, it is another confirmation; to wit, that God will ſhew ſignes of his ſpeciall fauour, when the Iewes ſhall be deliuered from the tyrannie of the Caldeans. And it was no leſſe then needfull, to ſet the *author* of ſo great a benefit before their eies: for we ſee how peruerſly we darken his glorie by our ingratitude. To be *filled* with iuſtice and iudgement, ſignifies, that God will liberally and abundantly ſhed abroad his grace in the reſtauration of his Church. Neither will the ſenſe be much impertinent, if we refer this to a right politike order, when all things are iuſtly and wel mannaged: for without that, the Church ſhall neuer floriſh, though all things elſe ſucceed according to our wiſh. We muſt meaſure our proſperous eſtate then by *iuſtice* and *iudgement rightly executed*, and not by the ouerflowing of theſe corruptible things.

He hath filled.

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Verſ. 6. *And there ſhall be ſtabilitie of thy times, ſtrength, ſaluation, wiſdome, and knowledge: for the feare of the Lord ſhall be his treaſure.*

HEe promiſeth that the eſtate of the kingdome ſhall ſtill bee happie and glorious vnder *Hezechias*, hauing reſpect principally to that wofull and miſerable ſcattering which was ſeene in *Achaz* his daies. For albeit the enemie was expulſed, yet was there ſmall hope that the Iewes (being in ſuch extremitie) ſhould haue recouered their firſt condition. As touching the words, ſome tranſlate thus; There ſhall bee in thy times, *truth, ſtrength*, and *ſaluation*: as if the Prophet ſhould relate what felicitie the people ſhould inioy vnder this holy King: and they thinke that euery word containes in it ſo many benefits of God. Others take the word *ſtabilitie*, for fidelitie; as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid; that it ſhould bee in ſtead of ſaluation and ſtrength. Otherſome draw a ſenſe from hence a little differing; to wit, that *ſtrength, ſaluation*, and *knowledge*, ſhall bee *ſtable* vnder *Hezechias*. But when I ſcan the words of the Prophet conſiderately, I had rather make another diſtinction; to wit, *that ſtabilitie, ſtrength, and ſaluation ſhall reigne in wiſdome and knowledge vnder Hezechias*: and ſo, that which is by and by added, *the feare of the Lord ſhall be the treaſure* of this good King, will follow and agree well. For in time of peace, euery one deſires to be ſecured: yet how few are there that care to vſe the meanes to inioy ſo great a benefit? Nay, doe not the moſt part pamper themſelues as ſwine in the ſtie? ſo as whileſt blind couetouſneſſe drawes all the world after things earthly, few make any reckoning of that incomprehenſible light of the heauenly doctrine.

The Prophets meaning then is, that the Churches felicitie ſhall be *ſtable*, when *wiſdome* and *knowledge* beares ſway therein, and that *ſtrength* ſhall long indure, when the *knowledge of God* is aduanced: thirdly, that eternall ſaluation ſhall dwell there, when men ſhall be taught rightly to know it. This is a verie excellent place: from whence we may learne, that ingratitude ſhuts out Gods bleſſings from vs: that is, when we forſake them to wallow our ſelues in earthly and carnall deſires: alſo, that although all the benefits we could imagin or deſire, were giuen vnto vs, yet ſhall all turne to our ruin and deſtruction, vnleſſe they bee ſeaſoned with the ſalt of faith and knowledge.

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No benefits of God ſweet and ſauorie to vs, vnleſſe they be ſeaſoned with the ſalt of faith and knowledge. Where the light of Gods word is quenched, our greateſt proſperitie is worſe then the worſt thing the world can afford without it.

Wee may therefore hence conclude, that the Church hath no *ſtrength*, vnleſſe the *knowledge* of God preceede all other benefits, and that ſhe then truly floriſheth, whileſt ſhe willingly confeſſeth to hold all the graces ſhee hath of Gods free bountie. But where this light of the word is wanting, and the true knowledge of God is either dimmed, or put out, the greateſt proſperitie we can inioy, is worſe then all the miſeries the world can afford. I therefore refer *ſtabilitie, ſtrength*, and *ſaluation*, to one & the ſame thing; to wit, that the Church ſhall haue ſtabilitie, when blindneſſe and error being baniſhed, men ſhall begin to learne the knowledge of God.

By this wee ſee what Church there is amongſt the Papiſts, (a pompous and glorious one it is indeed in outward ſhew); but where is this knowledge? Therfore cā ſhe not be ſtable; neither is ſhe the Church of God. If the Lord then ſhew vs that fauour, that the light of faith may ſhine truly amongſt vs, o-

ther blessings no doubt shall easily flow vnto vs: and if it fall out we be shaken with diuers stormes, yet God will vphold vs alwaies with his hand. Now when he saith, *thy times*, he speakes to *Hezekias*, not as to a priuat person, but as to the head of the people, vnder whom also the whole bodie is comprehended.

But seeing the kingdome of *Hezekias* was but a little shadow of Christ his kingdome as we haue touched before, these things therefore ought to be referred vnto Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of *wisdome* and *knowledge*. We are also to note these titles which are vsed to set forth the commendation of Gods word, and the doctrine of the Gospell: S. *Paul* also doth the like, Coloss. 1.9. when he saith, *Teaching in all knowledge and wisdome*: for by this praise, he extols the dignitie of the Gospell. Whence we also gather, that where Iesus Christ is not truly knowne, there men are destitute of true *wisdome*, although they be expert in all other sciences, which without this are all but vanitie.

Coloss. 2.3.

Moreouer it seemes *the feare of God* should be added for an exposition, that the Prophet might the better manifest that the knowledge whereof he spake was the gouernesse of pietie, being neither idle nor vaine, but penetrating with efficacie into our hearts to conforme vs to the *feare of God*. See therefore why this *feare* is elsewhere called *knowledge*, Prou. 1.9. and 9.10. yea, the beginning of it, that is to say, the summe and principall part of wisdome. And those deceiue themselues which take the word beginning for the first rudiméts or elements, seeing *Salomon* meanes the beginning, and the end: for as men are fooles vntill they haue submitted themselues vnto the word of God, so the perfection of wisdome flowes from teachablenes, or the obedience of faith. The *feare of God* then is called his *treasure*, because without it all prosperitie is but miserie: whence it yet further appeares that all the parts of a prosperous life consists in the knowledge of God, which we attaine by faith.

Knowledge the gouernesse of pietie.

The feare of God not only the beginning, but also the end of wisdome.

All outward felicitie meere beggerie without the feare of God.

Also vnder the person of this king he shews that it is an inestimable *treasure* to serue God in such deuotion and humilitie as is meete: and further he esteemes all them miserable and forlorne people which are void of this *feare of God*. On the contrarie, blessed and happie are all those which *feare* him, albeit of the world they be iudged the most miserable of all others. But what *feare* speakes he of here? Euen of that which conteines in it true obedience, and a reformation of our minds and affections. For the wicked haue a feare of God, but they feare him as malefactors doe their Iudge. Such a *feare* deserues no such praise, because it proceeds not from the true knowledge of God, nor from a readie desire to serue him. It therefore is directlie contrarie to that *wisdome* whereof our Prophet speakes, who hath so applied these things vnto *Hezekias*, that in the meane while they also appertaine to the whole bodie of the people, as we haue said before. Whence we gather, that they haue relation vnto the people as well as the king: but much more vnto Christ, who was filled with the *Spirit of the feare of the Lord* (as we haue seene in the 11. Chapter) to make vs partakers with him of ỹ same grace.

These things haue reference first to Hezekiah, secondly to the people, but especiallie to Christ.

Vers. 7. *Behold, their messengers shall crie without, and the Ambassadors of peace shall weepe bitterlie.*

8. *The paths are wast: the wayfaring man ceaseth: he hath broken the Couenant: he hath contemned the Cities: he regardeth no man.*

IT is not very certaine whether *Isaiah* here mentions the perplexitie and danger in which the Iewes were, the rather to set forth the greatnes of their deliuerance: or, whether he foretels the calamitie which was to come, that the faithfull should not faint vnderneath it. For mine owne part, I thinke this is not to be referred to the historie of that which already happened: for in regard that sharp and sore temptations were at hand, it was necessarie that the faithfull should be fortified to wait patientlie for the help of God euen then whē things should be growne desperate. Howsoeuer it be, it is a wofull and lamentable description of the wast of the Church; that in these dangers the faithfull might hold fast their confidence: secondly, that seeing themselues deliuered, they might acknowledge they were no other way rid from them but by the wonderfull power of God. 1 2

The signe of a desperate estate is noted out, when he saith, that *the Ambassadors* which were sent to appease this tyrant, could obteine no truce, for which cause they returned with bitter *sorrow* and *teares*, not being able to hide the same in their iourney, but were willing to manifest to others what was in their hearts, in regard they were in such a wretched estate. No doubt but *Sennacherib* with proud and scornefull reproaches refused the conditions of peace which were offred him, so as the Ambassadors were constreined openly to lament and *crie*, as hauing forgotten the dignitie of their persons; and letted not to publish the answer which this tyrant gaue them, euen before they returned to the King their master to giue an account of their Ambassage. Others by *the Ambassadors of peace*, vnderstand those which were wont to proclaime peace: but this interpretation is vnapt, and as I thinke, too farre fetched. By *the Ambassadors of peace*, I vnderstand those which were sent to appease *Senacherib*, and to redeeme peace with any conditions.

In the next verse he addes, that the waies shall be so stopped vp that there shall be no *commers or goers*, as it falles out when open warres are proclaimed. Now it seemes that the Prophet brings in the Ambassadors, telling how it shall not be lawfull for them to passe to nor fro any more, the *passages* shall be so dangerous. As touching that which followes, *he hath broken the Couenant*, some expound it, as if the hypocrits complained that God kept not his promise. But if this be referred

ferred vnto God, ſuch a complaint may be attributed not onely to the hypocrits, but to the faithfull alſo, who ſometimes expoſtulate the matter on this wiſe with the Lord: but I like not this ſenſe. And therefore I rather thinke the Prophet continues to ſet forth the crueltie and vnappeaceable furie of *Sennacherib*, who diſloyally *brake the couenant* which he made before with *Hezechias*. For albeit he promiſed truce; yet as ſoone as any occaſion offered it ſelfe to inuade Iudea, he falſified his faith, and began warre afreſh. Thereunto appertaines that which is in the end of the verſe, *he conſumed the Cities, and regarded no mans perſon*: wherein he ſhewes, that the crueltie of this tyrant was ſuch, that bee could not be withheld, neither by feare, nor ſhame.

Verſ. 9. *The earth mourneth and fainteth: Lebanon is aſhamed, and hewen downe: Sharon is like a wilderneſſe, and Baſhan is ſhaken and Carmell.*

10. *Now will I ariſe, ſaith the Lord, now will I bee exalted, now will I lift vp my ſelfe.*

HE here more fully expreſſeth after what maner they ſhould ſee the eſtate of Iudeah miſerably diſtreſſed, yet ſo, that their faith in the end ſhould breake forth as out of a bottomleſſe gulfe. He alſo names the places particularly, to wit, *Lebanon*, *Baſhan*, and *Carmell*, which are far diſtant one from another, being as it were the borders of the holy land: all which is to ſhew, that no corner ſhall be ſpared, or reſt in ſafetie. And in the deſcription of this deſolation, hee attributes to euery ſeuerall place, that which agreed with the ſituation of it; as to *Lebanon*, *ſhame* and confuſion: becauſe glory and beautie are attributed vnto it in other places, in regard it was repleniſhed and adorned with great and goodly trees. As touching *Sharon*, becauſe it was a plaine and fertile ſoile, he ſaith, it ſhall be *like a wilderneſſe*. That *Baſhan and Carmell is ſhaken*, becauſe there grew abundance of fruits. Thus he alludes to the nature of theſe places, and deſcribes the miſerie and calamitie which ſhould befall the ſame, that hee might the better amplifie and ſet forth the mercy and goodneſſe of God, which ſhould be the cauſe of their deliuerance, albeit for the preſent, they ſaw themſelues as good as forlorne. For here was cauſe to behold the immediat hand of God. Vnleſſe any had rather ſay, that the Prophet recites a thing already done, to ſtir the people vp to thankſgiuing.

1. *King.* 7. 2. *Pſal.* 92. 12. *Chap.* 35. 2.

Verſe 10. *Now I will ariſe*] The particle *now*, is of great weight: alſo this double repetition, *I will be exalted, I will ariſe*: for we muſt note the time to which this is to bee referred; to wit, euen to that in which the Church in mans iudgement was brought to nought: for then will it bee ſoone enough for God to yeeld her ſuccour. There is here therefore a compariſon of things contrary: for hee ſets the horrible calamities before the faithfull, which ſhould oppreſſe & eaſily ouerwhelme them, had they not been fortified with ſome conſolation. As if he ſhould ſay, The Lord will indeed ſuffer you to bee brought to the extremitie; but when you ſhall lie as it were at the laſt gaſpe, and in vaine ſhall haue proued all waies to diſpatch your ſelues thereout, himſelfe will *ariſe* for your deliuerance. For it is of neceſſitie that wee be thus afflicted and preſſed to the vtmoſt; to the end wee may know God to be the onely author of our ſaluation.

The word *now* therefore ſignifies a time of extreme miſerie. A man would thinke this to be a ſtrange kind of dealing in the Lord: but the anſwere is at hand; God thus defers his ſuccour, becauſe it is good, firſt that the patience of the faithfull ſhould be exerciſed: ſecondly, that their faith ſhould bee tried: thirdly, their fleſh tamed: fourthly, that they might be the better ſtirred vp to feruencie in praiers: fiftly, that they might be raiſed vp in the hope of the life to come. And therefore this blocke is laid in our way, leſt they ſhould preuent the time which the Lord allotted out vnto them.

Afflictions exerciſeth our patience, tries our faith, tames the fleſh, quickens praier, and raiſeth vp in vs the hope of the life to come.

The repetition is very weightie, and is added for the greater confirmation of the matter: for when things ſtand perplexed, wee thinke our ſelues vndone; whereas we ſhould hope aboue hope, becauſe then is the time when the Lord vſeth chiefly to manifeſt his power. For this cauſe he exhorts the faithfull to be of good courage, in ſetting before them theſe commendations of his glorious puiſſance; that none needs to feare, but valiantly to buckle with the pride of their enemies.

Verſ. 11. *Yee ſhall conceiue chaffe, and bring forth ſtubble: the fire of your breath ſhall deuoure you.*

12. *And the people ſhall bee as the burning of lime: and as the thornes cut vp ſhall they be burnt in the fire.*

NOw hee turnes his ſpeech againſt the enemies of the Church, which vainelie and fooliſhly exalt themſelues: for when God ſhould once begin in wonderfull manner to vtter forth his power, they ſhould then haue triall of the vanitie of their enterpriſes, and ſhould be able to bring nothing to paſſe, although by great troopes they aſſembled themſelues together, to put their plots in execution. For the Lord ſcornes their rage, in regard they imagined they were Lords of the world; whereas he in a moment can cut them off, notwithſtanding all their preparations. Now it is an vſuall maner of ſpeech in Scripture, to call mens deliberations and enterpriſes *conceptions*. The ſimilitude is taken from women with child. And therefore it is ſaid, that men conceiue & bring forth, when they imagin and put ſome wicked thing in execution: but our Prophet telles them, that ſuch conceptions ſhall turne to nothing, and

Pſal. 7. 14. *Iſai.* 59. 4.

that

that *the birth* also shall vanish into smoke, so as they shall not prosper in any thing which they take in hand. What neede we then to feare all these goodly and gay shewes which our enemies make? For say, that God suffers them for a time to *consult*, to *imagin*, and *rage against vs*, yet in the end he wil scatter all that they haue rashly, and proudly done, as *chaffe* before the winde. Let vs also know that this which *Isaiah* hath propheſied against *Senacherib*, doth likewise appertaine to all the enemies of the Church and faithfull people.

Where he denounceth that they shall be deuoured *by the fire of their owne breath*, or spirit. Some are wont to expound it, Your spirit is like a fire which shal consume you: but this similitude is both vnapt and absurd. The true exposition is cleare enough, *The fire which your breath hath kindled, shall deuoure you*: for we are wont to kindle the fire by blowing of it. He teacheth then that the *fire* which the wicked haue kindled *by their wicked deuices*, shall turne to their ruine, because they shall be consumed by them.

See Chap. 50. 11.

Now this sentence is the same which the Scripture so often and so diuerslie repeates, as, They shal fall into the pit which they haue digged: In the nets which they haue laid are their owne feet taken, Psal.7.15. Their sword which they haue drawne shall pierce their owne bowels, and their bow shall be broken, Psal.37.15. The Prophet shewes then that this wretched tyrant (which had destroyed all Iudea, and laid siege with great force against Ierusalem) as likewise the rest of ỹ Churches enemies, should draw ruine vpon their owne heads, and in the end vtterlie perish. In a word, the *fire* which themselues had kindled should be the only meanes to consume them.

Afterwards he compares them to the *burning of lime*, in regard ỹ their flintines should be mollified, euen as the fire desolues the stones, so that they should be brought to pouder and dust very easilie. Questionles the wicked rush themselues vpon their owne destruction by their owne headines, so greedie they are to doe hurt. The similitude of *thornes* is no lesse proper, for albeit they wound thẽ shrewdly which touch them, yet there is no wood that burnes so violentlie, or is sooner consumed. The like is to be seene in *lime*, for the fire softens and desolues it, notwithstanding it be neuer so hard at the first. This he saith shall befall the Caldeans, because the Lord shall cut them off in an instant, albeit they were then feared of all: and that their consumption should be brought to passe, when there was no appearance thereof at all. As oft then as wee see the enemies of the Church heape vp treasures, and gather men and munition together to bring vs to wrack, and to put all the world in an hurliburlie, let vs assure our selues they are kindling the fire in which themselues shall miserablie be consumed.

Whatsoeuer preparations the enemies of the Church make to consume her, is but the kindling and blowing of that fire which in the end shall consume themselues.

We know this was fulfilled in *Senacherib*, for time was the best expositor of the truth of these propheſies, how incredible soeuer they seemed then. Let vs hope then against hope that the same wil befall those that tread in the steps of this tyrant, and by this and infinite other examples let vs fortifie our selues and others in our miseries and calamities, out of which doubtlesse we shall be deliuered, and shall behold the horrible vengeance which shall fall vpon our enemies.

Verſ. 13. *Heare, ye that are farre off, what I haue done: and ye that are neere know my power.*

Isaiah makes a Preface here, as one minding to speake something of great importance: for he calles for *audience* of his hearers, which men are wont to doe when any excellent or matter worthie of note is to be propounded. He speakes to them that were *neere*, which should be eie-witnesses as it were of this spectacle: also he calles those *a farre off*, which should heare of it by report. As if he should say, Such shall be the power of God, that it shall not only be manifested to some *neere* bordering nations, but also to those that are very *farre remote* from them. His meaning is then, that God will make his worke knowne by some notable and speciall signe of his presence. Why so? Because the wicked which before quietlie reposed themselues in safetie as being exempt out of all danger, should now on the sudden be surprized with feares and terrors.

Verſ. 14. *The sinners in Zion are afraid: a feare is come vpon the hypocrits: Who among vs shall dwell with the deuouring fire: who among vs shall dwell with the euerlasting burning.*

Obiect. BVt some might replie, that there is no such great matter here to vse so solemne a Preface, as to summon all the world to *heare*, was it a thing of so great importance that the wicked should be affrighted? I answere, If all Anſ. be well considered it will be found no small testimonie of Gods power to awaken *sinners* out of their drouzines, and to make them (will they nill they) feele that God is their Iudge, but then especiallie, when they haue couered their contempt of God vnder the maske of *hypocrisie*. For albeit it is a matter of great difficultie to awaken ỹ prophane ones, when their hearts are indurate: yet the obstinacie of *hypocrits* farre exceeds theirs, who thinke God much beholding vnto thẽ. They are so bewitched then we see, that they contemne all threatnings, and scorne the iudgements of God, and with their flouts & mocks they reiect all the propheſies, so as it is a miracle to ouercome one of them who so obstinately resist. Thinke therefore that it is not without cause that our Prophet is so sharp in rebuking of them. For doubtlesse he galles the bastard Iewes by mentioning *Zion*: who shrouding themselues vnder the shadow of the Temple, thought themselues secure in so inuinsible a fortresse, that no harme could befall them. And truly, there are none more proud or hautie then they (as hath bin said) which glorie so much in the name of God, and in the titles of the Church.

It is a miracle to subdue an obstinate hypocrite.

The

The word *Manephich*, is trãſlated Hypocrits; but it may alſo bee generally taken for traytors and reuolters. Seeing they were ſo wicked then, as to mocke at God himſelfe, and his true Prophets, he denounceth, they ſhall feele him to be a ſharp and ſeuere Iudge, that ſo they might ceaſe to take pleaſure in their ſubtilties.

He addes a confeſſion, which hath an appearance of humility; the better to ſhew, that ſuch hypocrits as doe not willingly obey the word of the Lord, ſhall in the end feele by experience (the miſtris of fooles) how terrible Gods iudgements are. When laughter ſhall be turned into gnaſhing of teeth, then they ſhall begin to confeſſe, that all their force was nought elſe but ſtraw and ſtubble. Now for the wordes: ſome tranſlate; *Who ſhall dwell for vs?* others; *Who among vs ſhall dwell?* If we ſimply reade it, For vs; this will bee the ſenſe; who dare oppoſe himſelfe againſt the *fire?* or, Will put himſelfe between it and vs, that the flame thereof touch vs not? The other interpretations will beare the ſame ſenſe; but the expoſitors differs in this, that ſome refer it to the King of Aſſyria; and others, vnto God: which latter, I rather receiue, as I haue ſaid alreadie. For albeit the Aſſyrian was as a fire that burnt vp the country by his heate; yet our Prophet meant to expreſſe a more terrible thing then it; to wit, that inward torment and vexation of minde, wherewith the wicked are racked, the ſtings of conſcience which cannot be auoided, and that vnquenchable *fire* of offences which ſurmounts all torments. So then it is iuſtice with God to deale with *ſinners* as they deale with him. And therefore the Lord is called (in reſpect of them) *a deuouring fire*, by *Moſes*, Deut. 4.24. For the Prophets (as hath been often ſaid) borrow their phraſes from him: and the Apoſtle in Heb. 12. 26. doth the like.

Deut. 9. 3.

The Prophet himſelfe confirmes this expoſition, ſhewing the cauſe of this feare: for ſome might obiect, that God was too ſeuere to terrifie men thus aboue meaſure. Indeed he is wont to ſhew himſelfe louing and gracious to the faithfull; but therewithall ſeuere and terrible to the wicked. Some thinke that the Prophet meant to conuince all men of *ſinne*, that hauing ſcattered all truſt of merit (into the aire) they might with all reuerence and humilitie, flee vnto Gods free grace by true repentance. As if he ſhould ſay; None can ſtand before Gods iudgement ſeat, vnleſſe he be perfectly iuſt: and therefore that all conſequently are accurſed. But he rather ſpeakes in the perſon, and according to their meaning, who before ſcorned al threatnings: and ſo he now brings them in trembling and asking, who ſhall dare to preſent himſelfe before the face of God? For this dolorous complaint, is a ſigne of that terror which he ſpake of erewhile: where being conuinced of their weakneſſe, their diſtreſſe extorted forth theſe words; Who is able to abide the Lords preſence? Now becauſe they ceaſed not to exalt themſelues againſt God, notwithſtanding theſe words were drawne from them againſt the haire, as we ſay: therefore the Prophet, that he might preuent their wicked replies, anſwers on Gods behalfe, that he is not terrible and fearfull to men naturally; but it falles out ſo by their owne default, in regard themſelues are *affrighted* with the ſenſe of their owne guiltineſſe; ſo as God ſuffers not their conſciences to be at any quiet.

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Verſ. 15. *Hee that walketh in iuſtice, and ſpeaketh righteous things, refuſing gaine of oppreſſion, ſhaking his hands from taking of gifts, ſtopping his eares from hearing of blood, and ſhutting his eies from ſeeing euill.*

NOw he expreſſeth that more fully which we touched before; to wit, ỹ (theſe hypocrits) had no cauſe to accuſe God of ouergreat rigor, becauſe themſelues by prouoking him to diſpleaſure, did thereby put his fauour far away from them. For hee ſhewes that God agrees with men well enough, if they will *ioine* and *follow iuſtice*; if they giue themſelues to *equitie*; if they keepe their fingers cleane from *bribes*, and walke in vprightneſſe with their neighbours; but being infected with all maner of corruptions, and giuen to malice, ſlander, couetouſneſſe, extortion, and the like ſinnes, muſt not the Lord aſtoniſh ſuch with feares, and ſhew himſelfe terrible vnto them? In a word, the Prophets meaning is to ſtop the mouthes of the wicked ſcoffers, that ſo they might ceaſe to accuſe God of crueltie, in bringing deſtruction vpon them, ſeeing the whole cauſe thereof was in themſelues. They make many turnings to eſcape Gods iudgement; but the Prophet affirmes, that hee is alwaies good to thoſe which honour him. And albeit *Moſes* in this ſenſe calles him a conſuming fire, Deut. 9.3. leſt his maieſtie and power ſhould bee contemned; yet whoſoeuer hee be that ſhall draw neere vnto him with a true deſire to pleaſe him, he ſhall feele by the effects, that there is nothing more ſweete and amiable then his preſence. At ſuch time then as God cauſeth the light of his countenance to ſhine vpon the faithfull, they haue peace with him in a good conſcience: whence it followes, that hee is not terrible of his owne nature, but we, (we) by our peruerſitie prouoke him to be ſuch a one vnto vs.

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Though God titles himſelf a conſuming fire, leſt his maieſtie ſhould be contemned, yet whoſoeuer drawes neere him with a deſire to pleaſe him, ſhall feel nothing ſo ſweet as his preſence.

Now this is ſpecially directed to *the hypocrits*, who couer their villanies and ſecret miſchiefes vnder the cloke of holineſſe; and thus abuſe the name of the Lord to ſin the more freely. But our Prophet ſetting downe a definition of *iuſtice*, by examples, doth thereby more cleerly and plainly rebuke their vngodlineſſe. And mentions ſome principall actions touching the conuerſation of men, whereby we may eaſily take triall of our godlineſſe. For he ſets before vs the duties of the ſecond Table (as he hath done often alreadie) which is the beſt way to diſcouer who indeed is a religious man. For as gold is tried by the fire, ſo by a mans ordinarie cariage of himſelfe, may you find how he is affected in the ſeruice

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of God. The mutuall benefits which wee doe one to another, will manifest what pietie is in the heart.

By the word to *walke*, this similitude of the way, so familiar in Scripture, is to be vnderstood, when it speakes of the Christian course, or of a continuall perseuerance: Psal. 119.1.5. and 122. By *iustice*, he meanes not an exact obseruation of the Law, but that equitie which is required in the second Table: but wee will not stand to discusse the word curiously. Afterwards he descends to the principall parts of true vprightnesse: and because the *tongue* is the chiefe instrument whereby man gouernes his actions, he puts that in the second degree after iustice. For he that withholds it from *euill speaking* and slander, and abstaines from lying, periury, and flatterings, whereby he might any way offend his neighbour; such a one is said to *speake righteous things*.

The tongue.

The other kind is compriſed vnder these words, *and despiseth againe, &c.* He might well haue said in a word; Hee which despiseth monie; but he spake plainely, and therein applied himselfe to their rudenesse: for he that desires *gaine*, polluteth and vseth all dishonest and indirect meanes to inrich himselfe, hee wil not sticke to vexe and oppresse the poore and needie; neither cares he, so he may get mony, whether it come in by right or wrong. What is to be said of them then which haue their hands alwaies open and stretched forth to take: nay, which with talents grapple whatsoeuer comes to net. And not content therewith, will prostitute themselues vnto gaine, as shamelesse harlots will doe, to trap those that are destitute of wisdome. Is it any wonder if God thunder against such, to roote them out wholly?

Hands.

Takers of bribes.

Lastly, he requires that some signe and testimonie of integritie may also be seene euen in the *eares*. By *blood*, he meanes murthers and manslaughters; but he therewithall comprehends all sorts of wicked conspiracies, that the eares may neither be open to *hearken*, nor yet to giue any consent thereunto. For hee meanes not that wee should shut our eares against the cries of the poore, when they are wronged and oppressed; but that we should detest all such counsels, by which the wicked goe about to destroy innocents; that wee should not so much as lend our *eares* to such, neither in any wise to bee carried away by their solicitations vnto euill. Lastly, hee requires the same puritie in the *eies*. To conclude, he teacheth vs to restraine all our senses, in such wise, that we giue no occasion to the wicked to thinke we doe in any sort approue of their doing; euen as wee meane to escape God his vengeance & wrath, of which he spake before.

Eares.

Eyes.

Verſ. 16. *He shall dwell on high, his defence* shall be *the munitions of rockes: bread shall be giuen him*, and *his waters shall be sure.*

TO the end the Iewes might know that God had iustly chastised them, and that they might indeuor to make their peace with him, the Prophet affirmes, that this blessing is ready to fall vpon the *iust* and vpright, such as hee described them to bee in the former verse: for they were not to feare this deuouring fire of which hee spake, in regard they were out of all danger thereof.

They shall dwell on high in a safe place. The wicked indeede were to feare; for it should surely *deuoure* froward speakers, oppressors, deceiuers, and such as applied their *hands*, *tongues*, *eares*, and *eies*, to fraud and vnrighteousnesse. As if he should say; I would not haue you to wonder if he be seuere towards them, and yet he is not so much their Iudge, as the guiltinesse of their owne euill conscience, who like an executioner, is still at their elbow, miserably to torment them. The onely way therefore to be feareleſse in Gods presence, is willinglie to keepe our selues in his feare.

The onely way to be feareleſse, is willinglie to keep our selues in Gods true feare.

By *high places*, hee meanes those that are most safe and free from all danger: in a word, such as the enemie is not able to inuade by any force: which he sufficiently confirmes in the next words, by placing the iust in the *rockes*. To the *sure dwelling*, he addes abundance of outward blessings: as if hee should say; Nothing shall be wanting to those which serue God in sinceritie & vprightnesse. Why so? Because he will not onely saue them free from hurt, but will also furnish them to the full, with whatsoeuer good things they shall stand in neede of in this their short pilgrimage. For by *bread* and *water*, he meanes all things necessary for the sustentation of this present life.

Next, he promiseth *sure waters*: (for albeit the wicked haue abundance for a time, yet their *waters faile* in the end, as God threatens in the law.) Now the like may bee said touching the word *bread*, because it is an epithite belonging as well to the one as to the other: and it is as much as if he had said; that all the faithfull shall be sure of food. For the lions often lacke and want their pray; but those that feare the Lord, shall want nothing that is good: Psal. 34. For as in his owne nature he is bountifull, so is he neuer weary of giuing, because his goods diminish not by his great liberalitie.

Deu. 28.38. 39.40.

God is neuer wearie of giuing, neither doth his goods diminish by continuall giuing.

Now because the life of man is subiect to sundry perils, and that it sufficeth not to haue prouision and plentie of foode onely to sustaine vs, vnlesse the Lord also keepe and defend his by his almightie power, therefore we are diligently to obserue what was said before; to wit, that the faithfull are lodged in a *safe place*. For the Lord performes the office of a faithfull shepheard, who is not onely carefull to prouide food for his sheepe, but also preserues them from the rage of theeues and rauening wolues. To be short, he holds them vnder his sauegard, that no aduersitie might annoy them. Are our enemies busie then at any time to molest vs? Let vs thinke it a iust iudgement of God vpon vs for our sinnes. Hath he reiected vs? It is because wee haue deserued it. And thus we must impute all the euill which oppresse vs vnto our sinnes, as the

Psal. 23.1.

Our sinnes the cause of all our euils.

the onely cauſe thereof. Yet let not thoſe who haue kept faith and a good conſcience, think that God hath forſaken them: but to the laſt breath, let them reſt ſecurely vpon theſe promiſes which the Lord hath here made; to wit, that he will be a *ſure rocke of defence* vnto them. I grant that none can be ſo pure or fully perfect, that he ſhould be able to beare the preſence of God: for if he marke our iniquities, who ſhall ſtand? as ſaith the Pſalmiſt; All of vs then haue need of a mediator, by whoſe interceſſion our ſinnes may bee pardoned. Which doctrine it was not our Prophets meaning to reiect, which is plentifully diſperſed thorowout the whole Scriptures: but his driſt here was, to beat downe the wicked, who are alwaies gaulled & purſued with the ſting of an euill conſcience. Which wee are dilligently to obſerue againſt our popiſh Doctors, who abuſe theſe and the like places, where workes are cõmended, that they might aboliſh the righteouſneſſe of faith; as if the remiſſion of ſinnes, which wee receiue by the benefit of Chriſts ſacrifice, were to be excluded.

Pſal. 130. 3.

Verſ. 17. *Thine eyes ſhall ſee the king in his glory: they ſhall behold the land a far off.*

ALthough the Prophet changeth the perſon, yet this verſe ought to be ioined to the former; becauſe hee ſpeakes to the true ſeruants of God, & promiſeth them yet another benefit, to wit, that they ſhall *ſee the King in his glory*. Such a promiſe was very neceſſarie to ſuſtaine the hearts of the faithfull, when things were thus confuſed and deſperate in the land of Iudea. For when Ieruſalem was beſieged, the *King* was ſhut vp within the Citie, inuironed with diſloyall counſellers, the people inconſtant and mutinous, euery one expected preſent ruine, and as it ſeemed, no hope of a better eſtate was left. But the *kingly power* in *Dauids* race, was a ſingular pledge of Gods fauour towards them. *Iſaiah* then preuents this danger as you ſee. *Thy King* for a time, ſaith he, will ſeeme vile and contemptious, yet ſhall *thine eyes* ſee him eſtabliſhed in his former maieſtie and dignitie.

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First then let vs obſerue heere, that God beſtowes an ineſtimable fauor vpon vs, when the Commonwealth inioyes peace, and when he ſends vs good Princes, which gouernes all things faithfully and ſincerely; for there God rules ouer vs by their hand. This benefit therefore being no ſmall one, our Prophet was not forgetfull to mention it, in promiſing ſo happy an eſtate to the ſeruants of God.

God rules where good Magiſtrates rule faithfully.

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But herewithall we muſt obſerue, that this kingdome was a figure of the kingdome of Chriſt whom *Ezechias* repreſented: for the fruit of this promiſe would bee of no great value, vnleſſe we come to him, vnto whom all theſe things are to be referred. And leſt any ſhould take mee as a forger of allegories, which I profeſſe to flee, let ſuch a one know, that I expound not this ſimply of Chriſt. But in as much as the ſtedfaſtneſſe of this vading kingdome is no where elſe to bee found, but in him; the figure, which *Hezechias* bare, lead vs to Chriſt as by the hand. *Iſaiah* then promiſeth here the reſtauration of the Church, in which, two members are to be conſidered. Firſt, that the *King* ſhall appeare in his *beautie*: ſecondly, that the *bounds* of the kingdome ſhould be *inlarged*. Now we know ỹ Chriſt is ſo disfigured in outward appearance, that the world deſpiſeth him; becauſe nothing is to bee ſeene in him that is faire or pleaſant; but at the laſt, his *maieſtie*, his *magnificence*, and *beautie* ſhall appeare. His kingdome ſhall floriſh, and ſpread it ſelfe *far* and wide, albeit the wicked now are Lords of all, and doe ſo afflict the ſeruants of God, that they can ſcarcely inioy one foote of ground in peace and ſafety; yet with firme hope muſt we wait and looke for our *King in his glory*, who at length will ſit him downe in his glorious and beautifull throne, and will inrich his people with great honours.

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Calvin no forger of allegories.

See Chap. 53.

Verſ. 18. *Thine heart ſhall meditate feare: where is the Scribe? Where is the receiuer? Where is hee that counted the towers?*

THe faithfull are againe aduertiſed of the calamities which were at hand, leſt being ouertaken therewith vnawares, they might happily fall vnder the burthen. Some tranſlate the verbe to *meditate*, in the preter-perfectence: others, in the future tence; becauſe this change of time is much vſed among the Hebrewes. For mine owne part, I willingly retaine the future; *ſhall meditate*: which the Prophet alſo in his owne language doth: for as I take it, hee rather warnes the people of the euils which were neere, then relates what they had ſuffered before. Now when he asks, *where is the ſcribe?* he liuely beates into their eares, the voice of them who being affrighted, would cry on this manner, *where is the ſcribe? where is the receiuer?* the rather to touch them to the quicke.

If any thinke it to be a broken ſentence, becauſe hauing ſpoken in the former verſe of the *beautie of the King*, he now prophecieth terrors. I make no queſtion but the Prophet by way of compariſon, amplifies the fauour of God; to wit, that the faithfull being deliuered, might the better eſteeme of their condition. For men are naturally forgetfull and peruerſe, when they ſhould ſet themſelues to publiſh Gods praiſes: and being once eſcaped, they let ſlip the acknowledgement of the great dangers frõ which they were freed. It was therefore needfull to ſet before them the diſtreſſes vnder which they ſhould bee held, that they might the better apprehend the greatnes of the benefit which God ſhewed them. There is yet another reaſon why this people were to be aduertiſed touching this *feare*; namely, hauing ſpoken before touching the *beautie of their King*, hee would not haue them ſo relie vpon it, as to promiſe vnto themſelues ſuch tranquilitie, as ſhould be ex-

empt from all troubles; but rather to be prepared to vndergo all sorts of greeuances and vexations. And yet, that they should know also that God cared for the kingdome of Iudah, and in his good time would deliuer them out of the hands of those tyrants which held them tributaries and besieged them.

The estate which the Prophet heere describes is very miserable: for is it not a pitifull thing to see a people of a free condition so pressed vnder such a barbarous tyrannie, that all their goods must come to be praised, their houses, possessiõs, families, & seruants *registred?* Many of our times which haue not bin acquainted with these things, haue yet some little taste how irkesome this seruitude is, when their goods are praised to the vttermost mite: and not onely their yeerely rents which are certaine, but also the hope of future gaine: and not mony and possessions alone, but their names also are taken. Such deuices there are to impose new tributes, not vpon viands onely, but euen vpon the smallest things: so that tyrants rake to themselues a great part of that, which the poore people can hardly beare: yet all these, and infinite other calamities will nothing abate the pride, excesse, and rebellion of men. What will they be thinke you, being freed from these taxes? will they not easilie forget all the euils past, and the fauour of God also, and bee worse then euer they were before, in running into all leaud and wicked behauiour.

Note.

It is not without cause then that the Prophet laies these things thus before his people, lest after their deliuerance they should range after their lusts. As if hee should say; What a shame were that? nay, rather acknowledge the goodnesse of God, who hath dealt so mercifully with you, and cleaue vnto him with your whole hearts. Some haue falslie imagined, that Saint *Paul* alledgeth this place in 1.Cor.1.20. But so he should mistake the Prophets meaning, and should apply these words to a wrong sense. The cause of the error grew from the word *Saibe*, which is not taken here for a teacher. For *Isaiah* calles him a Scribe in this place, who tooke the names of men and their families, and inuentories of their possessions and houses. To be short, hee which kept the register of all the taxes and tributes.

What is meant by Scribe in this place.

By the *poiser*, he meanes him which receiued the imposts, for hee weighed the monies which were paied in: such as are our receiuers and treasurers at this day. He addes yet a third sort, which was the most intollerable of all; to wit, hee that *counted the towers or chiefe houses*, for they made search, and viewed euery house, to know which were the richest, that they might get the more pence out of it. Tyrants haue such at command, who like bloodhounds, haue skill to hunt and smell out fat purses; that so, besides the ordinary taxes they may raise an extraordinary impost. No doubt but the sight of such *exactors* was greeuous to the poore people, and not without cause: for they neuer left them, till they had sucke their blood to the verie marow. If any by this word had rather vnderstand the officers of the King himselfe, who had the charge to pull downe the houses adioyning to the walles; I hinder him not for following his opinion. I rather think it likely that the Prophet speaks of the exactors, which the conquerours set ouer them, whom they had vanquished, that they might the more securely hold their own, as they say.

Bloodhounds in Common wealths.

Vers.19. *Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a darke speech, that thou canst not perceiue,* and *of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not vnderstand.*

SOme translate the word *Naaz*, Strong; others, Impudently: but I verily thinke he meant to set forth the cruelrie of the Assyrians, which he presently declares, saying; *There is no communication to be had with them, for they speake a strange language, which thou canst not perceiue.* For there is nothing that moues men more to mercy, then an interchangeable speech, by which one may take knowledge of anothers misery. But if this be wanting, what is left to cause an hard heart to relent? Alas, they know not what thou saiest, and therfore thou canst looke for no more compassion from them by thy intreaties, then if thou hadst to deale with wilde and sauage beasts. Thus the Prophet further aggrauates the wofull estate of this people, that by contraries he might let them perceiue, how exceeding bountiful God was towards them, when he deliuered them out of so great a feare. As in another place the holy Ghost magnifies the grace of God, in that hee preserued his people in Egypt, albeit they vnderstood not their language. Psal.81.5.

Vers.20. *Looke vpon Zion, the Citie of our solemne feasts; thine eies shall shall see Ierusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that cannot be remoued: and the stakes thereof can neuer be taken away, neither shall any of the cordes thereof be broken.*

MAny read it in the vocatiue case; Looke O Zion: but it is better to reade it as I haue translated it; Looke vpon Zion. The Prophet propounds a promise touching ỹ restauratiõ of ỹ Church, of which ỹ faithful were to make speciall account: for if the Church shake or fall, where is their prosperitie? But he shewes that she shall be in such wise restored, that he sets the thing euen before their *eyes*; whereas indeed he speakes of a thing to come. And this he doth that his words might be ỹ more effectuall. As if he should say; *Thou shalt see Zion restored, and Ierusalem florishing yet once againe. And albeit you now see all things confused and ouerwhelmed, so as you thinke Zion is laid in the dust, yet euen in Zion shall you haue a safe and quiet dwelling place.*

A promise touching the restauration of the church

The Prophets are wont to speake of things to come, as if they were already accomplished.

In calling it a *Citie of solemnities*, he shewes wherein the restauration of Zion did chiefly consist,

Wherein the reſtauration of Zion chiefly conſiſted.

conſiſt; to wit, becauſe the people flocked thither *to heare the law, to renue their couenant with God, to call vpon his name, and to offer ſacrifices*: for when they were depriued of theſe things, they were as ſheep ſcattered without a ſhepheard, or as a bodie ſeparate from the head: in a word, as a people vndone, and depriued of all ioy. And therefore the captiues in Babylon ſorrow for nothing ſo much as that they were *baniſhed from Zion*, and could not inioy the comforts which there they were wont to finde, Pſal. 137. 5. It alſo appeares plainlie enough by many places that it hath bin the chiefe complaint of all the faithfull.

Moreouer, he calles *Zion, a Citie*, becauſe it ſtood in the midſt of the Citie; and it is alſo called the citie of *Dauid*. The compaſſe of the whole Citie of Ieruſalem was very large, for there was a double wall, as we haue ſhewed you heretofore, which is to be ſeene alſo in many other Cities. Note we here that in the reſtauration of the Church conſiſts the fulnes of all bleſſings, as the only bliſſe which we are to deſire and wiſh for; all other benefits abound they neuer ſo much, wat we this, are nothing: as on the contratie, enioy we this; we enioy all things; for we can no way be miſerable, as long as *Ieruſalem*, that is to ſay *the Church*, floriſheth. But when doth ſhe floriſh? When God ſits as chiefe in our aſſemblies, and when we couenant in his name to cleaue vnto him for euer. The vnbeleeuers are forward to crowne themſelues as it were with the title of Gods name, as if their aſſemblies were gathered vnder his enſigne: but all is hypocriſie. For though they draw neere to him with their mouthes, yet their hearts are farre off from him, neither will they haue him nor his lawes to beare ſway amongſt them in any thing.

In the reſtauration of the church conſiſts the fulnes of all bleſſings.

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In the next place *Iſaiah* ſaith, that the faithfull, which a long time had been toſt to and fro with many tempeſts, ſhould now at the laſt haue a ſure and *quiet abode* in the Church of God. But howſoeuer the people had ſome ſmall taſte hereof vnder *Hezekias*, yet the full accompliſhmẽt therof is performed in Chriſt only: vnderſtand me not, that euer ſince, Gods children haue had *ſafe and quiet dwelling* in this world. No, this *reſt* is now hidden, for wee are faine to wander and ſtray vp and downe here; and are driuen many times to ſhift from poſt to piller without any certaine abode, toſt with diuers tempeſts and whirlewinds, we are on euery ſide aſſailed with infinit enemies, and yet theſe combates muſt we ſuffer, ſo as we can hardlie get ſo much as a minutes reſt here. Thinke not then that God promiſeth ſuch a peace as carnall ſenſe can comprehend. No, we muſt diue into the deepeſt thoughts of our hearts, reformed by the holy Ghoſt in righteouſnes and holines, if we will enioy this peace which paſſeth vnderſtanding, as *Paul* ſaith, Phil. 4. 7. This peace ſhall we be ſure to enioy as the Lords gift, if we remaine in the true Church.

What maner of peace and quietnes it is which the faithfull inioy in this world.

By *tabernacle*, and *cords*, he fitlie and aptlie deſcribes the condition of the Church. For he might haue called it a citie well founded; but he calles it a *Tabernacle*, or *Tent*, which is apt in an inſtant to be remoued from place to place. To teach vs, that although the eſtate of the Church ſeeme to haue *litle ſtabilitie in it*, and is ſubiect to many changes, yet that ſhe ſhall ſtand ſteadie and vnmoueable for all that: ſhe ſhal ſtand againſt all ſtormes and tempeſts, againſt all the furie of enemies, although we thinke it vnpoſſible, and can no way comprehend the reaſon of it. Faith alone is it that can make things ſo repugnant to agree together, to wit, that *there is ſafer dwelling in a ſillie tent, then in the ſtrongeſt Caſtles in the whole world*. With this buckler muſt we beare off Satans blowes, which otherwiſe would ſhake and ſhiuer vs to pieces as oft as we ſee the Church not a little tottering only, but caried cleane away as with a whirlewind now hither, now thither. Who would thinke there were any *ſafetie*, or *place of reſt* to be looked for in theſe tempeſtuous whirleings? But becauſe the Lord will not haue his ſeruants altogether hampered in the things of this life, that they may depend wholly vpon him; this promiſed protection of his ought to be more eſteemed of vs, then thouſands of other ſtayes beſides.

The Church rather called a Tabernacle then a Citie.

Though the Church in this world be ſubiect to many changes as the Mõne, yet ſhall ſhe ſtand vnmoueable againſt all ſtormes and tempeſts whatſoeuer, as is proued in the verſe following.

Verſ. 21. *For ſurely there the mightie Lord* will be *vnto vs as a place of floods, and broad riuers, Whereby ſhall paſſe no ſhip with oares, neither ſhall great ſhip paſſe thereby.*

THe two particles *Chi*, and *Im*, ſtand often for a double affirmation; but they are put here for expoſitiues: we may alſo tranſlate, For if, but I willinglie retaine that which is cleareſt. Well, the Prophet giues a reaſon why the Church which reſembles *a reſtleſſe pauilion*, is notwithſtãding *ſteadier then Cities well founded*: to wit, becauſe her Lord the *Almightie is in the midſt of her*, for ſo ſhe ſhall not be ſhaken, as is ſaid Pſal. 46. 5. Separate God frõ the Church once, and ſhe will fall of her ſelfe though no man put his leaſt finger to it. For wherof doth ſhe conſiſt, but of a ſort of poore weake and fraile creatures, yea, the fraileſt of all others. But whẽ *God dwels in the midſt of vs*, then he ſuſteines and beares vp this feeble and weake nature, and is to vs as *a ſtrong rampart*, deepe trenches; yea, euen as walles and *riuers* which compaſſe in a Citie round about. Now the Prophet had reſpect to the ſituation of Ieruſalem, which had nought elſe but a *litle riuer*, nothing ſo large and boyſterous riuers as Babylon and other Cities had. For they were commanded before Chap. 8. 6. to content themſelues with the only power of God, & not to couet after theſe great floods; as if he ſhould ſay, We ſhall ſurely be inuincible if God be reſident amongſt vs, becauſe his defence will be a ſhield and buckler of proofe.

The Church inuincible as long as God hath his abode in the middeſt of her. Content thy ſelfe with a meane eſtate, for that which may be for thy aduantage one while, may turne to thy hurt at another time.

The ſhip ſhall not paſſe.] Great riuers haue this incommoditie, that they make paſſage for the enemies to ariue therein with their ſhips ſometimes more then were to be wiſhed: and thus that which ſerues at one time for a help, many times may afterward turne

to our hurt and losse. But the Lord saith, he will so serue as a *viuer*, that yet the entrance of no enemie need to be feared, in regard of any such incommoditie. Now hee mentions two sorts of vessels, to wit, *gallies*, and ships of burthen: and thus he shewes that the enemie shall no way preuaile. From hence wee may 1 gather two very profitable doctrines. First, neither to seeke, nor wait for saluation at the 2 hands of any, but from God alone. Secondly, that it is in vaine to gather together much artillerie and defences, because they shall not onely become vnprofitable vnto vs, when God is against vs, but shall turne to our owne ruine and destruction.

Vers. 22. *For the Lord is our Iudge, the Lord is our law-giuer, the Lord is our King: he will saue vs.*

The maner how God sits in his Church. 1. 2. 3. King.

NOw the Prophet shewes how God visits in the middest of his Church; to wit, by being serued and acknowledged as *Iudge*, *lawgiuer*, and *King*. For those who obey and submit themselues vnto God, as to their *King*, shall effectually feele that he is the safe keeper of their saluation: but those that glory in this falsly, shall looke for saluation from him in vaine. Submit wee our neckes therefore onely to his yoke. Let vs harken vnto his voice, and obey him: then will he for his part manifestly shew himselfe to be our *defence and protection*. But if we contemne his voice, and rebell against his Commandements; what maruell is it, if in dangers he leaue and forsake vs? The true Church then, as you may obserue, is she who acknowledgeth God for her *King* and *lawgiuer*. With what face then dare the Papists brag, that they are the Church of God, seeing they reiect the *lawfull gouernment* established by *Moses*, the Prophets, and by Christ himselfe, to bring in their own deuices and trumperies in stead of the same? They exercise a cruell tyranny ouer the consciences of poore men and women: and in taking that libertie away, which Christ hath purchased, they miserably vexe the poore soules of his seruants, and as much as in them lies, would draw them into perdition with themselues.

Lawgiuer.

That is the true Church, which acknowledgeth God for her Lawgiuer and King.

Papists exercise a cruell tyranny ouer the consciences of poore men and women.

But it is Gods office alone to sit in mens consciences, seeing he is the onely *Iudge* and *lawgiuer*, whose right it is to rule vs by his word. The Prophet conioynes three words together here; *Iudge*, *lawgiuer*, and *King*; because it is a thing of such great importance, as ought not slightly to bee passed ouer. If wee then suffer our selues to bee gouerned by his word, hee will neuer forsake vs. Thus in few words, wee haue the onely meane set before vs how to obtaine saluation.

Iudge.

Vers. 23. *Thy cords are loosed: they could not well strengthen their mast, neither could they spread the saile: then shall the pray bee diuided for a great spoile; yea, the lame shall take away the pray.*

HEe turnes his speech to the Assyrians, in whose person hee also speakes to all the enemies of the Church. For hauing promised her such stabilitie, as shall neuer be shaken, he taxeth now the fond confidence wherewith the wicked are puffed vp; as if they were so well rooted, that it were vnpossible euer to displant them. Be it then that for a time they built their hopes vpon their riches, as vpon a strong Citie, and that the same was as an high wall vnto them in their imagination: whilest they were so besotted therewith, yet *Isaiah* propheceies their sudden destruction to be at hand, because Gods hand vpheld them not. Now hee goes on with the similitude which he vsed in the 21. verse, where he compared the Church to a very *strong place, well inuironed with goodly riuers*: by reason whereof, the enemy could not approch vnto her. Now he compares the estate of the wicked to *ships*: signifying thereby their *tottering foundation*; notwithstanding they plaied the bugbeares, and were caried with such furie and rage, as it seemed they would beare downe all before them with a breath. Although they had furnished themselues then both with great *ships* and *gallies* to ioyne in one the regions, which lay far distant one from another, and so meant to make themselues Lords of sea and land: yet should they feele that all was but vapors and smoke. The Lord would *turne ouer their ships, breake downe their masts, and cut off their Cables, and sinke all into the bottome of the sea*. Let vs not altogether then stand wondering and gazing at the strength, violence, or audaciousnes of our enemies; but let vs looke vp vnto the Lord, & wait for that day wherein he will tumble their furie and violence vpon their owne heads.

Verse 21.

Vers. 24. *And none inhabitant shall say, I am sicke: the people that dwell therein, shall haue their iniquitie forgiuen.*

NOw the Prophet returnes againe to the Church; for the ruine which he threatned should fall vpon the Assyrians, tended not a little to the consolation of the faithful: for what securitie could the Church haue had, vnlesse God had opposed his helpe against the power of so many enemies, which assailed her on euery side? Hauing in a word then touched the state of the wicked; to wit, that they shall all be brought to nought, because they persecute the children of God; he aptly returnes where he left, to wit, that God will omit no occasion that may make for the good and saluation of his Church. He saith then that the *Citizens* of the Church shall be freed from all incommodities, because by the fauour of God, they shall inioy an happie estate.

The second part of the verse serues for an exposition of the former: for *sinnes being forgiuen*, the graces of God shall flow in vpon vs without

without any let or ſtay. Whence we gather, that all the miſeries which aſſaile vs, proceeds from no other cauſe then from our *iniquities*. Otherwiſe, the reaſon which hee yeeldes, ſhould be improper and far fetched: but this principle is to be holden, that all the miſeries which God ſends vs, are ſo many tokens of his wrath. Thence it followes that God muſt needes vſe vs with a fatherly reſpect, when our ſinnes are pardoned; and out of his loue, to giue vs whatſoeuer is good for vs.

All our miſeries proceedes from our ſinnes. A Principle.

Therefore if we deſire to be eaſed of our troubles, keep we this order. Aboue all things let vs ſeeke reconciliation with God; for the cauſe being remoued, the effect ſhall forthwith vaniſh away. But becauſe our deſires are not well nor rightly ordered, caring onely to get away the rod from our backes, and neuer conſider deeply of the cauſe: we needs not wonder if wee lie groueling ſtill vnder the ſmart thereof. They therefore deceiue themſelues which would bee freed from croſſes, and yet will delight in their ſinnes: nay, if ſuch ſhould be vnder no aduerſitie at all, yet ſhould they not ceaſe for all that to be miſerable people: for what reſt or tranquilitie of mind can they inioy, whileſt their conſciences in euery place purſues the with the guilt of their iniquities?

What courſe wee are to take, that would bee eaſed of our troubles.

They deceiue themſelues, that would be freed fro croſſes, and yet delight in their ſins.

Wherein conſiſts true felicitie then? In hauing obtained forgiueneſſe of ſinnes, and in feeling ſenſibly, that all the good things we receiue from God, are ſo many pledges of his fatherly good will towards vs. Learne we alſo, that it is impoſſible to pleaſe him, or be accounted among the number of his children, vnleſſe hee ceaſe to impute our ſinnes vnto vs. There is nothing then but free reconciliation alone, which can make vs well pleaſing in his ſight; nor nothing but that, which can make way for his loue to be ſhed abroad in our hearts.

Now albeit we be continually vnder the croſſe, yet that breakes not off the promiſe; for the faithfull content themſelues with this comfort and conſolation in the middeſt of all their afflictions; to wit, that God is their God, and ceaſeth not to hold them for his deere children, though he correct them. For being regenerate by his Spirit, they begin to taſte of that happineſſe which *Adam* inioied in full meaſure before his fall: but being burthened with many ſinnes, therefore haue they needs of a continuall waſhing: and yet God ſo tempers his bitter potions, that he ſupports their infirmities ſtill. He alſo lets them ſee that he hath a care of their welfare, by moderating the ſharpneſſe of his ſtripes, if he doe not at once ſet them free. It is not without cauſe then you ſee, that our Prophet *exempts* the renued Church from common *miſeries*, becauſe they carrie in them *a ſtampe of Gods curſe*.

In what the faithfull find contentment in afflictions.

Daily defilings needes daily waſhings.

Hence alſo we may note how childiſh the diſtinction of the Papiſts is, touching the forgiueneſſe of the ſinne, but not of the puniſhment; as if wee were able to ſatisfie Gods iuſtice. But the Prophet teacheth vs another leſſon, as wee may eaſilie gather from other places of their writings. But if we had but this onely text, can any man ſpeake more plainly, then to ſay, that *afflictions ſhall ceaſe*, becauſe *iniquitie is forgiuen*? Truly it is all one as if it had been ſaid; *The puniſhments ceaſeth, becauſe the fault is pardoned*. I grant that God ſometimes afflicts the faithfull, albeit he forgiues the fault: but it is to the end that by this ſtroke of the rod, he might make them wiſer for the time to come; and not to exact a ſatisfaction of them, as if he had been reconciled vnto them by halues. But our Papiſts will needes haue ſuch puniſhments ſtand for ſatisfactions: as if the ſinner in part ſhould thereby redeem himſelfe; which, wee know, directly croſſeth the doctrine of free remiſſion of ſinnes. And thus their fond inuentions, both concerning ſatisfactions, and Purgatory, falles to the ground.

A childiſh diſtinction of the Papiſts.

Satisfactions and Purgatorie.

It is alſo to be noted, that this priuiledge belongs onely to the houſhold of faith: for out of the body of Chriſt, which is the communion of Saints, what *hope of reconciliation with God is there left*? That is the reaſon why wee are taught in the Symbole to ſay, I beleeue, *the catholike Church, the remiſſion of ſinnes*. For as God loues none but thoſe whom hee findes members of his onely Sonne; no more beſtowes hee his free imputation vpon any, but ſuch as are liuely members of his body. What remaines to thoſe that are without then, and are ſtrangers from the Commonwealth of Iſrael, but that they muſt needes periſh vnder the curſe? Therefore to forſake the true Church, is manifeſtly to renounce eternall life.

Two Articles in the Symbole.

To forſake the Church, is to renounce eternall life.

THE XXXIIII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Come neere yee nations, and hearken yee people: let the earth heare, and all that is therein; the world, and all that proceedeth thereof.*

HItherunto our Prophet minding to comfort the children of the Church, hath preached as it were in the midſt of their aſſembly. But now he directs his ſpeech vnto the Gentiles, and takes vp the ſame argument ſtil, albeit after another maner then before. For hauing ſhewed that the Lord hath ſuch care ouer his Church, that hee will alwaies prouide meanes for her ſafetie: hee now alſo addes that which we haue ſeene heretofore; to wit, that he will at laſt take his peoples cauſe in hand, and reuenge their quarrell, though for a time hee hath ſuffered the wicked to take their penniworths of them. He continues to handle the ſame matter then, but by a conſolation

ſolation of another kind. For he ſhewes how ſeuerely God will plague thoſe wicked ones, which haue perſecuted his Church. The Prophet according to his office therefore, ſummons them by proclamation on Gods behalfe (that he might the better awaken them) to *aſſemble* themſelues together, and appeare before his iudgement ſeat. For thus the wicked muſt be rouzed out of their ſecurity, who in time of proſperitie deſpiſe all admonitions; thinking that God either will not, or cannot puniſh their iniquities. Yet in ſpeaking thus vehemently, his greateſt reſpect was to the Church: for otherwiſe hee found but deafe eares among the *nations*, they would haue profited nothing at all by it.

In this place hee addreſſeth his ſpeech to the Idumeans, who were like enough proudly to deſpiſe theſe threatnings, and therefore he calles *heauen* and *earth* to witneſſe againſt them, ſaying, that the iudgements which God will execute, ſhall bee ſo apparant and manifeſt, that not onely *all people*, but all the inſenſible creatures alſo ſhall ſee it: for it is the maner of the Prophets to ſpeake thus to the *dumbe creatures*, when men indued with reaſon and vnderſtanding, grow deafe; as wee haue ſeene before in the firſt Chapter.

Verſ. 2. *For the indignation of the Lord is vpon all nations, and his wrath vpon all their armies: hee hath deſtroyed them,* and *deliuered them to the ſlaughter.*

BY *nations*, he meanes thoſe enemies which bordered vpon the Iewes, who were inuironed with many Countries: for they had as many enemies almoſt, as borderers. Now albeit there were other cauſes of this malice, to wit, enuie: yet becauſe they were of a contrarie religion, that did wonderfully inflame their rage againſt them, in regard they thereby condemned their ſuperſtitions, which cauſed the Lord the rather to promiſe his helpe, as a Iudge to reuenge their quarrell.

He addes, *vpon all their armies*, becauſe the Iewes were but an handfull of people, being compared with other *nations*. Although theſe nations then boaſted, becauſe of their *great armies*, and deſpiſed the ſmall number of the Iewes; yet the Prophet affirmes, that God can eaſily conſume their multitudes, & bring them all to nought, rather then he will hazard the loſſe of his little flocke, whereof he is the ſhepheard. And albeit hee ſpeakes of *things to come*, yet vſeth he the *preſens tence*, becauſe he might ſet the thing before the eyes of the poore Iewes, which were almoſt ouerwhelmed with afflictions. For, as I haue touched before, he foretels not theſe things in reſpect of the *Idumeans*, who would receiue no inſtruction; but in reſpect of the *Iewes*, whom he meant to comfort, becauſe they were miſerably vexed by their enemies.

The Prophets vſe the preſent tence when they ſpeake of things to come, to ſhew the certaintie of their prophecies.

Verſ. 3. *And their ſlaine ſhall bee caſt out, and their ſtinke ſhall come vp out of their bodies; and the mountaines ſhall be melted with their blood.*

BY this circumſtance hee ſhewes that the deſtruction ſhall be great: for if but a few perſons be ſlaine, they *burie them*. But when ſo many are *ſlaine*, that thoſe which be left aliue, are not able to burie them, they care not much to leaue them vnburied: ſo as the ſtinke of the carkaſes, as yee know, aſcends and corrupts the ayre. Thus it appeares that God is ſtrong enough to rote out infinit armies. It may be alſo the Prophet meant to ſet forth this iudgement of God at large, becauſe beſides the killing of the nations, there would be ſhame and diſgrace brought vpon them, in regard their dead were depriued of the right and honour of buriall. Afterwards he amplifies the horrour of the diſcomfiture, in ſaying, that their blood ſhall flow from the *mountaines*, as if they were diſſolued or *molten*: as when breaches of great riuers doe violently deſcend, and carry earth and all before them. And thus he againe ſhewes, that no meanes ſhall be left them to eſcape, becauſe the ſlaughter ſhall bee no leſſe in the *mountaines*, then in the plaine where the battell is pitched.

Verſ. 4. *And all the hoſt of heauen ſhall bee diſſolued, and the heauens ſhall bee folden like a booke: and all their hoſtes ſhall fall, as the leafe falleth from the vine, and as it falleth from the figgetree.*

Iſaiah vſeth here an exceſſiue manner of ſpeech, as others of the Prophets likewiſe often doe, to ſet forth the terror of Gods iudgement, and deepely to wound dull and dead hearts. For otherwiſe, his ſpeech would haue been of no force, neither would it much haue profited the careleſſe and ſecure perſon. He addes then, that the very *ſtarres* themſelues ſhall bee darkened in this waſte, as if they were conſtrained to fall: the better to manifeſt the waſting which ſhould be there. For when the heauens are clowdie and gloomie, it ſeemes the cloudes *wrap* and *fold* themſelues vp one in another, the Sunne and ſtars begin to grow wan and weake, and the whole frame of the heauens ſhake, as if they were readie to fall. Now he ſhewes the like ſhall happen at this time, becauſe euery thing ſhall ſhew ſignes of ſorrowe and lamentation.

But this muſt be referred to the apprehenſion of men, for the heauens moout not out of their place: but when the Lord manifeſts ſome tokens of his diſpleaſure, wee are as much terrified therewith, as if the heauens were ready to fall vpon our heads, and to burie vs vnder them. Not that ſuch things befall the heauens; but he ſpeakes as it were to braſen faces, whom hee was faine thus to awake, that they might not take him as if hee told

told them a tale of *Robbin Hood*, as they ſay; no, you ſhall bee ſo ſmitten with feare, ſaith he, that you ſhall imagin the *very heauens* are readie *to fall about your eares*. This is the iuſt reward of a drouzie conſcience, to wit, that wicked perſons which cannot bee touched with any feare of God, ſhall be afraid of their owne ſhadow, and ſhall as much tremble at the *falling of a leafe*, as if *the Sunne and ſtarres fell from heauen*. And thus he alſo notes a wofull change, which ſhall trouble and mingle all things together.

The reward of a benummed conſcience.

Verſ. 5. *For my ſword ſhall be drunken in the heauens: behold, it ſhall come downe vpon Edom, euen vpon the people of my* * *curſe, to iudgement.*

* Or, diſcomfiture, in iudgement.

HE ſaith that the *ſword of the Lord is drunke with blood*, as when one hath made a great ſlaughter, ſwords are bathed in blood. And that the ſpeach might haue the more force, he brings in the *Lord* himſelfe vttering of it. But why, ſaith he, it is *in heauen*? For God calles not men vp thither to puniſh them, but executes his iudgemẽts here below in earth, and that by the hands of men. But the Prophet reſpects that ſecret counſell of God, by which he deliberates and ordaines all things before the execution therof: he vnderſtands it not then of the act it ſelfe, but commends the efficacie of his owne propheſie, in regard that by the immutable counſell of God this ſlaughter ſhould certainely fall out. Alſo he meant to informe the faithfull hereby, that God examins the doings of the wicked *in heauen*, howſoeuer they giue themſelues to all iollitie on earth, and go on in their bad courſes vnpuniſhed. Laſtly, that the *ſword* wherewith they ſhould be ſlaine was *alreadie bathed in blood* in God his account, euen when he is only determined to puniſh them, which he will aſſuredlie performe, notwithſtanding all their proſperitie.

My ſword.

Note.

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Gen. 18, 20. Sodome burnt alreadie in Gods account, whileſt ſhe gaue her ſelfe to drunkennes, diſſolutions, and execrable villanies: as much may likewiſe be ſaid of all other wretched people which lie fettered in Satans chaines, to be ſlaine by the ſword of the Lord of hoſts, euen then when they wallow themſelues moſt in their voluptuouſnes. Let vs not therefore ſtand gazing vpon the proſperitie of the wicked, whileſt they inioy more then their hearts can wiſh; neither let vs linger after the ſame: for albeit no man moleſt them, yet are they not far off from ruin. Why ſo? poore ſoules! God is againſt them.

But our Prophet names the *Idumeans* here, who were enemies to Gods people, notwithſtanding they were of affinitie with them, and bare the ſtamp of the ſame religion, for they were children of *Eſau*, and of the ſtock of *Abraham*, as was ſaid before. As at this day, what greater enemies haue wee then the Papiſts, which are baptized with the ſame baptiſme that we are, and make profeſſion of the name of Chriſt? and yet they furiouſlie perſecute vs, and would haue vs vtterlie rooted out, becauſe we condemne their ſuperſtitions, and Idolatries. Euen ſuch were the *Idumeans*, and therefore the Prophet culled them out from amongſt all the reſt of the enemies of the Church.

Gen. 36, 8.

Papiſts the greateſt enemies the Church of God hath.

In calling them the *people of his diſcomfiture*, he confirmes the former ſentence: for it is as much as if the Lord had ſaid, It will be but in vaine for you to thinke you can eſcape my hands, ſeeing you are alreadie ordeined to deſtruction. For by this phraſe of ſpeech he pronounceth definitiue ſentence vpon them, as being alreadie condemned in his heauenlie decree, and that no leſſe, then if at that preſent they had been *put apart*, and *cut away* from off the land of the liuing.

And leſt it might ſeeme that God did them any wrong, he addes, *in iudgement*: for there is nothing vnto which men are more prone then to accuſe God of crueltie: ſo as the greateſt part can not be brought to acknowledge him their competent Iudge, eſpeciallie if he chaſtiſe them ſomewhat ſeuerely. *Iſaiah* therefore ſhewes, that this ſlaughter muſt needs be mixt with equitie, ſeeing God neuer exceeds in ouermuch ſeueritie.

Verſ. 6. *The ſword of the Lord is filled with blood: it is made fat with the fat, and with the blood of the lambs, and the goates, with the fat of the kidneys of the rammes: for the Lord hath a ſacrifice in Bozrah, and a great ſlaughter in the land of Edom.*

HE goes on ſtill with the ſame argument, but by another deſcription, which amplifies the matter greatlie: wherein his drift is to rouze vp the wicked who were wont to gibe and geere at all admonitions, as we haue ſaid before. Is it not needfull then that Gods iudgements ſhould be diſciphered out in liuely tables to wound the hearts of the enemies, and to animate the minds of the faithfull with an holy pride in aſſurance that their foes can not any way ſhift it for all their ſtoutnes and rebellion, but that they muſt be brought to the ſhambles like beaſts as ſoone as God doth but hold vp his finger, as they ſay?

He compares their deſtruction to the *ſacrifices*: for as they were wont to ſacrifice beaſts for the ſeruice and honor of God, ſo ſhould he be glorified by the ſlaughter of this people. The Prophet then confirmes that here which he hath ſaid before touching the *iudgement*: for when the Lord executes Iuſtice, his glorie ſhines thereby; men reuerence and worſhip him, ſo as the deſtruction of the wicked you ſee is rightlie compared to ſacrifices, which were a part of his ſeruice. Verſ. 5.

Indeed there was no great pleaſure in beholding the ſacrifices: for the cutting their throats, the guſhing out of the warme blood, and the ſtinck of the ſmoke ſerued rather to driue men away; yet the honour and glorie of God ſhined euen in theſe things. So, this deſtruction of the Idumeans no doubt was an

horrible ſpectacle to looke vpon, and made no ſuch goodly ſhew, as to bring one in loue with the ſight of it: but that the faithfull euen in this reſpect, might learne to ſanctifie the name of God, they were commanded to lift vp their eies *to heauen*, becauſe God in executing ſuch a vengeance, did as it were erect and ſet vp ſo many altars for his ſacrifices. And becauſe they had vniuſtly afflicted the Church of God, and had cruelly intreated his choſen, without all compaſſion or humanitie, *Iſaiah* pronounceth that the offering vp of their blood, was *a ſacrifice* acceptable and of a ſweet ſmelling ſauor vnto God, becauſe it is the execution of his iudgements.

By *lambs* and *goates*, vnder a figure he means the *people* which ſhould be ſacrificed: and in alluding to the *ſundry kinds of offerings*, *he comprehends all the people, as well ſmall as great*: to ſhew, that when God ſhall take his enemies in hand to puniſh them, hee will not let ſo much as any one of them eſcape. He mentions *Bozrah*, which was the chiefe and head Citie of the Country, in which the greateſt ſlaughter ſhould bee executed: and in the next place addes the *land of Edom*, through which this diſcomfiture ſhould paſſe, without ſparing any corner of it.

Verſ. 7. *And the vnicornes ſhall come downe with them, and the* *heifers *with the bulles: and their land ſhall bee drunken with blood; and their duſt is made fat with fatneſſe.*

*Or, calues.

THis verſe is annexed to the former, for it is no new thing he ſpeakes of, but hee continues the ſame figure, amplifying what hee had ſaid touching *goates* and *lambes*: to which, hee not onely addes *calues*, but *wilde beaſts* alſo. The ſumme is, that Gods vengeance is bounden, ſo as he will ſpare neither age nor eſtate; for he will put to the ſword as well the cruell and proud Giants, with their vaine brags, as the feeble weakling: as if one prepared *a ſacrifice*, in which, *beaſts of all ſorts* were mingled one with another. Neither ſhould any thinke it abſurd, that *lambs* are coupled with *cruell beaſts* in this *ſacrifice*: for by the word *lambs* in this place, hee meanes not harmleſneſſe and innocencie; but the poore and weake are called ſo by compariſon, becauſe their meane condition held them vnder ſome appearance of modeſtie.

Now albeit it may ſeeme ſtrange that the Lord ſhould thus ſmite his enemies, without ſparing of any at all; notwithſtanding by the word *ſacrifice*, he ſhewes he doth nothing but that which is iuſt and equall, and for which he ought to be praiſed. And indeed whoſoeuer ſhall examin this fact, ſhall be inforced to lay his hand vpon his mouth, and to confeſſe, that God had iuſt occaſion to cut them off all, not one excepted. The like end are all reprobates to looke for; namely, to be ſacrificed by the hands of thoſe that are as wicked as themſelues. Some take the word *Abbirim*, for Strong: I had rather follow them which tranſlate it *Bulles*, it being ſo taken, Pſal. 50. Albeit by *Bulles* here, vnder a figure, he meanes the ſtrong and mighty.

Verſ. 8. *For it is a day of the Lords vengeance, and the yeere of recompence for the iudgement of Zion.*

THis verſe muſt be ioyned to the former, for it containes the end why the Lord corrected the Idumeans ſo ſeuerely, namely, becauſe he meant now to maintaine and reuenge the quarrell of his people. For had he not added this reaſon, that which hee ſpake before, might haue ſeemed not onely darke, but improper. For it would be but a flitting and vncertaine knowledge of things, vnleſſe in the conſideration of Gods puniſhing of the wicked, we did alſo therein ſee, that hee manifeſts the continuall care and loue which he hath to his choſen, in the preſeruation of them. Now that which is here ſaid of the Idumeans, ought to bee applied to all the enemies of the Church; for vnder this one particular, our Prophet comprehended them all: and for this cauſe are we to cheere vp and refreſh our hearts with this conſolation in time of aduerſitie, and to ſuſtaine the iniuries which are done vs, which God ſhall reuenge himſelfe. For is he called the auenger, thinke you, for nought? See Pſal. 94. 1. It is not our Prophets meaning then alone to ſay, that God hath power ſufficient to puniſh the wicked when he thinks good, but alſo that he reignes in heauen, to reuenge all wrongs in due ſeaſon.

From particular threatnings, wee may deſcend to the generall.

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But the two words, *day* and *yeere*, is to bee noted: for thereby he giues vs to vnderſtand, that God ſleepes not in heauen, whileſt hee ſeemes to winke at the enemies crueltie; but onely deferres to puniſh, till the appointed time; to the end the faithfull might learne in the meane ſpace, to poſſeſſe their ſoules in patience, and ſuffer him to gouerne all things according to his incomprehenſible wiſdome. *Luke 21. 19*

Verſ. 9. *And the riuers thereof ſhall be turned into pitch; and the duſt thereof into brimſtone; and the land thereof ſhall be burning pitch.*

THis whereof he ſpeakes, hath relation to that which went before; in which hee addes a more ample declaration of this deſtruction. We told you erewhile why the Prophets doe liuely repreſent and ſet forth Gods iudgements in ſuch plaine tables as it were; euen to bring men vpon the ſcaffold, thereby conſtraining men to take knowledge of thoſe things, which otherwiſe they would neither ſee nor comprehend; and if they did, yet they would vtterly forget them as ſoone as they had ſeene or apprehended them. But beſides this, we muſt note that the Prophets ſpake of ſecret and hidden things, which ſeemed altogether incredible: for many thought the Prophets bolted out things at a venture

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in theſe matters. There needed many confirmations therefore: and ſuch are thoſe that he vſeth in this, and other the like places.

The ſumme then is, that he ſpeakes of ſuch an horrible change, as ſhall vtterly waſte the land of Edom. Moreouer, he alludes to the deſtruction of Sodome and Gomorrah: Gen. 19.24. which is a forme of teaching much vſed among the Prophets: for in this ruin we haue (as Saint *Iude* telles vs) a perpetuall example of Gods wrath againſt the reprobate: neither is it without cauſe that the Prophets doe ſo often renue the remembrance thereof, for they would haue all men learne thereby to tremble at Gods iudgements. Hitherunto appertaines that which is ſaid in the verſe following. *Iude 7.*

Verſ. 10. *It ſhall not bee quenched night nor day: the ſmoke thereof ſhall goe vp euermore: it ſhall be deſolate from generation to generation: none ſhall paſſe through it for euer.*

QVeſtionleſſe the Prophet vſeth an exceſſiue manner of ſpeech; but the Lord is conſtrained thus to deale with vs, to awaken our dulnes; for an vſuall forme of ſpeech would not moue or affect vs. In ſaying then, that the wrath of the Lord againſt the Idumeans, reſembles a *fire that neuer goes out*, he takes from them all hope of pardon: for as they ceaſed not to prouoke him, ſo ſhould they find him a ſeuere Iudge vnto them. And *Malachi* notes it as a ſigne of the reprobation of this people, that the Lord was angry with them for euer: Malachi 1.4. The oppoſition muſt be ſupplied, becauſe Gods children alwaies receiue ſome conſolation, leſt they ſhould be diſcouraged. But we need not ſtand long vpon this matter: it ſufficeth that we haue the drift and ſcope of the Prophets words.

Verſ. 11. *But the pellican and the hedgehog ſhall poſſeſſe it, and the great owle and the rauen ſhall dwell in it: and he ſhall ſtretch out vpon it the line of vanity, and the ſtones of emptineſſe.*

AS touching theſe creatures which *Iſaiah* here mentions, there are diuers opinions: neither are the Hebrew expoſitors themſelues well reſolued touching the ſame: yet wee may perceiue the Prophets drift well enough; to wit, that hee ſets out the face of a Country laid waſte & deſolate. For doubtleſſe he ſpeakes of hideous monſters in nature, which come not among men, neither are they acquainted with them. And this he doth the rather to deſcribe the horror of this deſtruction. The firſt member of the verſe then is cleere enough of it ſelfe: but there is ſome difficultie in the ſecond. Some expound theſe words, *lines of vanitie*, by an *antiphraſe, and vnderſtand it of the Iewes: but I rather thinke it ſhould bee referred to the Idumeans, as the former words are. And to the end we may the better know that this is the Prophets true meaning, the ſame words are found in the firſt Chapter of Malachi, verſe, 4,5. who came long after our Prophet: in which place, hee confirmes that which *Iſaiah* here denounceth. Though Edom ſay, we are impoueriſhed, but we wil returne & build the deſolate places; yet ſaith the Lord of hoſtes, they ſhall build, but I will deſtroy it; and they ſhall call them, the border of wickedneſſe, and the people with whom the Lord is angry for euer. And your eies ſhall ſee it, and yee ſhall ſay, The Lord wil be magnified vpon the borders of Iſrael. *Malachi* then plainely expounds that which *Iſaiah* ſpake ſomewhat darkly in his time: *Iſaiah* ſaith, the Idumeans ſhall *build* in vaine: the other, that they ſhall ſpread the *lines* of vanitie: for it is all one in effect as if he had ſaid, that the maſter-workmen (as Maſons and Carpenters) ſhall but loſe their labour in going about to build the Cities againe: for men of ſuch craft, vſe *ſmall lines* and *plummets* to meaſure their works by. Thoſe then that ſhould take in hand the reſtauration of Edom, ſhould beſtow coſt in vaine: for they ſhall be ſo confounded, that they ſhall not know at what end to begin, nor where to make an end. And albeit God vſeth to mitigate the miſeries which he ſends vpon others, by ſome conſolation in the end, yet they muſt looke for none at all.

*A figure, that hath a contrarie meaning.

Hence we may collect a very profitable doctrine, which is this: doe wee at any time ſee that cities heretofore ruinated, are now built againe and brought into ſome good faſhion? Therein wee may behold a ſingular note of Gods fauour: for the labour of Maſons and handicrafts men would haue been to no purpoſe, vnleſſe the Lord had put his hand both to the beginning, middeſt, and end thereof; for what can proſper, vnleſſe he guide things from the laying of the firſt ſtone, to the laſt: and likewiſe, vnleſſe hee keepe them vnder his protection? Men may well diſburſe great ſummes of monie then, *yet in vaine*: yea, they ſhall vexe themſelues, without bringing to paſſe, vnleſſe hee be pleaſed to gouerne the buſineſſe, and to powre out his bleſſing vpon that which they take in hand. His onely bleſſing therefore makes rich: and that alone is it which vpholds vs in any eſtate or condition. For which cauſe it is ſaid, that *his hands* built Ieruſalem: Pſal. 47.2. Now as touching that which *Iſaiah* here threatens againſt the Idumeans, the holy Ghoſt pronounceth the like elſewhere, againſt the houſe of *Ahab*: meaning that it ſhould bee raced euen with the ground: 2. King. 21.13.

Except the Lord build the houſe, they labour but in vaine that build it: Pſal. 127.1.

Pro. 10.10.

Verſ. 12. *The Nobles thereof ſhall call to the Kingdome, and there ſhall be none: and all the Princes ſhall bee as nothing.*

THis text is diuerſly expounded: but I will not trouble you with the reciting of the expoſitions; for in refuting of them, I ſhould make my ſelfe more worke then needes. That which is moſt probable, is this, *They ſhall call*

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the Nobles of Edom to rule, but it ſhall be in vaine: As if he ſhould ſay, In ſo miſerable an eſtate there ſhall none be found that will willinglie beare *rule*, or take vpon him the gouernment of ſtate-matters. This ſentence is read elſewhere, yea, we haue had the ſame in a maner before, albeit ſomewhat differing in words. Now this maner of ſpeech leads me to think, that the Prophet meant cloſely to taxe the pride of this people, who were waxen ouerhaughtie, by reaſon of their peace and abundance. For as much then as the Idumeans being ſeated vpō high mountaines grew proud, the Prophet ſhewes, that they ſhould be brought downe with ſhame, ſo as none of the *Nobilitie* ſhould be left, neither ſhould there remaine any man of great place: for when kingdomes are ruinated, all gouernment is alſo aboliſhed. The people are as a bodie without an head, neither is there any diſtinction of perſons, or places.

Chap.3.6.7.

Lords without Lordſhips.

Thus then by way of ſcorne he ſaith, that theſe *braue Nobles* which were ſo highlie exalted, ſhalbe as Lords without Lordſhips, which appeares yet better by the ſecond member where it is added for expoſitions ſake, that *they ſhall be brought to nothing*. The ſumme is, that Edom ſhall reſemble a bodie ſhattered in peeces, in which ſhall appeare nought elſe but an horrible confuſion of all things. Oh fearefull curſe of God! What doe men differ from beaſts, I pray you, if they want the execution of good lawes? Is their condition any whit better? No ſurely. The beaſts may well be without any head or gouernour, becauſe they will not offer crueltie to thoſe of their owne kinde: but Lord, what is more cruell then man, if he be not kept vnder! Is he not caried an end by his paſſions as a furie of hell to runne out into all diſſolutions?

Verſ. 13. *And it ſhal bring forth thorns in the pallaces thereof, nettles and thiſtles in the ſtrong holds thereof, and it ſhall be an habitation for Dragons, and a court for Oſtriches.*

HE continues on his ſpeech, wherein he ſets forth an Image of an horrible deſolation: to wit, when beautifull houſes and pallaces are razed euen with the ground; or, ſo laid on heapes, that men can haue no vſe of them: being rather fit for *thornes, briars*, and *nettles* to grow in, then for dwelling places, which is farre worſe, then if they had bin conuerted into meadow or errable ground. But ſee how the Lord puniſheth the pride of ſuch as delight in building of ſumptuous houſes, and gorgeous pallaces; they thinke to make their names immortall, as it were: but God driues them out, and makes *neſts* therein for *birds*; and *dennes* for *wild beaſts*: and thus they ſerue as perpetuall enſignes of their vaine ambition, who by ſuch buildings thought to make thēſelues garlands of their owne renoume and excellencie. *Mens places* then are inhabited of *ſuch beaſts*, who repreſent the nature & diſpoſitions of thoſe which built and dwelt in thoſe ſo goodly houſes.

How God puniſheth the pride of ſuch as delight in building ſumptuous houſes.

The houſes of men inhabited by beaſts, anſwerable to their natures that dwelt in them.

Now this ouerturning of order is alſo a wofull ſigne of Gods wrath; to wit, when the earth which was created for the vſe of man, is cōſtreined to receiue inhabitants of other kinds, and to ſpew out their right and lawfull owners: but by meanes thereof no doubt it ſhall be purged of that filthines wherewith it was in times paſt defiled.

A note of Gods curſe in this change.

Verſ. 14. *There ſhall meet alſo Ziim and Iim, and the Satyre ſhall crie to his fellow, and the Skritch-owle ſhall reſt there, and ſhall finde for her ſelfe a quiet dwelling.*

15. *There ſhal the Owle make her neſt, and lay, and hatch, and gather them vnder her ſhadow: there ſhall the Vultures alſo be gathered euery one with her make.*

SOme affirme that theſe beaſts are Fayries, others, Hobgoblins; others, Satyres: neither do the Hebrues themſelues agree about the proper ſignification of their names. But what need we ſtand much about the matter? It ſufficeth vs that wee haue the Prophets ſcope and drift. He meant to decipher out an horrible deſolation. As if he ſhould ſay, Idumea ſhall be laid ſo waſt, that it ſhall be left without inhabitants: for in ſtead of them it ſhall be repleniſhed with *wild beaſts*. See here the iuſt reward of thoſe vaineglorious fooles, which built ſuch ſumptuous pallaces to continue the perpetuall memorie of their names forſooth. And here by the way alſo is a prediction of the chaſtiſement wherewith this curſed nation was to be ſcourged for their crueltie, in regard they whollie bent themſelues to ſeeke the ouerthrow and deſtruction of their brethren and neighbours.

The like was threatned before Chap. 13.21. 22. againſt Babell.

Now howſoeuer it be doubtfull whether the Prophet ſpeakes heere of * Fates, * Hobgoblins, or * Satyres, yet all agree that theſe words ſignifie ſuch beaſts as haue the faces of men. We alſo ſee how cunning the Deuill is by diuers illuſions, ghoſts, and fearefull apparitions; by ſounds, and hidious noyſes, to inchant deſolat places: but of this wee haue ſpoken in the 13. Chap. Now this vice which God hath ſo ſharplie puniſhed in one people, is almoſt common to all: for who is he that builds ſuch ſtately houſes, but the price therof is wrung out of the poore? ſometimes by violence and extorſion; ſometimes by continuall moleſtations; ſo as the very morter, ſtones, & wood, are repleniſhed with blood, in Gods ſight: Therefore the ſtone ſhall crie out of ỹ wall (ſaith *Abacuck*) and the beame ſhall anſwere vnto it, Woe to him that builds a Towne with blood, &c. Let vs not wonder at theſe ſtrange iudgements and horrible changes then, when wee ſee that ambition drawes with it theſe wicked extortions and robberies, but rather let vs ſeriouſlie therein conſider Gods iuſt reuenging hand.

* Ladies of the Fayries or Elfes.

* A Skritch-owle, or an vnluckykind of bird.

* Gods of the wods, hauing the head of a man, and bodie of a goate.

Sumptuous buildings for the moſt part reared vp by extortions. *Abacuk.* 2. 11.

Verſ. 16. *Seeke in the booke of the Lord, and reade: none of theſe ſhall faile, none ſhall*

ſhall want her make: for his mouth hath commanded, and his very ſpirit hath gathered them.

BY the *booke of the Lord*, ſome vnderſtand this prophecie; as if he ſtirred them vp to reade it diligently: and ſo it is, as if he ſhould ſay, *not one title of it* ſhall faile, when the time is expired: as he addes by & by after. Others expound it more ſubtillie of Gods eternall decree, thus; Search whether he hath not ſo ordained it: but this expoſition is too farre fetched. I expound it of the *law it ſelfe* therefore, which by way of excellencie is called *the booke of the Lord*, becauſe out of it, the Prophets drew all their doctrine, as we haue often told you heretofore. That the noueltie of ſuch a fact then, ſhould not make them reiect this prophecie, *Iſaiah* ſaith, that they were aduertiſed of it *long before*: and thus hee priuily taxeth their incredulitie, for remaining ſo groſſe conceited, as to eſteeme this thing altogether new and vnheard of.

The word Law expounded.

Now he hath good reaſon to bring them to the *law*, wherein God ſo often declares that he will haue care of his people, and will puniſh the wicked ſort. Seeing *Moſes* therefore ſpake of it ſo long agoe, the Prophet ſaith, that none ought to be ſo incredulous touching the truth of his prophecie, ſeeing he telles them of no ſtrange matters, but onely confirmes that which *Moſes* hath long ſince teſtified and taught. This I take to be the natiue ſenſe of our Prophet, who by theſe words meant to fortifie the Iewes, to the end they ſhould wait with patience for the promiſe of the Lord, as being aſſured that the euent would manifeſt the truth of thoſe things, which were alreadie foretold to fall vpon the Idumeans, and other enemies of the Church. Why ſo? Becauſe *Moſes* had teſtified (without cauſe of blame) that God would alwaies protect and defend his people. Againe, it was needfull they ſhould be aduertiſed hereof, that when the Idumeans ſhould be thus dealt withall indeed, they might not thinke it fell out by chance, but might acknowledge God the author of this iudgement. For ſuch is the peruerſitie of mans nature, that he beleeues not, though he be forewarned, till the very pinch: and beſides, hee is giuen to attribute that vnto fortune, which proceedes from the iuſt iudgement of God. *Iſaiah* therefore preuents theſe inconueniences, in willing them to aske of *Moſes* touching the truth hereof, becauſe hee was reuerenced of all, in reſpect of his authoritie.

None of them, to wit, of the *beaſts*: for the Hebrewes vſe theſe two wordes *Iſch*, and *Iſhah*, not only when they ſpeake of men and women, but alſo of males and females of all kinds. *For his mouth.* He confirmes that which he ſaid before; for albeit Gods works be manifeſt inough, yet he makes vs comprehend them better by his *mouth*, that is to ſay, by his word, that thereby wee may haue a clearer ſight of them: and this is the right viewing of the works of God, to wit, when with a quick eie we behold them in the cleere glaſſe of his word. For we are too bold and preſumptuous, and giue our ſelues the raines too much, vnleſſe we be guided by this heauenlie doctrine, as it were by torch-light. The pride and ouerweening of men therefore is here to be repreſſed, who will call into queſtion, and cenſure the iudgements of God and all his workes, without being ruled by his word: for if they would *ſeeke in his booke*, and aske at *his mouth*, wee ſhould ſee greater pietie and religion in them then there is.

Men erre, becauſe they ſearch not the Scriptures, Mat. 22.

Now the Prophet in ſpeaking of the *mouth* of the Lord, meant to confirme that which was ſaid before touching this iudgement; the reaſon is, becauſe *nothing can faile of that which iſſues out of his ſacred mouth*. *Iſaiah* affirmes it to be a thing impoſſible then, that that which is once decreed of God, which he alſo hath cõmanded him to publiſh in his name, ſhould euer be called backe by any meanes. And thus with this buckler, hee repulſeth all the difficulties which eaſilie ariſeth, as oft as the promiſes of God doe ſurmount our reach.

I grant he ſometimes threatens with condition, as he threatned *Abimelec*, Gen. 12. 17. and *Pharaoh*, Gen. 20. 3. and the Niniuites, Ionah. 1. 2. whom afterwards hee pardoned, becauſe they repented: but if he haue once determined to puniſh men indeed, hee will ſhew by the effects, that hee is both true of his word, and able to performe it, as well as hee is able to deliuer his in the time of neede.

This the Prophet expreſſeth againe when he maketh the *mouth* and *ſpirit* or breath to conſent together: for albeit the *ſpirit of the mouth* and the *word*, doe often ſignifie one and the ſame thing; and that the Hebrewes are wont to repeate one thing twice: yet here he makes an elegant alluſion vnto the *breath*, from which the *words* proceed, and of which they be formed: as if he ſhould ſay; this prophecie ſhall not want his efficacie, becauſe God, who by his voice hath commanded the brute beaſts to poſſeſſe Idumea, wil alſo draw them thither with his *onely breath*.

Now hee ſpeakes of a ſecret inſpiration. What maruell is it then, if all beaſts aſſemble themſelues together at Gods firſt becke; as we ſee it came to paſſe in the deluge; yea euen in the creation of the world; when *Moſes* teſtifies, that at Gods commandement all beaſts came by and by vnto man, to ſubiect themſelues vnder his gouernment? Gen. 2. 19. & 7. 15. And would they not thinke you haue been ſubiect and obedient to him ſtill, if he himſelfe had not been depriued of this authoritie by his owne rebellion? But being now reuolted from God, the beaſts forthwith began to band themſelues againſt him, and to offer violence vnto him.

The brute beaſts would haue been ſubiect to man, if man himſelfe had been ſubiect to God.

Verſ. 16. *And hee hath caſt the lots for them, and his hand hath diuided it vnto them by line: they ſhall poſſeſſe*

poſſeſſe it for euer, from generation to generation.

HE ſaith, that theſe monſters and wilde beaſts are ſo put into poſſeſſion of theſe places, that they can not be eaſily chaſed from thence, becauſe *God* (himſelfe) hath aſſigned it vnto them as their *lot* and inheritance. By this then he ſhewes, that whole Edom is vnder the Lords commandement, that is to ſay, to caſt out the inhabitants thereof, and to giue the poſſeſſion thereof vnto whom it pleaſeth him, namely, to the *Dragons, Oſtriches, Satyres, Owles, Vultures*, and ſuch like.

1 We muſt not promiſe to our ſelues a perpetuall abode in any place.

Hence let vs gather, that it is in vaine for men to promiſe vnto themſelues a perpetuall abode in any place whatſoeuer, further forth then they be readie to depart both out of place, yea, and calling to, as ſoone as God ſhall be pleaſed to diſpoſſeſſe them. For we hold our places but as tenants at will in the place where he ſuſtaines vs, nay, as pilgrims and ſtrangers, whether we be in the countrie of our naturall birth, or out of it. If he be pleaſed to giue vs a quiet habitation in a certaine place for any long time together, we inioy it only by his ſpeciall fauor: for as ſoone as he ſpeakes but the word, we muſt of neceſſitie be packing thence. Moreouer, if we acknowledge he hath giuen vs to continue in any Countrie, there we may be bold to dwell ſafely and quietlie: for if he will maintaine the beaſts right in keeping them ſafe in the place which he hath aſſigned them, will he not much more preſerue men, for whoſe ſakes he hath created heauen, earth, and the ſea, with all that therein is?

2 We muſt impute it to a ſpeciall fauor of God if he ſuffer vs to inioy our abode in any place for a long ſpace.

THE XXXV. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *The deſert of the wildernes ſhall reioyce: and the waſt ground ſhall be glad and floriſh as the roſe.*

THE Prophet ſpeakes heere of a maruelous change, for hauing in the former Chapter ſet forth the deſolation of Idumea, and ſhewed how it ſhould be brought vnto a deſert, now on the contrarie he promiſeth that the deſert ſhall be made a frutefull place, ſo as the barren and fallow field ſhould become fat and floriſhing, and the ſolitarie and waſt places ſhould be inhabited with people. This muſt needs be
1 the peculier worke of God, for as he bleſſeth
2 the whole earth, ſo alſo with this bleſſing
3 doth he ſprinckle ſome parts of it more ſpa-
4 ringlie, others more liberallie: ſometimes he withdrawes it altogether, becauſe of mans vnthankfulnes.

This text is diuerſlie expounded. Not to meddle with the fond gloſſes of the Iewes, who draw this and the like places to the temporall kingdome of the Meſſias, whom they forge at their pleaſure. Some expound it of Iudea, others referre it to the vocation of the Gentiles. But let vs aduiſe our ſelues well, whether it will not agree better ſo to expound it of Iudeah, that vnder it we alſo comprehend the whole world. For he hath ſo propheſied the deſtruction of the whole world, that in ỹ meane while he ſpared not Iudeah, contrariwiſe in as much as iudgement began at his owne houſe, or ſanctuarie, the waſt of the holie land was foretold in the more lamentable termes, to the end it might ſerue as a ſpeciall example. Hauing therefore aptlie and fitlie begun with Iudea, he now calles all the world a *deſert*, becauſe the wrath of God wholie ouerflowed it as a deluge. I therefore
1 willinglie referre this place to Iudea firſt, and
2 next to other parts of the world: as if he ſhould ſay, When the Lord ſhall haue puniſhed men for their iniquities, and ſhall be auenged vpon the Iewes and Gentiles, then the *deſert* ſhall be conuerted into an habitation, and God ſhall renew the face of the whole earth.

This reſtauration is an excellent teſtimonie of the goodnes of God: for are we not all worthie to periſh, and to be vtterlie conſumed, when we prouoke God by our reuolt, but eſpeciallie thoſe whom he hath adopted for his peculier people? But *Iſaiah* had ſpeciall reſpect vnto the Iewes, leſt they ſhould faint in their ſcattering.

How and when this propheſie ſhall be accompliſhed.

Let vs now ſee how this propheſie was accompliſhed, or when it ſhall be accompliſhed. The Lord began ſome reſtauration of his Church when he brought his people out of of Babylon, but that was but a ſmall beginning: I am not afraid therefore to ſay, that this, and the like places, are to be referred vnto Chriſt and his kingdome: for it can not otherwiſe be vnderſtood nor fulfilled, if we compare other propheſies with this. But whē I ſpeake of Chriſtes kingdome, I vnderſtand not only that which is here on earth, but that alſo which ſhall be accompliſhed at the laſt day, which for this cauſe is called the day of reſtoring & refreſhing, Acts 3. 21. becauſe the faithfull finde no permanent reſt till then. The reaſon then why the Prophets ſpeake ſo magnificallie of Chriſtes kingdome is, in regard that they haue an eie vnto that great and notable day wherein the true and perfect felicitie of the faithfull ſhall be eſtabliſhed.

The Churches reſtauration began in the returne from Babel, proceeded at Chriſtes firſt comming, and ſhall be fullie accompliſhed at his ſecond appearing.

The Prophet therefore hauing ſpoken of theſe horrible diſcomfitures, and hauing likewiſe foretold the miſerable confuſion that ſhould befall the whole world, he now comforts ỹ faithfull by this promiſe, telling them for certaine, that all things ſhall be reſtored. But this is only brought to paſſe by Chriſt, in whom we may be ſaid to be renued and gladed in deed, for he it is who reſtores and puts in order whatſoeuer was and is confuſed: for

out of him, what is there in heauen or in earth but ſtinch, confuſion, and deſtruction. But wee are to note it diligently in the firſt place, that the world was fitted by ſuch chaſtiſements to receiue ſo great a fauour; and that by meanes thereof, this benefit of Chriſt might ſhine themore gloriouſly, which would haue ſeemed but darke and obſcure, if things had been already ſet in perfect order. And therefore it was needfull that the proud and haughtie hearts ſhould be tamed and humbled, that the taſte of this grace and power of Chriſt might be the more welcome.

Verſ. 2. *It ſhall floriſh abundantly, and ſhall greatly reioyce alſo and ſay: the glorie of Lebanon ſhall be giuen vnto it: the beauty of Carmell, and of Sharon; they ſhall ſee the glorie of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.*

HEe now more fully expreſſeth how great the effect of this grace of Chriſt is, by whoſe power and vertue, the things which before were deſolate and in poore eſtate, doe now floriſh. This repetition then ſerues for an amplification: and the verbe twice vſed, may be doubly expounded; that is, either to ſignifie the prolonging of time in the continuall growth: as if he ſhould haue ſaid, It ſhall not floriſh with a tranſitorie beautie, which vaniſheth away by and by, but with a continuall freſhneſſe, ſtedfaſt and permanent, that ſhall neuer fade nor fall: or, to note out the increaſe and continuall, or yeerly growth: for Chriſt inricheth vs, that from day to day he may augment his graces in vs.

The ſimilitudes following, doe further ſet forth this fruitfulneſſe: for hee contents not himſelfe to ſay, that there ſhould be plentiful haruеſt, whereas before it was a wilderneſſe, and that the dry places ſhould wax greene, but hee addes that there ſhall be ſuch a glorie and excellencie, as is in *Libanus*, *Carmel*, and *Sharon*: and albeit *Carmel* ſignifies a field that is tilled and fruitfull, yet here it is a proper name, as the other two be. Now we haue ſeene heretofore, that theſe mountaines were much renowned, and held for the moſt wealthy places of all Iudeah, in regard of their goodly ſituation and abundance of fruits. *Chap. 33. 9.*

They ſhall ſee the glory.] He now expounds that in plaine termes, which before he ſpake figuratiuely. Men are barren and emptie of all good things by nature, till they haue learned to know God aright: and therefore the beginning of our fruitfulneſſe is, that wee haue life put into vs by his preſence, which cannot bee brought to paſſe without an inward feeling of the power of faith. For I make no queſtion, but the Prophet meant to raiſe vp our mindes higher, to the end wee might bee brought to the conſideration of the abundance and fruitfulneſſe of heauenly graces. Men may be filled with bread and wine, and ſuch like, and yet in the meane while may be ignorant that God is the giuer thereof, and therefore ceaſe not to bee miſerable ſtill; nay, which more is, abundance rather blindes them, and oftentimes makes them grow rebellious: but when God manifeſts himſelfe, and cauſeth vs to ſee his *glory* and *excellencie*, it comes to paſſe, that beſides the ſight of theſe bleſſings, we inioy them to our ſaluation.

Verſ. 3. *Strengthen the weake hands, and comfort the weake knees.*

WEe may expound this place generally, as if he ſhould ſay; Let thoſe that feele *their hands weake*, put ſtrength to them, and let thoſe who feele their *knees trembling and weake*, be of good comfort, and be ſtrong: but the verſe following ſhewes, that all this belongs to the Miniſters of the word. For he ſpeakes to the teachers of the Church, & commands them to exhort, to prouoke, and *quicken vp the feeble*, which were weake and fainthearted, to the end hee might make them more conſtant and cheerefull. Now this is brought in to very good purpoſe, becauſe it could not be choſen, but that ſo many ſignes of Gods wrath (of which I.e ſpake before) ſhould not terrifie and make the ſtouteſt of all to tremble. For ſeeing aduerſities doe alwaies caſt vs downe, who is not afraid when God ſhewes himſelfe angry againſt our ſinnes, and proclaimes open war againſt vs? But the Prophet giues them in charge to cheere vp the ſorrowfull hearts, and thoſe that were as good as dead: and in the verſe following hee ſhewes how this ſhould be done.

The Miniſters of the word.

The ſorrowfull hearted ought to be comforted.

Verſ. 4. *Say vnto them that are fearefull; Be you ſtrong, feare not: behold, your God commeth with vengeance, euen with a recompence, and will come and ſaue vs.*

BEcauſe it is God onely who makes his word effectuall in our hearts by his holy Spirit, and puts this *ſtrength* into it, whereof he hath ſpoken, (for by faith onely wee liue and ſtand) therefore *Iſaiah* addes this promiſe, touching the grace that was to come, ſaying, *Behold, your God will come.* In the firſt place we haue to note, that Gods meaning is not to withdraw or keepe his grace in ſecret, but rather that it be publiſhed and communicated to all, to the end *trembling hands* and hearts may be ſtrengthened, and their ſpirits reuiued. This is the onely meanes to inable vs to ſtand in the moſt deſperate tentations: for if wee be not ſet vpon our feete by the word of the Lord, we muſt needes quaile and loſe our hope. The Miniſters haue this charge then; to wit, to comfort the heauy hearted, to confirme the weake, and to ſtrengthen thoſe that are ready to fall.

The efficacie of the word noted.

Wee haue alſo to note of what exceeding force the word is, ſeeing it is able to ſtrengthen the *weake hands*, and to *comfort the feeble knees*: for if it had not power to inſpire this life into men, the Prophet would neuer haue ſpoken thus. And yet, if God ſhould onely

ſmite the eares in ſpeaking, and ſhould not therewithall cauſe the ſame to ſinke into our hearts, all would be to no purpoſe. In that he attributes this efficacie vnto the word then, let vs alſo therein know that it is himſelfe from whom that power proceeds, that ſo it might not be ſpoken fruitleſlie, but might worke inwardlie vpon the conſcience, not at all times, nor vpon all, but then, when it pleaſeth him thus to worke by the ſecret power of his holy ſpirit.

The Lord works not vpon all, nor at all times, inwardly vpon mens conſciences.

Hence we gather, that by the ſame word we be brought into the right way of Gods ſeruice, for without it we ſhould remaine ignorant, all our reaſon would faile, and not only ſtagger, but our infidelitie would make vs become wholie brutiſh. It is more then need then that the Lord ſuccor vs this way, that our feares being appeaſed, & our weaknes ſtrengthened, we may be fitted to walke on in our chriſtian courſe. For if we had theſe words *Feare not, Behold your God*, well fixed in our hearts, all faintings would ſoone vaniſh. Men no ſooner feele that God is neere vnto them, but they caſt away feare, or at the leaſt ſo reſiſt it, that they are not ouercome of it. In nothing be carefull ſaith S. *Paul*, for the Lord is at hand, Philip. 4. 5. and 6. of which ſentéce we haue intreated at large elſewhere. It ſeems alſo that the Apoſtle to the Hebrues alludes to this place, Chap. 12. 3. and 13. where hauing forbidden them to be grieued or diſcouraged with Gods correction, he recites the words of our Prophet, and applies this ſentence to all the faithfull, that ſo they might ſtirre vp themſelues vnto perſeuerance, and conſtantlie to hold out vnto the end, in regard they were to ſuffer many aſſaults.

How to be eaſed of fainting fits.

Neither is it ſuperfluous that the Prophet addes *your God*: for if we be not aſſured that he is *ours*, his *comming* ſhall bring vs terror rather then comfort. Therefore he ſets not God forth here in his Maieſtie, which caſts downe the pride of the fleſh; but his grace which comforts the afflicted & weake. We ſee then it is not without cauſe that he thus adornes God with this title, namely, that he is the protector of the faithfull, to retaine them in ſafetie.

Obiect. If any obiect that God muſt needs be dreadfull when he comes to puniſh in his wrath: Anſ. I anſwere, that this *vengeance* is threatned againſt the wicked, and the enemies of his Church; ſo that albeit it be terrible vnto thé, yet it ſhall bring conſolation to the faithfull. This is the cauſe why he addes, that he will come to *ſaue*: for otherwiſe the Iewes might haue replied, What benefit ſhall the deſtruction of the enemie bring vs? What ſhall we be the better for it? Should wee delight in their calamities? This is the cauſe I ſay why he ſaith expreſſlie, that he will turne this *vengeance* and *recompence* (touching their enemies) vnto their *ſaluation*: for the ſaluation of the godly is alwaies ioined with the puniſhment of the wicked. We ſhewed in the ſeauenth Chapter verſ. 4. how the faithfull are deliuered from perplexed cares by this fauor of God, and by the hope of his defence. For the preſent, let vs obſerue, that God is readie armed with *vengeance*, to the end his children may learne to reſt vpon his help, and not to thinke him idle in the heauens: this is the cauſe of theſe repetitions, for infidelitie hath gotten ſuch faſt rooting in vs, that is not plucked vp by and by.

The punishment of the wicked is alwaies ioined with the ſaluation of the faithfull.

In the end of ỹ verſe there may be a double reading, to wit, either that God ſhall come with a *recompence*, or, that he will come with the recompence of God; chooſe whether of the two you like beſt, for the ſenſe is all one. Notwithſtanding if you reade *Elohim* in the genetiue caſe, Recompence ſhall be called the recompence of God, becauſe it properlie belongs vnto him, that ſo the faithfull may know aſſuredlie that he is no leſſe a *rewarder*, then *God*.

Verſ. 5. *Then ſhall the eies of the blind be lightened, and the eares of the deafe opened.*

6. *Then ſhall the lame man leape as an heart, and the dumb mans tongue ſhall ſing: for in the wildernes ſhall waters * breake out, and riuers in the deſert.* * Or, be digged.

HE ſpeakes ſtill of the promiſe touching the reſtauration of the Church, that he might comfort the harts of the faithfull who ſhould be ſharplie aſſaulted with the grieuous calamities of which he had foretold. Now ſeeing Chriſt is the fountaine from whence this reſtauration ſprings, we muſt of neceſſitie ſtill haue recourſe vnto him, if we will haue the right vnderſtanding of that which *Iſaiah* ſaith in this place, for by him alone it is in deed that we are begotten againe to the hope of the heauenlie life. Now it is not vnlike but our Prophet alludes to the prophcſie which we haue ſeene in the 29. Chapter verſ. 9. 10. where he threatens the Iewes with a fearefull blinding of their eies, and an hardening of their hearts, for which cauſe he here promiſeth that at Chriſtes comming mens mindes ſhall be *enlightened* and cleared by regeneration, whereas before they ſate in darknes.

There is great force in the word *Then*; for thence wee may gather, that being out of Chriſt we are *dumb, blind*, and *lame*: in a word, void of all abilitie to performe any thing that is good; but Chriſt renues vs by his ſpirit, that in him we may recouer our true health.

Being out of Chriſt, we are ſpirituallie blind, dumb, and lame.

By *tongue, eyes, eares*, and *feete*, he meanes all the faculties of our ſoules, which in themſelues are ſo corrupted, that we can not draw thence ſo much as a good thought; till we be made new creatures by the benefit of Chriſt: for our *eies* can not ſee the truth, our *eares* can not vnderſtand it, neither can our *feete* walke in it, vntill we be vnited vnto Chriſt. The *vnderſtandings* of men indeed are very accute in apprehéding miſchiefe, *their tongues* eloquent and prompt vnto ſlanders, periuries, lying, and vaine ſpeach, *their hands* and fingers but too nimble to theft and violence, *their feete* to ſhedding of blood: in a word, all the powers both of ſoule and bodie not only inclined, but

Eyes. Eares. Feet.

We are naturallie prone and wiſe to do euill, but to do well we haue no knowledge. Iere. 4. 22.

but alſo ſet on fire to doe wickedly. But come we to the performãce of that which is good, euery finger is a thumbe, as they ſay. Is it not more then needfull then that wee be reformed by the power of God, that thence wee may beginne to vnderſtand, comprehend, ſpeake, and put in execution thoſe things
1.Cor.12.3. which God hath called vs vnto? for none can ſo much as ſay, that Ieſus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghoſt.

This reformation then we ſee proceedes onely from the grace of Chriſt: thoſe therefore which are conuerted vnto him, doe recouer new ſtrength, whereas before they were wholly vnfruitfull, and as good as dead. For out of him, we are either depriued of all good things; or elſe they are ſo corrupted in vs, that they can be applied to no right vſe, but are rather prophaned by our abuſing of
Mat.1.11.5. & 15.3. them. Ieſus Chriſt hath both fully teſtified and taught the truth of this point, when hee gaue *ſpeech* to the dumbe, *ſight* to the blind, *legs* to the lame and impotent: but that which he did to the body, was but a glimpſe of that which he works much more abundantly and powerfully in our ſoules.

In ſaying that the *waters ſhall be digged out*, he addes other benefits wherewith the faithfull are inriched ſoone after the eſtabliſhing of Chriſt his Kingdome: as if hee ſhould ſay; You ſhall not neede to feare any want, after you be reconciled vnto God through Chriſt; for plentifull and perfect felicitie ſtreames from him vpon vs. But theſe things the Prophet ſets before vs vnder borrowed ſpeeches.

Wee are poore and beggerly, till God inrich vs with Chriſts benefits.

Firſt, he ſaith the *waters* are *digged*. For whereas all things were barren before, now there ſhould be great abundance. How poore and beggerly are we then, vnleſſe God, for the loue which hee beares to Ieſus Chriſt, powres out his bleſſing vpon vs; which Ieſus onely brings with him from his heauenly Father, and then imparts it to the members of his body. I denie not but the wicked thriue wonderfully in outward abundance; but all is accurſed of God; becauſe they are out of Chriſt: from whom onely flowes that true and ſauing influence of all riches. Truly it were much better to wiſh death, rather then the abundance of wine and oyle, with which wee muſt needes ſwallow the curſe of God. When Chriſt then ſhall beginne to manifeſt himſelfe, then ſhall riuers and waters flow forth, to the healthfull vſe of the faithfull.

Death is rather to be wiſhed, then that abundance with which we muſt needes ſwallow Gods curſe.

Verſ. 7. *And the dry ground ſhall be as a poole, and the thirſtie as ſprings of water: in the habitations of dragons, where they lay, ſhall bee a place for reedes and ruſhes.*

HE confirmes the former ſentence; to wit, that Chriſt ſhall come to ſatisfie his choſen with abundance of all good things. Why ſo? Becauſe waters ſhall iſſue and flow out of the *dry ground*. But we muſt remember what I ſaid erewhile; to wit, that the Prophet here deſciphers out vnto vs, an image as it were of euerlaſting happineſſe: for howſoeuer this outward change appeared not viſible to the eye at Chriſts comming; yet *Iſaiah* not without good cauſe affirmes, that vnder his gouernment, all things ſhall be fruitfull: for hee hath ſaid before, that without him all things are accurſed vnto vs. This whole world will bee but as a parched heath and wilderneſſe, where lions, *dragons*, and wild beaſts range after their pray, vntill the kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt bee erected and ſet vp amongſt vs: let it bee once eſtabliſhed; the faithfull ſhall feele no want at all.

The world but a wilderneſſe without Chriſt.
Pſal 67.9.7.
Pſal.34.11.

The Lord did ſet his ſeale to the truth of this doctrin, whē he deliuered his people out of Babylons captiuitie. Yet we are to ſeek the accompliſhment of this prophecie in Ieſus Chriſt, who ſets all things that are out of frame, in their perfect eſtate againe. For that deliuerance was but a darke ſhadow of this; and yet wee are not to ſeeke the full accompliſhment of this promiſe in this world; neither, becauſe as our bleſſednes conſiſts onely in hope, ſo muſt wee frame our mindes to wait for the ſame till the laſt day; when wee ſhall be put into the full poſſeſſion of our happineſſe, which now for the preſent is hidden as it were from vs. It ſufficeth vs that God giues vs ſome ſweete taſte thereof in theſe our conflicting daies, that with the greater affection wee might learne daily to aſpire to that full felicitie which is reſerued for vs in the heauens.

As our full bleſſednes conſiſts in hope, ſo muſt we patiently wait for the ſame till the laſt day.

Verſ. 8. *And there ſhall bee a path way, and the way ſhall bee called holy: and the polluted ſhall not paſſe by it: for he *ſhall be with them, and walke in the way, and the fooles ſhall not erre.*

*Or, ſhall go.

THE Prophet promiſeth the Iewes heere, that they ſhall bee ſet at libertie to returne home againe into their country, to the end that being afterward carried captiue into Babylon, they might not imagin it to be a perpetuall baniſhment. And yet me thinkes this ſentence ſhould extend it ſelfe further. For as heretofore hee promiſed them abun- *Verſ.7.* dance and ſtore of bleſſings, where there was nothing but barrennes; ſo he ſaith now, that the place where none dwelt, ſhall be inhabited and frequented by multitudes. To bee ſhort, that Iudea ſhall be in ſuch league and amitie with other nations, that one of them ſhall mutually paſſe to the other without any danger at all: for where places are not inhabited, what traffique can men haue there? You ſhall ſee no man paſſe to and fro there. He ſaith then it ſhall come to paſſe that the Iewes ſhall haue egreſſe and regreſſe (as we vſe to ſpeake) to traffique with others, after they are come home, and ſhall bee ſetled in their Country.

But it is not without cauſe our Prophet addes, that *the way ſhall be holy*. For where there is much concourſe of people, vices and corruptions haue their ſwinge on euery ſide. How could it bee auoided then, but theſe

great troupes muſt needs pollute the land, yea, and infect one another with a mutuall contagion. The Prophets meaning is then, that not only the land, but the minds of men ſhould be purged and renued by the benefit of Chriſt, that both the one and the other which in times paſt were wont to be prophaned by their vncleanes, ſhould now be ſanctified. And yet we muſt keepe that in minde which I haue touched before, to wit, that the Iewes whoſe *way ſhall be made holy*, ſhould returne into their countrie again to ſerue their Redeemer therein. As if he ſhould ſay, The land ſhall be purged from thoſe filthie ſinkes which in times paſt were in it, that it may be inhabited by the true ſeruants of God.

He ads alſo a more ample expoſition when he ſaith, that *no polluted* ſhall paſſe by this land now hallowed by the Lord for his children. As if he had ſaid, God will ſo ſeparate the faithfull from the prophane, that they ſhall no more be mingled one with another: and this doubtleſſe was to be eſteemed as one of the principall bleſſings that the Church receiued. But this is not accompliſhed in this life, for hypocrits and contemners of God intrude theſelues pell mell into the Church, and many times hold great places in it: and yet we may ſee ſome ſigne of Gods fauor this way, when he takes off the ſcumme from his Church by diuers meanes; only we muſt wait for the full purgation of it vntill the laſt day: yea, euen the ſeruants of God theſelues, who are regenerated by the worke of his holy ſpirit, are yet compaſſed about with many corruptions: for albeit the Lord hath begun to ſanctifie them, yet it ſhall not be perfected in this life: their old man is not whollie mortified, but only tamed and repreſſed to giue way for obedience to the new. Now becauſe the Lord liues and reignes in them, and ſubdues their luſts, they are *called holy*, in reſpect of ỹ principall part of regeneration in them.

The Church ſhall not be fullie purged till the Laſt day.

The elect are called Saints, in regard the principall part is regenerated.

The expoſitors turne the end of the verſe diuerſlie, where he ſaith, *he ſhall goe with them*: for ſome tranſlate, They ſhall walke that way, and ſhall not erre after they haue been accuſtomed to walke in it, no, not they which knew it before others. This way ſhall be for the children of Iſraell, thoſe which walke in it ſhall not erre though they be fooliſh. But me thinks the pronowne demonſtratiue *he*, may better be referred vnto God. As if the Prophet had ſaid, God ſhall goe before you to prepare the way, and the ſcope of the text alſo requires it to be ſo vnderſtood: for it was not enough for them to haue an open way, vnleſſe God went firſt before to direct his choſen. Our Prophet then magnifies this ineſtimable grace, by bringing in *the Lord walking* with his people: for if he ſhew vs not the way we ſhall alwaies erre, being of our ſelus whollie addicted to vanitie. Nay, though the way be plaine, and be before our eies; yet can not wee diſcerne it from that which is crooked: and although we haue made ſome good entrance, yet will our follie carrie vs hither and thither out of it by and by.

But our Prophet relles vs, that we ſhall not neede to feare miſſing of the way when we follow God, whileſt he goes before vs; ſeeing it pleaſeth him to take this office vpon him. It is very likely alſo, that he alludes to the hiſtorie of the firſt deliuerance, becauſe God then led his people in the day vnder the cloude, and in the night vnder a piller of fire, Exod. 12, 21. Therewithall he alſo ſhewes how needfull it is that God ſhould gouerne vs: he alſo taxeth vs all of follie (be wee neuer ſo wiſe in our owne conceit) when he addes that *the fooles ſhall erre no more*: for God lets them wander by crooked paths, which thinke themſelues wiſe enough to be their owne guides: if we therefore deſire to keepe *him in the way with vs*, let vs acknowledge that we ſtand in neede of his direction. In the meane while he offers vs a good recompence when he promiſeth that all ſuch as forſaking their owne counſels ſhal be content to follow him, ſhall not erre in any thing though they be none of the wiſeſt. And yet his meaning is not that the faithfull ſhall remaine *fooles* ſtill after the Lord hath taken them by the hand: but he ſhewes what they were, before God vouchſafed to leade them the right way.

Verſ. 9. *There ſhall be no lyon, nor noyſome beaſts ſhall aſcend by it, neither ſhall they be found there, that the redeemed may walke.*

HE addes yet another fauour of God, and that is, that the people ſhall be deliuered frõ all dangers, though they walked through the deſerts. Before, among other curſes of God he put this; that wild beaſts ſhould meet the Iewes in all places which way ſoeuer they trauailed: but now, being receiued into fauor, they ſhould be aſſailed neither by *lyons*, nor any other cruell beaſts, becauſe God would chaſe them away, that his redeemed might paſſe without hurt or danger. For albeit they had libertie to returne, yet they might well meete with many impediments in the way, and therefore he ſaith, The Lord ſhall remoue all anoyances that might any way ſtop their paſſage. Hence we gather a very neceſſarie doctrine, to wit, that the Lord not only begins the worke of our ſaluation, but cõtinues it vnto the very end, leſt otherwiſe his grace might be fruteleſſe and vaine in vs. *Firſt then he opens the way to giue vs entrance. Secondly, he makes it plaine and eaſie, and takes away all impediments. Thirdly, he goes with, and before vs in the way. Laſtly, he ſo continues forth this grace in vs, that at the laſt he brings vs vnto his perfection.* We muſt make vſe of theſe foure points euery day. For albeit our hearts be ſet (whileſt we liue in this world) to aſpire to our inheritance which is in heauen, yet Satan laies many ſtumbling blocks before vs, and we are inuironed on euery ſide with infinit dangers, but the Lord who hath ſet vs in this way, and goes before vs, leading vs by the hand, will neuer leaue vs in the midway, but wil fullie perfect that vnto the end which he hath begun in vs by his Spirit. We may alſo obſerue, that the mouthes of rauening and wilde beaſts are muſled ſo by the grace of God,

Chap. 30.6.

He that begins a good worke, will accompliſh it vnto the day of Chriſt Philip. 1.6.

1
2
3
4

We ought to make vſe of this doctrine for the whole courſe of our life.

God, they cannot hurt vs, nor exerciſe their crueltie vpon vs; according as it is ſaid in Hoſe. 2. 18. I will make a couenant for you with the *beaſts* of the field, and with the birds of the aire.

Verſ. 10. *Therefore the redeemed of the Lord ſhall returne and come to Zion with praiſe: and euerlaſting ioy ſhall be vpon their heads; they ſhall obtaine ioy and gladneſſe, and ſorrow and mourning ſhall flee away.*

THe Prophet confirmes the former doctrine; to wit, that nothing ſhall hinder the Lord from working the full redemption of his people; becauſe he hath decreed it. He calles them the *redeemed of the Lord:* firſt, that he might prouoke them to the conſideration of his power: ſecondly, that they ſhould not meaſure the promiſe of their returne, by looking vnto humane helpes. Moreouer, hee ſhewes that *they ſhall come to Zion.* Thereby giuing them aſſurance, that God will not bring them out of Babylon, to leaue them in the way. Hence we learne, that we cannot enter into *Zion*, which is the Church, vntill God haue *redeemed vs*: for in this example of the ancient people, we haue a patterne ſet before vs, in which wee may ſee that no man is deliuered from vnder the tyrannie of the diuell (whoſe vaſſals we are all of vs by nature) vntill God haue preuented vs by his grace. For who is ſufficient to be his owne redeemer? Now becauſe the worke of this redemption belongs in particular vnto the kingdom of Chriſt, it thereupon followes, that hee is onely the finiſher of it; as himſelfe ſaith, Iohn 8.36. Againe, it is not enough to be once redeemed: for marke what the end of it is here, to wit, that he might remaine in the Church of God, and grow daily from faith to faith. Hath Chriſt *redeemed vs* then? let vs aime at this marke with all our might.

We cannot enter into the Church till God haue redeemed vs.

If any ſhall reply, that we need not goe far to be receiued into the Church, for wee are brought into it by Baptiſme: I anſwere, the Prophet vnder this figure, ſpeakes of the whole courſe of our life; becauſe the *redeemed of the Lord* are then ſaid to bee truly *come into Zion*, when hauing ended this their pilgrimage, they enter into the poſſeſſion of the heauenly life. We may therewithall alſo note that the more we profit in the grace of God, and proſper in the Church, the neerer we are vnto him.

Obiect.

Anſ.

By the words of *ioy and gladneſſe*, he meanes there ſhall be ſuch felicitie vnder the Kingdome of Chriſt, that we ſhall haue ample matter of reioicing. But wherein doth true ioy and gladneſſe conſiſt? And ſurely the true and onely way to obtaine *gladneſſe*, is to feele that God is reconciled vnto vs, whoſe fauor alone is ſufficient to yeeld vs perfect felicitie; yea ſo far, as to make vs reioyce in tribulation: Rom. 5.1,2,3. Contrariwiſe, what can comfort or glad vs, if God bereaue vs of this reconciliation? Hence wee gather a ſure doctrine; to wit, the faithfull cannot be ſaid to *reioice* as they ought, vnleſſe they ioine *praiſes* vnto God therewith: this ſpirituall *ioy* therefore muſt be diſtinguiſhed from carnall and prophane ioy and delights, into which the wicked plunge themſelues; for they reioice indeed, but the iſſue ſhewes how dangerous this laſciuiouſneſſe of the fleſh is, when wee flatter our ſelues in the contempt of God. It is not without good cauſe therefore that S. *Paul* calles this ioy ſpirituall; for it conſiſts not in the inioying of earthly things, as in riches, honours, treaſures, which periſh and come to nothing in a moment; but this ioy is ſecret, it hath his ſeat in the heart, and out of it can it not be remoued nor taken away by any meanes whatſoeuer, though Satan indeuors with might and maine vpon all occaſions to diſturbe and afflict vs.

And therefore our Prophet addes verie well, that it *is euerlaſting, and driues away all ſorrow*: for albeit the children of God do euery day vndergoe many anguiſhes, yet ſo great is the power of their conſolation which they haue by the Spirit, that in the end it ſwallowes vp all ſorrow and mourning. We glorie, ſaith *Paul*, Rom. 5.3. euen in our tribulations: now this glorying or boaſting cannot be without ioy. The Apoſtles went away *reioicing* from before the Councell, that God vouchſafed them the honour to ſuffer rebuke for the name of Ieſus: Act. 5.41. I grant ỹ faithfull are not exempt vtterly from ſorrow: nay, they are oftentimes plunged in great diſtreſſes: it is moſt true, but they are not ouercome of them, becauſe by faith they looke directly vnto this redeemer, by whoſe power they are more then conquerors. For they may bee compared to one that being gotten vp to the top of ſome high mountaine, beholds the Sunne, and is gladded with the brightneſſe of it; and in the meane while ſhould ſee others vnderneath him below in the vallies, ſo choked and ſtifled with fogges and miſts, that they could not behold this light.

Simile.

The hiſtorie contained in the next Chapter, and that which followes, is as it were a ſeale ſet vnto the former prophecies.

THE XXXVI. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Now in the fourteenth yeere of King Hezekias, Sennacherib King of Ashur came vp against all the strong Cities of Iudah, and tooke them.*

IN this Chapter, and in that which followes, the Prophet recites an excellent historie, which is set 1 as a seale vnto the doctrine of the prophesies before going, touching the afflictions of his people: in which also, God promised to shew them mercy by repulsing the Assyrians, that so hee might deliuer Ierusalem and the holy land out of their hands. By this so manifest an effect then, the people perceiued that the Prophet had not foretold these things in vaine. Furthermore, God had also a 2 purpose to informe the posteritie to come, albeit those, which then liued had no lesse need of such a spectacle then their predecessors. Our Prophet hath often threatned that Gods vengeance was at hand; that the Assyrians taried but till God gaue them a signe to imploy themselues as his scourges in his seruice: on the other side, he published promises of consolation touching the Iewes; to wit, that God would succor them when all things should be brought to an after deale. And these things were all fulfilled, but the greatest part of the people closed their eies, when they should haue beheld these famous iudgements of God: nay, which was worse, they shamefully despised the succour which God offered them. By all which circumstances, their sottishnesse was altogether inexcusable.

The ends and vses of this history. But this serued no doubt for the comfort of the little flocke, who would not by their infidelitie cast disgrace vpon so excellent warnings, but rather by beleeuing, indeuoured to purchase credit vnto them, for their sakes that should succeede. And the Prophet for his part was hereby incouraged to hold on his course with the greater affection, and with the more inuincible constancie, when he saw before his eies, that God did as it were from heauen so gloriously confirme the doctrine which he had preached. And because 3 the truth of God is neuer honoured according as it deserueth, if it bee not furnished with infallible testimonies of his mightie power, he being willing to relieue our infirmitie, makes vs here behold as in a glasse, his workes and word ioined together; so that looke what the Prophet taught vpon earth, God confirmed from heauen. But his calling 4 was then manifestly confirmed indeed, when the Lord deliuered Ierusalem from the siege of *Sennacherib*, all things being then in such a desperate case, that the faithfull could not, but confesse that they were rid out of death by his onely power. Now yee see the reason why I haue said, that this historie is as an authentique seale set to the former doctrines, the which (if it had been wanting) would not haue bin beleeued.

In the fourteenth yeere.] It is not without cause that he notes this circumstance of *time*, in which these things were done. For *Ezechiah* had then established the worshippe of God in his Country: and not content therewith, he had also summoned the Israelites by posts and messengers sent from all parts, with commandement that they should come to Ierusalem to offer sacrifices; to forsake that their long reuolt, that with one consent they might be reunited againe into their most holy faith, & serue God according to his word. Read 2. Chro. 30 31. 32. Chapters. Euen when the Kingdome was brought into this good order; to wit, when superstitions were abolished, the Temple purged, and Gods true worship erected and set vp: *then* came the Assyrians to assaile Iudea, who wasted the Country, tooke the Cities, and subdued the land vnder his command. Ierusalem onely remained, within which *Hezechiah* was mued vp as in a prison. 2. *King.* 18. 4 Note.

Let vs consider a little now in what dumps this good King and his subiects were cast: for if we iudge of this calamity according to reason vnreformed, a man would thinke that God did vniustly suffer his seruant to bee brought into such extremities; because it seemed in some sort, that his godlinesse might deserue protection at Gods hands, and that hee should haue exempted him from all incumbrances; because his whole desire was bent to serue his God purely. For we may wel thinke that God brought not this scourge vpon him now for his negligence, excesse, or wantonnesse; much lesse for his superstitions or idolatry, seeing at the very first entrance into his Kingdome, he imploied himselfe to the vtmost, with exceeding diligence to establish religion in the puritie of it. What was Gods purpose herein then? Surely hee meant to try the faith and patience of his faithfull seruant.

Vers. 2. *And the King of Ashur sent Rabshakeh from Lachish towards Ierusalem vnto King Hezekiah with a great host, and hee stood by the conduit of the vpper poole, in the path of the fullers field.*

THe order of the historie may seeme somewhat here to be altered: for hee said before, that *Sennacherib* had *taken all the Cities of Iudah*: vers. 1. and now hee sends *Rabshakeh* from

from Lachiſh which he had beſieged: Lachiſh was not taken yet then. But we are to note that oftentimes the courſe of an hiſtorie is diſioynted, ſo as that is recited laſt which was done firſt. Beſides the Scripture haue this figure frequēt in them (as in this place) where it is ſaid, that all ỹ ſtrong Cities were taken, although ſome no doubt eſcaped, which *Hezekias* notwithſtāding was vnable to ſuccour. It ſeemed then that the Aſſyrian was become Lord of the whole land, ſeeing nothing was left but Ieruſalem, in which *Hezekiah* was impriſoned.

This hiſtorie is deſcribed more at large in the ſecond booke of Kings 18. & 19. Chapters, where it is ſhewed that *Hezekiah* vſed all the meanes he could to redeeme his peace, for he would haue had it almoſt vpon any condition. He gaue 3000. talents of ſiluer, and 30. of gold, which this tyrant exacted, for payment whereof, he was driuen to rob the Temple of the veſſels that were in it, and of the plates of gold which were faſtned vpon the gates thereof, becauſe his owne treaſure was ſpent. But as ſuch inſatiable gulfes can neuer be filled, ſo when he had receiued this money he then falles to demaund greater things, and impoſed vpon him harder conditions then the former, that he might vex and afflict this good King to ỹ full. For hauing once wrought vpō his mildnes, he thought the ſecond time to draw him to whatſoeuer himſelfe liſted, only he waited for fit opertunitie to begin warres afreſh.

But the people no doubt for their parts had well deſerued to be thus ſcourged for their wickednesſes, according as it had been before propheſied: for albeit religion floriſhed in outward ſhew, yet their liues remained vnchanged, impietie ouerflowed, and their hearts were as foule within as euer they were before. For as much as the people repented not of their ſinnes then, was it not needfull they ſhould be chaſtiſed with the greater ſeueritie in regard of ſuch a malitious obſtinacie? But becauſe the meaſure of their iniquities was not yet full, God pacified the rigor of his wrath, and gaue them an admirable deliuerance when all things were become vtterlie deſperate.

Verſ. 3. *Then came forth vnto him Eliakim the ſonne of Hilkiah, the ſteward of the houſe, and Shebna the Chancellor, and Ioah the ſonne of Aſaph the Recorder.*

MEntion was made of this *Eliakim* in the 22. Chapter: to him the Lord promiſed the chiefe place in the kingdome after the death of *Shebna*. But it ſeemes this was but a vaine and idle promiſe, ſeeing he is ſent to the enemie to ſue for fauour, as one, being readie to yeeld and ſubmit himſelfe to the mercie of ſuch a cruell Tyrant. This might alſo aſtoniſh the hearts of the faithfull, euen to make them call the truth of Gods promiſes into queſtion. Beſides, this good king was ſo deſtituted of good ſeruants, that he was conſtrained to ſend *Shebna* with the reſt, though he knew him to be a diſloyall traytor. The word *Sopher* ſignifies a Scribe, and therfore it is often taken for Teachers, or ſuch as are learned: ſometimes for thoſe that keepe bookes, and haue the diſpoſing of the rowles or charters of Kingdomes. I haue tranſlated it *Chancellor*: for it can not be referred to the knowledge of the Law: we may alſo gather that this *Shebna* was in great credit, though he were put from the eſtate of being ſteward, or great maſter of the kings houſhold. The word *Mazkir* ſignifies a ſecretarie, or a maſter of the requeſts.

Verſ. 4. *And Rabſhekeh ſaid vnto them, Tell you Hezekiah * I pray you, Thus ſaith the great king, the king of Aſhur, What confidence is this wherein thou truſteſt?*

* This clauſe I pray you, is not in Maſter Calvins text.

THe Prophet ſhewes that theſe three Ambaſſadors (which repreſented in a maner the whole ſtate of the kingdome) were not only repulſed, but receiued diſgracefullie, & galled with inſupportable iniuries by the Captaine of this Tyrant. For he is ſo impudent as to aske how *Hezekias* durſt preſume to rebell, no leſſe then if he had bin a man conuinced of Rebellion. Some expound the particle *Na, I pray you*, but it can not well ſtand with the honor (as you would ſay) of ſo proud and inſolent a Tyrant, to come vnto them by way of intreatie. He ſpeakes rather like thoſe who impoſe conditions vpon others, who are either vanquiſhed, or are readie to yeeld themſelues for feare, whome ſuch are minded to receiue to mercie, which we commonlie call, *Sommer*, that is, To call vpon, or To Summon one. But that his Summons might be of the greater authoritie, this Captaine ſpeakes in the perſon of his *King*: and with big words ſets forth his *greatnes*; the rather to daunt the heart of *Hezekias*, when he ſhould heare he had to deale with ſo *powerfull* an enemie. For his meaning was not only to ſay that *Hezekiah* was farre inferior to his Maſter the chiefe Monarch of the world; in compariſon of whom, *Hezekiah* was to be eſteemed no better then a meane Gentleman: but he calles him the *great King*, *the King of Aſhur*; that by theſe titles of his power and magnificence he might as it were darken the glorie of all other Kings, that ſo all might ſeeme to reſt in him alone. Which thunderbolts had bin ſufficient to haue terrified and feared the heart of *Hezekiah*, eſpeciallie ſeeing he was mued vp, as I ſaid before, within the walles of the Citie, out of which he could not eſcape; much leſſe was he any way able to make his partie good againſt the violence of this Tyrant.

Verſ. 5. *I ſay, * Surely* I haue *eloquēce*, but *counſell & ſtrength* are *for the warre: on whom then doeſt thou truſt, that thou rebelleſt againſt me?*

* Or, they are but words of the lips.

WHereas we reade in the holie hiſtorie, *Thou haſt ſaid*, it may be expounded

thus, to wit, that *Rabshekeh* makes as if hee knew *Hezekiah* his thoughts: as if hee should say; Thus thou deliberatest with thy selfe. But the sense comes all to one, though we reade this word in the first person: for *Rabshekeh* speakes as one that had gaged the depth of *Hezekias* his enterprises, and had been made acquainted from point to point with all his purposes; and therfore scoffingly reproching him, saith, I perceiue thy consultations well enough: but alas! they are but *vvords of the lippes*.

Now this clause is diuersly expounded: some reade, Thou saiest thou hast not the words of the lips onely: that is, thou braggest not onely of eloquence, but of courage and counsell. Others, Thou hast speech indeed, but counsell and strength are fit for war. But I approue not of them who take *vvords* for praiers; for that would bee a sense constrained, and too far fetched.

Thus vnderstand it then; *Hezekias hath words of the lippes*: that is to say, *hee tickles your eares with goodly discourses and sweete promises, to keepe you from reuolting: he hath indeed plentie of words, as they say, but of vs hat value are they to wage warre against a mightie potentate?* as if he should say; I am not ignorant what *Hezekiah* doth, nor vpon what principles he staies himselfe, euen vpon *sweete wordes*: but these are nothing worth to wage warre withall; for counsell and strength are needfull for that. It may also be well referred to the Egyptians: as if hee should say; that *Hezekias* plaied the foole to suffer himselfe to bee gugled with faire promises. For we need not doubt but the Egyptians were forward enough in promising mountaines and wonders, although they were slow enough in performing anie thing. But forasmuch as he will speake of this matter anon, I willingly thinke that he derides *Hezekias*, as one who being stript of all furniture fit for warre; onely entertained his people with wordes full of vaine boasting.

Vers. 6.

Vers. 6. *Loe, thou trustest in this broken staffe of reede on Egypt; whereupon if a man leane, it will goe into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh King of Egypt, vnto all that trust in him.*

IT is very likely that this is distinguished from the former sentence. For hauing said that *Hezekias* entertained his people onely with glozing and flattering words, & thence concluding that his confidence was vaine: he comes now to other particulars, and indeuors by all meanes to weaken the hearts of the people, that by the discouraging of them, he might with the greater facility cause them to yeeld. Firſt, he labours then to bring the King into disgrace with his subiects: secondly, he awakens the hearts of the subiects, by telling them that the helpes vpon which they relied concerning Egypt, should no way help them; and therefore they were very vnwise to expect any succour thence.

1 2

First, he compares Egypt to *a staffe of reede*; because of their weakneſſe: then by way of amplification he addes, that it is *broken*: thirdly, that it is so far from staying him that *leanes* vpon it, that it will rather *pierce his hand*. The summe of all which is, that the confidence which the Iewes had in the Egyptians, should not onely be frustrate, but also hurtfull. And no doubt but *Rabshekeh* had had good cause thus to tax them, if *Hezekias* had indeed relied vpon the Egyptians. But he falsly & shamefully accuseth this good King of that whereof he neuer had so much as a thought. And yet God in the meane while paied this rude and rebellious people home with this reproch, which they worthily deserued, in suffering so wretched a caitife, thus to scorne their reuolt and disloialtie. Our Prophet had sharply censured this offence before, but his reprehensions were reiected; euery one turned away his eares: was it not good reason then that the Iewes, who so vnworthily disdained the Prophet, speaking vnto them in the name of God, should be sent to schoole to such a Master as railing *Rabshekeh* was.

1 2 3

They that cannot indure to heare Gods voice in the ministerie of his word, shall be forced to heare of the same things by such as shall be little to their liking.

By this example we are admonished, that it is no maruell if at some time vnbeleeuers (who cast off the counsel of God, which tends to their saluation, setting light by all prophecies) bee forced to heare these and the like flouts from their enemies, with which *Rabshekeh* the Captaine of the Kings armie heere proudly and disdainfully scornes the Iewes. Also we may see how great difference there is betweene the admonitions of the Lord, and the reproches of Satan. When God would withdraw our mindes from trusting in the arme of flesh, he pronounceth this generall curse; Woe be to him that trusts in man. That all the world being brought to nothing, wee might content our selues with him alone. But to encourage those whom before he had cast downe, hee sets this remedie before them; *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, &c.* Ier. 17. 5. & 7. Contrariwise, Satan accusing vs for our vaine hopes, therewithal sollicites vs vnto dispaire, drawes vs from euill to worse; and in the end, to vse vnlawfull meanes, as *Rabshekeh* heere doth; who scornes the hope which the Iewes had in the Egyptians helpe, that hee might bring them from that to rest vpon God onely: but hee puts the Assyrians betweene, as if saluation could appeare from no place elsse. He names *Pharaoh*, but he also comprehends all Egypt.

What difference there is betweene the Lords admonitions and Satans reproches.

Vers. 7. *But if thou say vnto me, We trust in the Lord our God, is not that he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah tooke downe, and said to Iudah and to Ierusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar.*

Rabshekeh vseth an argument which consists of these three members; to wit, either *Hezekiah* thinks himselfe strong enough

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to reſiſt, or hee lookes for helpe from Egypt, or, he truſts in God. If he reſt vpon his owne ſtrength, it is his folly; for what is he in comparison of my maſter? As for Egypt, let him neuer expect helpe thence, but rather hurt and loſſe. His onely ſtay that he reſts vpon, muſt be *the helpe of God*; but hath he not ouerthrowne his altars, and aboliſhed his ſeruice? will hee not therefore rather puniſh then helpe him? *Rabſhekeh* then in a word ſtrips this good King at once, of all ſuccour both of God and man. Satans drift in this, was not onely to pierce the heart of the King, and to ouerwhelme him vnder the burthen of this affliction; but alſo to ſtir vp the Commons (who commonly are factious and inconſtant) to rebellion. Many whereof no doubt yet doted vpon their old ſuperſtition, and would eaſilie haue been drawne to a reuolt by this ſubtile deuice; becauſe the ancient religion forſooth, which had long cuſtome ioined with it, was now changed by *Hezekias*, who in their conceit was iuſtly puniſhed for his raſhneſſe. For example, if any thing now fall out otherwiſe then well, the Papiſts by and by cry out with open throats, that it is a iuſt vengeance of God vpon vs, becauſe we haue beene ſo bold to aboliſh their traditions and ceremonies, receiued for ſo many hundred yeeres.

Verſ. 8. *Now therefore giue hoſtages to my Lord the King of Aſſur, and I will giue thee two thouſand horſes, if thou be able for thy part to ſet riders vpon them.*

HIs concluſion is, that *Hezekias* ſhall doe beſt to yeelde himſelfe without trying it out by fight, and to promiſe obedience for euer vnto the Aſſyrian. Which, that he may the rather perſwade him vnto, hee caſts his *powerſie* againe in his teeth. As if hee ſhould ſay; *If I ſhould giue thee two thouſand horſes, were thou able to furniſh them with ſufficient riders amongſt all thy people?* For hee offers him not horſes by way of honor, or that he meant in good earneſt ſo to doe; but rather to afflict and wound the heart of this good Prince. The clauſe, *I will giue thee*, muſt be thus reſolued; *Although I ſhould giue thee* two thouſand horſe, yet were not thou able to finde horſmen enough for them. I am not ignorant what the expoſitors write vpon this place: but whoſoeuer ſhall conſider euery circumſtance well, will eaſilie iudge that this was ſpoken in contempt.

Verſ. 9. *For how canſt thou deſpiſe any Captaine of the leaſt of my Lords ſeruants, and put thy truſt on Egypt for chariots and horſmen?*

HEe now confirmes the former ſentence, & ſhewes that *Hezekias* is ſo far off from reſiſting the power of *Sennacherib*, that hee is ſcarſe worthy to be compared with the leaſt of his Captaines. But what is the reaſon that he lifts himſelfe thus arrogantly? No doubt becauſe the Iewes ſhould not preſume any thing at all in regard of the abſence of the King of Aſſur, who was now beſieging Lachiſh. For albeit he was not yet come with all his hoſt, *Rabſhekeh* brags notwithſtanding, that his *Leiftenants* are ſtrong enough; to the end *Hezechias* and the people might without delay yeelde themſelues vnder his obedience.

Verſ. 10. *And am I come now vp without the Lord to this land to deſtroy it? The Lord ſaid vnto me; Goe vp againſt this land and deſtroy it.*

NOw he ſets vpon *Hezekias* another way; namely, that he ſhall aſſemble his forces in vaine, together for his defence. For he pretends that the King hath not now to deale with a mortall man like himſelfe, but rather with *God himſelfe*; becauſe he is come vp to deſtroy the land of Iudeah at his appointment. As if he ſhould haue ſaid; As many of you as ſhall reſiſt me, ſhall reſiſt God: and then your reſiſtance will be to ſmall purpoſe. Hence let vs learne, that albeit we be giuen to piety, faithfully indeuouring by all means to aduance the Kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, yet wee muſt not looke for all that to be exempt from all croſſes, but rather to fit our ſelues for the bearing of them. For the Lord will not alwaies crowne our vertuous life with earthly rewards: truly ſuch recompences were vnfitting for vs. As namely, abundance of riches, inioying of outward peace, and hauing all things that heart can wiſh. For are not the wicked therefore eſteemed the onely happy men in the eies of the world, becauſe they are frolike, quiet, healthfull, and haue the world at will. Thus then it might ſeeme that our condition ſhould be no better then theirs.

God crownes not vertue alwaies with earthly honours.

But it behoues vs alwaies to ſet this example of good King *Hezekias* before our eies, who after he had wholly bent himſelfe to reforme religion, and to ſet vp the pure worſhip of God, was yet ſharply aſſailed with afflictions, ſo far forth, as he was not far off from deſpaire; to the end, that when we ſhall think we haue done much, wee be ſtill ready notwithſtanding to ſuſtaine all ſorts of combates and perſecutions. Neither to be out of heart, if at the firſt our enemies be too hard for vs; in ſuch wiſe, that we looke euerie moment to bee ſwallowed vp aliue of them. For theſe great crackers, and haughtie ſpirits, will eaſilie bee taken downe, after they haue caſt vp their firſt bubbles: yea, after they haue ſpit forth their venom, all their pride will quickly vaniſh and come to nought.

Note.

Rabſhekeh magnifies the greatneſſe and power of his King, to affright the heart of King *Hezekias*, ſee I pray you what courſe the wicked ſort takes with vs: they aſſaile vs by threats, they labour to ſhake our faith and patience by many feares; or rather, Satan himſelfe doth it indeede in their perſons. For who ſees him not ſpeaking heere in the

Satan ſpeaks by the mouth of Rabſhekeh.

the perſon of this railing miſcreant? Nay, which more is, he takes vnto him euen the *perſon of God* himſelf, and ſo transformes himſelfe into an Angell of light. For what ſaith the Holy Ghoſt in other places? He that reſts vpon the help of man, ſeeks his owne deſtruction, becauſe man is a thing of nought, weake and brittle. Doth not *Rabſhekeh* affirme the ſame here? Speakes he any otherwiſe then if he were a Prophet ſent of God? It behoues vs therefore wiſely to diſtinguiſh betweene the voice of God, and men, who deck and adorne themſelues with his name vnder falſe pretences, for the Deuill can turne himſelfe into many ſhapes, that he may appeare in the likenes of God. But this rayler had no cauſe at all to reproach *Hezekias* with this, as hath been ſaid: for he truſted not in his forces, neither was he puffed vp in any confidence of the ſtrength of Egypt.

2.*Cor.*11.14

*Iere.*17.5.

We muſt wiſely diſtinguiſh betweene the voice of God, and the voice of mẽ.

It is the portion of the faithfull to be railed vpon when they do the moſt good.

But it is our portion euen then to be railed on when we doe the moſt good. Satan hath skill enough in deed to aſſaile vs by ſuch engins, and cauſleſſie to make vs ſtinke as it were in the preſence of men, which I confeſſe is a very dangerous temptation; for we deſire to maintaine our credits with men, and are much offended when they take that in euill part which is done with an honeſt and vpright affection; and therefore Satan labors in nothing more, then by ſlanders to caſt diſgrace vpon that which we haue done with pure conſciences, for either he forgeth againſt vs ſome crime whereof we are innocent, or chargeth vs with falſhood, imputing things vnto vs which we neuer meant. But our integritie muſt be vnto vs as a braſen wall, whereby we may remaine vnmoueable, as *Hezekias* here doth againſt all ſuch accuſations and ſlanders.

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The integritie of the faithfull ought to be vnto them as a wall of braſſe, to fortifie them with inuincible conſtancie.

As touching the latter member of this ſentence, wherein *Rabſhekeh* taxeth the King, becauſe he had aboliſhed Gods true worſhip: who ſees not that this is a meere ſlander. *Hezekias* had indeed ouerthrowne the Idols, and the Idolatrie which God abhorred. But what maruell is it if the Infidels know not how to diſtinguiſh betweene the falſe god and the true, betweene religion and ſuperſtition? but we haue too much experience of this euen amongſt our ſelues. For the Papiſts who are plunged ouer head and eares in their ſuperſtitions, accuſe vs for aboliſhing infinite humane traditions, and complaine that we haue almoſt cleane ouerthrowne Gods whole ſeruice, and thus they ſtand railing at vs as this *Rabſhekeh* doth. Should God helpe theſe heretiques who haue deſtroyed his Altars, profaned his Temples and all things elſe, which were by vs ſet vp in ſuch a decent and goodly order? For the Papacie was all glorious without, euery one admired it: but alas, we retaine nothing but a few bare and naked ceremonies altogether without pomp. Will you ſee the reaſon then why they thinke the ſeruice of God is ouerthrowne? It is becauſe they meaſure it by outward things. Therefore when any aduerſitie befalles vs, then by and by they crie out: nay, it is well enough, all the fault is in thẽſelues. Theſe heretiques haue brought the whole world vnto ruine by their hereſies. And if they ſee vs plunged into any miſerie, then they open their mouthes wider againſt vs then euer before. Yet muſt we ſtill remaine ſtrong in the faith againſt ſuch horrible outcries, and muſt alſo let them know, that that which they pretend to be the ſeruice of God, is not; but is rather meere dotages, which we haue worthelie aboliſhed: yea, we muſt not let to tell them, that all ſuch things as haue been forged in mans braine appertaines not at all to Gods worſhip, but are to be eſteemed as the illuſions of Satan, being of all other things the moſt dangerous. We ought then as you ſee to ſtand out with an inuincible faith againſt all ſorts of theſe imputations, whereby Satan indeuors to darken and ſmother the light of true religion.

Vnbeleeuers know not how to diſtinguiſh betweene religion and ſuperſtition.

The raylings of Papiſts.

But one might haue thought it ſtrange at the firſt bluſh, that *Hezekias* had ouerthrowne all the Altars but one; and prophaned all the Temples, only one excepted: but this only defence may ſerue in ſtead of many, that nothing was done for which he had not good warrant out of Gods word; and therefore was he contented with one Altar, becauſe God had forbidden them to erect many: he brake downe all the Images, becauſe they had been vnaduiſedlie erected and ſet vp, againſt the doctrine of the law. We at this day haue the ſame difference with the Papiſts, for they blame vs for nothing more, then that wee haue caſhered an infinite number of their bald Ceremonies, and haue only retained thoſe things which God hath ordeined. But in this matter we are not to diſpute to nor fro touching ŷ which may pleaſe mẽ; but rather how we may approue our actions vnto God.

2.*King.*18.4 *Exod.*20.4.

Verſ. 11. *Then ſaid Eliakim, and Shebna, and Ioah, vnto Rabſhekeh, Speake I pray thee to thy ſeruants in the Aramits language (for we vnderſtand it) and talke not with vs in the Iewes tongue, in the audience of the people that are on the wall.*

WEE further ſee by this circumſtance how farre *Hezekias* abaſed himſelfe, whilſt he ſought by *mild intreaties* vnto *the ſeruãs* of his enemie, *by his Embaſſadors*. Secondly, the pride of *Rabſhekeh*, in reiecting ſo curriſhlie theſe humble requeſts. Thirdly, the indignitie of ſuch a refuſall, which is the greater, in regard the ſute was for the obteining a thing of ſo ſmall importance. Hereby it is manifeſt that *Hezekias* was ſo carefull to appeaſe the rage of this Tyrant, that almoſt quite forgetting his royall dignitie, he endeuored to pacifie him with as lowly termes as was poſſible: if we be therefore wrongfullie oppreſſed, let vs not thinke much to part with ſome of our right in giuing ſoft anſwers.

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Verſe 12.

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Now in that he thus humbled himſelfe in the ſenſe of his owne weakenes, becauſe he was vnable to reſiſt the Aſſyrian, it ſerues greatlie for the ſetting forth of Gods glorie, becauſe he ſaued this people as it were our

Hezekias his example worthie our imitation.

of

of the lions iawes: for this deliuerance had neuer been ſo glorious, if they had bin freed onely from ſome pettie danger. But ſeeing they were at the pits brinke, the power of God ſhines ſo much the more, in that by ſo rare a miracle he chaſed away and diſcomfited the enemie, who now had put his knife to their throats as it were.

The Ambaſſadors beſought *Rabſhekeh* that he would not ſpeake thus before the people; becauſe they were naturally mutable and inconſtant, and therefore might ſuddenly be drawne to reuolt: ſecondly, they were timerous, and therefore would quickly tremble euen at the ſhaking of a leafe: and therefore they requeſt *Rabſhekeh* not to ſpeake in the Iewes language, for they ſought nothing elſe but how they might find a fit meanes to redeeme their peace. This good King likewiſe did all hee could to appeaſe the rage of the tyrant, but to no purpoſe; for the Ambaſſadors obtained nothing of *Rabſhekeh*. The more he intreated, the fiercer grew hee, and ouerflowed in all pride, as the propertie of the inſolent is to doe.

Verſ. 12. *Then ſaid Rabſhekeh; Hath my maſter ſent mee to thy maſter, and to thee to ſpeake theſe words, and not to the men that ſit on the wall, that they may eate their owne dung, and drinke their own piſſe with you?*

WE ſee here the madneſſe and wouluiſhneſſe of this tyrant: whence alſo wee may perceiue, that the ſtate of King *Hezekias* was in great danger. For *Rabſhekeh* ſpeakes here like a conqueror, and behaues himſelfe towards *Hezekias*, as if hee had been no King at all, but rather his vaſſall or ſlaue. In that we ſee him then thus ſwollen with pride, we muſt needes thinke that *Hezechias* on the other ſide was not a little caſt downe, euen as one ouerwhelmed with ſorrow, and left deſtitute of all ſuccour: ſo as both in his owne, and all mens iudgements elſe, there was no way but one with him. Let vs alſo gather hence, that *Rabſhekeh* was not ſent thither to offer any conditions of peace, but rather to receiue the King to mercie, and to terrifie the people; for the bringing whereof to paſſe, *Sennacherib* had giuen him a puiſant armie.

Hee alſo makes his bragges, that he hath not to doe with the King, ſo much as with the people; to whom he ſpake forſooth for their benefit and commoditie. Now that hee might make them quake and tremble yet more, he ſets before them the *miſeries* and calamities into which they plunged themſelues, if they harkened vnto *Hezechias*; to wit, that they muſt needes *die for hunger*; becauſe the extremitie would be ſo great, that of force they ſhal be conſtrained to eate *their owne dung*, and to *drinke their owne piſſe*. They ſhould therefore ſhew themſelues wiſe, and ſuch as had care of their owne ſafetie, if they forthwith yeelded themſelues to his mercie.

Verſ. 13. *So Rabſhekeh ſtood and cried with a lowd voice in the Iewes language, and ſaid; Heare the words of the great King, of the King of Aſſur.*

THe Propher ſhewes by what practiſes *Rabſhakeh* indeuoured to diſcourage the hearts of this people. And firſt hee telles vs that he ſpake in the *Iewes language*, notwithſtanding that the Ambaſſadors had beſought him to ſpeake in the Aramites. Now it muſt needs be a great corasiue to the hearts of the faithfull, to heare this holy tongue, which was dedicated to the myſteries of heauenly wiſdome, to be thus prophaned and proſtituted to ſuch horrible blaſphemies: neither could it be auoided, but this tentation ſhrewdlie ſhaked the vnfirme and weake. But hence we may note, that there are no enemies more noiſome then thoſe that ſpeake in our owne tongue. Of which, we haue experience now in very many who learne our tongue, that is to ſay, our manner of ſpeech; that they may the better inſinuate themſelues into the eares of the ſimple and ignorant, to turne them away from the truth. *Verſe* 11. No enemies worſe then thoſe that ſpeake out owne language.

Thirtie yeeres agoe the Papiſts had a barbarous language, vtterly eſtranged from the ſtile of the holy Ghoſt: there was ſcarcely to be heard amonſts them, one word that ſauored any thing at all of Chriſtianitie: but now they haue learned to varniſh ouer their blaſphemies with the language of Canaan, that ſo we might take them for honeſt men. And thus wee ſee the diuell hath filed and furbuſhed their tongues; for he is their father and inſtructer, as hee was in times paſt vnto *Rabſhekeh*. Note.

When it is ſaid, he *ſtood vp*, it is to ſet forth the pride and inſolencie of this varlet, for his outward geſtures manifeſts ſufficiently how arrogantly he behaued himſelfe. No doubt he *ſtood* before; but now hee raiſeth vp himſelfe, to be the better ſeene and feared of the Iewes. And hauing yet once againe told them the *greatneſſe* of *his King*, he addes vnto it the meſſage with which he was ſent. For it is one of Satans policies with high wordes to ſet forth the power of our aduerſaries, and to make the dangers ſeeme greater then they be indeed, to bring vs out of heart: for wee faint by and by, as ſoone as our eies are but a little dazeled with the glory of earthly things. Againſt it therefore we are to oppoſe the power of God, which will be ſufficient to arme vs with ſtrength, againſt all the powers of darkneſſe. The enemies ceaſe not to brag proudly, euen with open mouth of their greatneſſe and power, and ſcorne our feebleneſſe and weakneſſe; but if the Lord be with vs, what ſhould aſtoniſh vs? Satans policie.

Verſ. 14. *Thus ſaith the King; Let not Hezekiah deceiue you: for he ſhall not be able to deliuer you.*

IN giuing to his Maſter the title of a *King*, he ſpeakes of *Hezekias* as if hee were but ſome

some common person, and giues him no title at all. Also, not content to continue his slanders against this good man, he now disgorgeth his venome euen against God himselfe, calling the trust & confidence which *Hezekias* had in his fauor, (whereunto he also exhorts all his) nothing but impostures and deceipts.

Slanders of the Papists.

Wee at this day are assailed with the like slanders of the Papists, when they say, we do nothing else but seduce and leade men into perdition, by teaching thé to trust perfectlie in one only God. But we neede not maruell much if they cast those reproches vpon vs which were cast vpon this good King, seeing they proceed from the same author and father of lies, euen the Deuill. Where he saith, *Ezekias is vnable to deliuer his people*, it was very true in deed, vnlesse God did also put to his hand. Neither did *Hezekias* attribute this vnto himselfe, to rob God of his honor: but freelie protested, that his owne safetie, and the safetie of his people depended vpon God only. But it was needful that this aduersarie should disguise his words, as the wicked doe at this day, whé they meane to defame our doctrine, for they forge faire and goodlie pretexts to make our words heretical in shew, so as they easily deceiue the hearers, vnlesse they haue their eies in their heads, to consider of all things wisely.

Vers. 15. *Neither let Hezekiah make you to trust in the Lord saying, The Lord will surely deliuer vs: this Citie shall not be giuen ouer into the hand of the King of Ashur.*

NOw *Rabshekeh* recites *Hezekias* his exhortation, by which he encoraged the people, and addes his refutation, as if it had been but a vaine speech, euen the inuentions of his owne braine: whence it appeares, that the wicked make none account at all of the power of God, although they can speake of it to serue their owne turne. For albeit he denies not plainly that God is able to help his people if he would, but makes them beleeue he is angrie with them, and therefore is their enemie, yet in ouerthrowing their faith (as much as in him lies) he abolisheth the power of God, because his meaning was so to smite the hearts of this poore people with terror, that they should be constreined through despaire to subiect themselues to the lawes of this victorious Tyrant.

Moreouer, by another subtletie he also indeuors to wring frō them their trust in Gods help, in that he allures them as we shall see in the next verse with promises of inioying plétie and ease. For what is able to worke in vs a desire to reuolt from God sooner, then whé we are drawne thereunto with the shew of profit and pleasure. If the world begins once to smile a little vpō vs, and to glad our hearts, then behold the hope of eternall life begins forthwith to vanish, for our senses alwaies dote vpon presens things. *Rabshekeh* hauing armed himselfe with this engin, giues them this admonition, Depend not vpon vncertaine hopes, rather take that which is certaine. This maner of speech hath great efficacie in it to allure vs to a reuolt. For men are apt to nothing more, then to be possessed of that which may bring them profit: and it is exceeding irksome and tedious vnto them to be deferred, or to hang in suspence, so as to preferre the good which is yet farre off, before the commodities which are before their eies. See *Rabshekehs* argument then: *Hezekias* promiseth you help from God, *but you see no such matter*: he therefore seekes to captiue your wits in the expectation of things vncertaine: but the *King* my Master will not only promise, but wil performe in giuing you those things which you see. This might seeme to be a very strong argument. But let vs finde out the fallacie, for Satan is often wont by such sleights to turne vs from depending vpon Gods prouidence.

Wee must walke by faith, and not by sight. 2. Cor. 5. 7.

The Lord calles vs to the hope of eternall life which as yet is hidden from vs: (for we hope for the things which wee see not.) Hee promiseth that he will be our Sauiour: in the meane while he suffers vs to languish and faint many times, so as it seemes all our hope is but in vaine, if we only keepe our eies fastned to the estate of present things. Satan sets now vpon vs, and thus begins to whisper in our eares. And why doest thou hope thus in vaine? What is the fruite of thy faith? What expects thou out of this world? In a word, we must be armed to wrestle thus against Satan euery day. When Christ calles vs to heauen, Satan indeuors to hold vs groueling to the earth. We must therefore stick close to the promises which are set before vs, that hoping aboue hope, we may stand fast in the Lord, and neuer suffer our selues to be seduced nor withdrawne from trusting in him by any allurements whatsoeuer.

Rom. 8. 25.

Wee haue need to put on the whole armor of God. Ephes. 6. 11.

Vers. 16. *Hearken not to Hezekiah, for thus saith the king of Ashur, * Make appointment with me, and come out to me, that euery man may eate of his owne vine, euery one of his owne fig-tree, and drinke euery man the water of his owne well.*

* Or, make a blessing.

WHilest he deuiseth how to estrange the peoples hearts from *Hezekias*, he therewithall entiseth thé vnto present pleasures, that they may quite forget God, and wait no longer vpon him. As if he should say, Trust not in God, Trust rather in my King. See how Satan playes the Sophister: for in darkening Gods goodnes by his fogges and mists, and masking vs with vailes of false hopes, he sets vp the creatures in stead of the Creator, to wrap vs vp in his nets.

Well, *Rabshekeh* presents *profit*, *pleasure*, and *ease* before them by this vaine brag; to wit, God offers you benefits, but they are far off: I haue mine here in mine hand. Now albeit he vseth *Hezekias* his name here, yet vpon the matter, the comparison stands betweene God and the Assyrians. For *Hezekiah* being indeed the true seruant of God, he played not the hypocrite in boasting of his trust and confi-

dence

dence falſly: but reſting vpon the immutable and vnchangeable promiſes, hee faithfully exhorted the people (as his dutie was) to reſt quietly vpon God. Contrariwiſe, *Rabſhekeh* clothes his *King* with Gods ſpoiles as it were, and as the ſeruant and vaſſall of the diuell, indeuoured to withdraw the peoples minds from their true allegeance vnto God, to all impietie.

To make bleſſing with him, ſignifies friendly to pacifie: as if he ſhould ſay; Fight not, venture not your ſelues that way; but yeeld your ſelues, and ſubmit you freely to my King. Now *Sennacherib* not onely craues *audience*, but would alſo haue them to do homage and fealtie; which that he might the better draw them vnto, hee couers this odious terme of *ſeruitude*, with the word *bleſſing*. Hee counſels them to redeeme their peace and other commodities, which they inioied before at his hands, by this woſull reuolt; to wit, that they ſhould forſake *Hezekias* to cleaue vnto him. Now it was the moſt ſeruile and miſerable condition that might be, to forſake this good King whom God had eſtabliſhed, who alſo bare the image of Chriſt: for what was it elſe but to renounce God himſelfe, who had erected and ſet vp in the middeſt of them this ſigne of his heauenly fauour?

Verſ. 17. *Till I come and bring you into a land like your owne land*, euen *a land of wheat and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.*

NOw hee addes a condition much more vile then the former: for he ſhewes that peace can no way be procured with *Sennacherib*, but by yeelding themſelues vnto *baniſhment*. And what was that but to forſake Gods true worſhip, to throw themſelues into ſuperſtitions; and willingly to caſt themſelues out of that inheritance which God had giuen them? But in regard that *Rabſhekeh* ſpeaks to men deſolate, and ſuch as were aſtoniſhed with the preſent danger, hee boldly challengeth of them, whatſoeuer himſelfe liſteth; to the end they may at the leaſt procure the ſafetie of their liues.

And here wee ſee as in a glaſſe, that his words are nothing elſe but a liuely repreſentation of thoſe temptations & aſſaults, wherewith Satan daily laies ſiege againſt our faith. For all his practiſes tend onely to plucke vs away from our confidence in God, by the allurements and pleaſures of this world. What? is it not good to ſleepe quietly in a whole skinne, and to redeeme thy peace any way? Thou wouldeſt be happy; doth not happines conſiſt in the plentiful inioying of all things? But then eſpecially he aſſailes vs thus, when he ſees vs in miſerie; then is he bold, & dares more vehemently ſollicite vs to ſhake off Gods yoke; but ſo, that ſtill he doth it with ſetches and cloſe conueiances, as hee may beſt couer our reuolt with the ſhew of ſome good.

Now when he hath gotten vs in his nets ſo far forth, that wee eſteem better of things preſent, then of thoſe to come, he addes this condition with it alwaies; to wit, that we will now be his ſeruants, and runne at his becke: and this we can by no meanes eſcape, when hee hath once tickled vs with his deceitfull hopes, and with the taſte of earthlie things. Satans conditiõs which he vſually addes to his temptations.

But becauſe this word exile, ſounded ſomewhat harſhly and vnpleaſantly in the eares of this people, it being no eaſie matter for them to leaue the ſweetneſſe of Iudea; *Rabſhekeh* willing to let them know that they ſhould looſe nothing by abandoning their Country, telles them, that the Country into which they ſhold be caried, was no leſſe fruitfull and plentifull then theirs. And thus hee went about to dazle their eies, that they might not thinke thẽſelues to be looſers any way by the bargaine. Yet doth he finely omit that which was the principall, to wit, the ſeruice and worſhippe of God, the Temple, the Kingdome, and ſacred order & gouernment, with other matters appertaining to the heauenly inheritance. For alas! without theſe, what felicitie is there? Wherefore let euery one of vs in the feare of God learne, to fix the right knowledge of ſpirituall benefits faſt in our hearts: for it is not for nought that *Dauid* ſaith, he would rather be a doore keeper in the houſe of his God, then (with all the delights and pleaſures of this world) to dwell in the tents of the vngodly. For he that once ſuffers his heart to be glewed to the loue of earthly things, is in danger thereby to depriue himſelfe of true happineſſe. For this is that horrible iudgement whereby God often auengeth himſelfe vpon mens incredulitie. Let all the faithfull therefore feare before God, and beware that they faint not vnder anie calamities or afflictions whatſoeuer. *Pſal.* 84. 10.

Verſ. 18. *Leſt Hezekiah deceiue you, ſaying; The Lord will deliuer vs. Hath any of the gods of the nations deliuered his land out of the hand of the King of Aſſur?*

HEere is now another argument differing from the former; by which he labours to ſeduce the peoples hearts from their allegeance to King *Hezekias*, and from their truſt and confidence in God. He bragged before that he was Gods ſeruant, ſent of him to deſtroy the land of Iudea: for which cauſe he promiſeth vnto himſelfe aſſurance of the victory. But now the miſcreant feares not to aduance himſelfe againſt the Lord of hoſtes. For you muſt know that the wicked doe not alwaies at the firſt chop diſcouer all their impietie touching their contempt of Gods maieſtie; but the Lord by degrees laies open their thoughts, and conſtraines them to caſt vp the poiſon which lay hid within them. This wretch now then goes on further in his blaſphemies, and feares not to ruſh againſt the higheſt Maieſtie, as if hee were the ſtronger. *Verſe* 10. Note.

But he ſpeakes in the perſon of his Maſter,

who had obtained great victories ouer many mightie nations, which indeede had their *gods*; vnder whose protection they thought themselues safe. *Sennacherib* hauing subdued these, thought also that he had ouercome their gods, vpon whose help they rested. Thence it comes that he puffes vp himselfe so farre in pride, that he dares iustle against the liuing God: yea, he is caried away with such madnes, that he feares not to oppose his strength against the power of the Almightie.

You see then, that albeit the wicked seeme at the first to be farre from the contempt of Gods maiestie, yet in the end they manifest that they attribute all to themselues, and vterlie exclude him. In words I grant they will giue the praise of their victories vnto their gods, but forthwith they sacrifice vnto their owne nets, and offer incense to their yarne, as *Abacuk* saith, 1. 16. which practise our hypocrites imitate at this day. For if they obtaine any victorie, they by and by runne and thanke their Idols: but when that is done, they also thanke their owne counsels, policies, manhood, and their forces: so as a man may well perceiue that vpon the matter they attribute all their successe vnto themselues, and not vnto their Idols. In this his prowd boasting then, he shewes himselfe to be a lyar, when he acknowledged God the author of his victories.

On the other side it could not be but the heart of good King *Hezekias* must needs be wonderfullie grieued in hearing God to be thus charged with breach of his promises, whē this wicked one railed thus against God, and matcht him with Idols. But these things are written, to the end we might consider the patience of this good King, and also follow his example when the like shall befall vs.

Hezekias his patience worthie our imitation.

Haue any of the gods of the nations?] When he opposeth himselfe against all Gods, as one that had ouermatcht them, it is so farre from common sense, that the wicked themselues do shudder and tremble at it: and yet if the Lord doe but a little presse them, he easily drawes forth of them such confessions as this. When they haue premeditated what they will say, then they can faine themselues Gods seruāts forsooth, but soone after he inforceth them to confesse and vtter forth that which was concealed within. Let vs know then that superstition is alwaies ioined with pride, so as it is vnpossible but he should aduance himselfe aboue all that which is called God, which in his heart acknowledgeth him not. We neede not wonder then that wicked men are prowd and rebellious, for it is only the pure and right knowledge of God which is able to humble our stout hearts. And yet this miscreant is no way excused, for casting the vanitie and feeblenes of these Idols iustly in their teeth: for wee must looke at his intent and pride, seeing he scornes not so much the superstition and vaine confidence of the Gentiles, as through their sides to wound (if he could) euen the highest Maiestie. Euen as that tyrant *Dionysius*, who resisted God, and prouoked him to the fight, whilest he scorned his owne Idols: for against his conscience he derided the God which he could scarcely comprehend in his shallow braine. The like is to be said of all other Infidels, who haue mocked at false religions, which they thought were of God.

Dionysius.

Note we here also the other blasphemie by which the diuine Maiestie is wickedlie violated, when *Rabshekeh* couples the true God with the false, as if he were one of their consorts. For what blasphemie is greater then to match the immortall God, the author of all things, with dunghill gods: truth with lyes, glorie with ignominie, and hell with heauen? The Lord our God is great, and worthie to be praised, saith *Dauid*: yea, he is to be feared aboue all gods: for all the gods of the Heathen are Idols, but the Lord made the heauens, strength and glorie are before him, power and beautie are in his sanctuarie, &c. Psal. 96. 4. 5.

Vers. 19. *Where is the God of Hamath, and of Arpad? Where is the God of Sepharuaim? Or how haue they deliuered Samaria out of mine hands?*

20. *Who is hee amongst all the gods of these lands, that hath deliuered their countrie out of mine hand, that the Lord should deliuer Ierusalem out of mine hand?*

SOme thinke *Hamath* to be Antioch in Syria: *Arpad*, that Citie whence people were taken to inhabit Damascus, and that *Sepharuaim* was situated in this countrie. If these things be so, then *Rabshekeh* recites here the ancient names of the Cities whence in times past many nations came forth: but afterward they not only lost their renowme, but their proper names also, that such a change might the rather affect and moue them. Howsoeuer it be, he expresslie notes out the neighbour cities which were best knowne by name to the Iewes, that the ruin of them might touch them the more neere: neither do I doubt but these places were of Syria, and Israel. As if he should say, You see these two kingdomes subdued, which notwithstanding had so many gods and patrons, and doe you thinke that your God can resist me? The expositors take the particle *Chi* for an interrogation in both places. Haue the gods of the nations deliuered them? Shall your God deliuer you then? But that the sense might runne the better, I had rather translate it thus, Let your God deliuer Ierusalem out of mine hand? This seemes also to be spoken tauntinglie, as if in scorne he should haue said, Yea, I warrant you, your God will deliuer you, as the gods of the Gentiles deliuered those that worshipped them. Now this ignorance of the wicked proceeds from this, they know not that God punisheth mens sinnes when aduersitie befalles them. First of all then they deceiue themselues by making an ouerthwart comparison: Oh, I haue ouercome this or that people, therefore it is I that am the efficient in this matter: for they know not that God by their

their hands executes his wrath vpon the people, whom he for their iniquities hath deſtinated to deſtruction. For though they will not vtterly denie but they haue receiued ſomewhat in their victories from him, howbeit it is but fainedly, becauſe they neither ſee his will nor his iuſtice therein.

In the next place they ſtep one degree higher; that is, euen to equall themſelues with God: I haue ouercome them whom God protected; & therefore I haue alſo ouercome himſelfe. Heere is a liuely deſcription of that which we ſaw before in the tenth Chapter. Ha! Aſhur the rod of mine indignation: but he thinks not ſo. There the Lord admoniſhed the faithfull, that although *Sennacherib* in his outragious pride, ſtroue to aboliſh all diuinitie; yet he was alwaies to hold this principle, that hee could put nothing in execution, but what God himſelfe from heauen ſhould ſuffer.

It is our parts then to acknowledge that God corrects vs by the hands of wicked men, who are the rods of his wrath: and therefore to turne our eies from them, and caſt them vpon him, who iuſtly corrects vs for our
A good leſſó. tranſgreſſions. If the wicked preuaile, let vs not thinke that Gods arme is therefore broken: but let vs know that we were vnworthy of his helpe. For he it is that armes tyrants againſt vs for our ruin; hee puts weapons and munition into their hands, hee driues them to and fro which way ſoeuer he thinks good, and deliuers vs vp into their hands, when we haue ſhaken off his yoke of obedience from our neckes.

1 2 3 4

Turke. When we ſee the Turke to ſwell ſo proudly as he doth at this day againſt vs, and is alreadie become maſter of an infinit multitude of Chriſtians: we muſt not be troubled at it, as if Gods arme were ſhortened, or as if hee wanted power to deliuer vs. No, but wee ought rather to conſider how many waies thoſe of Grecia & Aſia haue prouoked Gods wrath againſt them, whileſt ſo many villanies and abominations haue had the full ſwindge in theſe countries, whileſt ſo many horrible impieties and ſuperſtitions haue bin ſuffered
Note. to raigne there. It was requiſite then that the chaſtiſement ſhould be the ſharper, that the iniquities of ſuch as made profeſſion of Gods name in hypocriſie, might bee ſuppreſſed. Thence hath the proſperitie of the Turke ſprung; thẽce followed thoſe horrible waſtes which we ſee in all the eaſterne parts. And yet how inſolent is the Turke? How ſets he vp the creſt, ſcorning our religion, and wonderfully extolling his owne, or rather worſhips himſelfe indeede, and ſacrificeth to his yarne, as was ſaid before out of *Habaunck* of other infidels.

Let vs be warned to lay theſe iudgements of God neere to our hearts, and not imagin that the Turke was able of himſelfe to conquer ſo great an Empire, but that it was the Lord who let him looſe thus to puniſh the iniquities of men. But his pride in due time ſhall
The Turkes pride ſhall be repreſſed in due time. be repreſſed. Now albeit proſperitie in it ſelfe be a teſtimonie of Gods fauour, yet we muſt not begin there, if we will iudge thereof as is meete. For ſo play the Turkes and Papiſts: if they obtaine the victorie, they conclude by and by that they haue God at their becke forſooth. But whẽ we know him as we ought, his benefits ſhall come to vs in their order; to wit, they ſhall ſerue as teſtimonies to aſſure vs of his fauour and power. And yet wee muſt bee exceeding warie how we attribute any thing to our ſelues: for our mindes are no ſooner poſſeſſed with a falſe confidence, but we ſhall be ſo tranſported & caried away with furie, that God ſhall bee found no more worthy afterward to be matched ſo with vs. At the firſt, the wicked will deteſt ſo much as manifeſt an impietie; but when they are once beſotted with diueliſh pride, to aray themſelues with God his ſpoiles, it is then eaſie to fall into this beaſtly ignorance. I grant that *Sennacherib* had ſome ſhew of pietie; for wee ſhall reade afterward, that hee was ſlaine in his Temple whileſt he was worſhipping Niſroch his God, to procure his fauour and good will: but as he here confounds the Creator of heauen and earth, with the gods of the Gentiles, ſo alſo when occaſion ſhould haue offered it ſelfe, hee would haue made no bones at all to haue railed vpon his owne Idoll. Chap. 37. 38.

Verſ. 21. *Then they kept ſilence, and anſwered him not a word: for the Kings commandement was, ſaying; Anſwer him not a word.*

THis is added that wee might yet better conceiue in what a wofull caſe Iudea was: for this good King hauing but weake meanes left, is conſtrained to put vp all wrongs, and to let his enemie haue the laſt word. He had ſent his Ambaſſadors to appeaſe his furie: when this preuailed not, hee forbids them to commune with him, that they might no further inſenſe this cruell woolfe, who was but too much inraged before. Yet it is not eaſilie diſcerned whether the Prophet ſpeakes here of the Ambaſſadors, or of the people, to whom *Rabſhekeh* vttered theſe blaſphemies. It is moſt likely that it ſhould be referred rather to thoſe which kept the walles, who notwithſtanding ſtood ſtill without tumult, albeit the enemie gaulled them to the quicke by his reproches; becauſe they obeied the commandement of their King. Whence we
A paterne for true ſubiects. gather, that it is a ſingular grace of God to ſee a peaceable and an obedient people, eſpecially when all things are confuſed and at the laſt caſt.

But ſome may obiect, that it was no time
Obiect. now to command them ſilence, when ſuch blaſphemies were diſgorged againſt God: for we are not to diſſemble the matter, whileſt the wicked ſtand breaking their ieſts vpon his Maieſtie, no, though it were with the danger of our life? At leaſt wee ought to make it ſome way appeare, that we cannot indure to heare his honour and glory to be trod vnder foote. But it is not ſaid, that they held their
Anſ. peace, as giuing conſent to that which hee ſpake, or to approue of thoſe blaſphemies

which he belched out againſt God, which no doubt vexed them ſore, albeit they vttered neuer a word. For the Ambaſſadors ſorrowed and wept, & from their inward griefe which preſſed them, proceeded the renting of their garments: by which outward ſigne, they teſtified that they abhorred his blaſphemies. Now in as much as it had been but time loſt, to haue reaſoned the caſe with *Rabſhekeh*, they returne quietly without any word at all: the people on the other ſide, who could haue gotten nothing by contending, are content to oppoſe their ſighes againſt this miſcreants pride.

Verſe 22.

A commendable magnanimitie.

And truely it is a very commendable fortitude not to be bowed, but quietly to keepe our ſtandings, when it is not permitted vs to anſwer. Hence learne, that we are not to contend againſt the wicked at all times, when they teare the bleſſed name of God in peeces by their outrages; becauſe in ſo bitter a combat, and amiddeſt ſo manie railings there is no roome left for defence of the truth.

A good caueat.

And yet we muſt not ſo giue the raignes to our cowardlineſſe, that we ſhould thinke our ſelues excuſed, if wee keepe ſilence when the wicked lift vp themſelues againſt God. For our ſilence is not to be approued of, vnleſſe in ſome ſort we ſhew that it greatly diſliketh vs, and that we giue them to vnderſtand, as much as in vs lieth, that there is nothing more inſupportable to vs, then to heare the holy name of God rent in peeces. Wee muſt giue teſtimonies of our zeale then, leſt the enemies ſhould thinke that we lightly eſteemed the honour of God, in that wee are not moued when they blaſpheme.

Verſ. 22. *Then came Eliakim, the ſonne of Helkiah, the ſteward of the houſe, and Shebna the Chancellor, and Ioah the ſonne of Aſaph with rent clothes, and told him the wordes of Rabſhekeh.*

NOw wee ſee that *Eliakim* and the other Ambaſſadors were not ſilent, as if they had approued of the impieties of *Rabſhekeh*, or, that they temporiſed in reſpect of the danger: for they *rent their garments*, and thereby ſhewed how much they were offended with theſe blaſphemies. I except the hypocrit *Shebna*, who was forced with ſhame to doe as others did, though but for faſhions ſake onelie. The Iewes and other eaſterne people were wont to *rent their clothes*, when they meant to ſhew their great deteſtation of ſomething: for as their conſtitutions were much more fierce then ours, who dwell in theſe cold Countries, ſo were they more violent in their outward geſtures, maner of their attire, goings, and ſuch other ſignes. We muſt alſo note in this place, that thoſe who paſſed by the iniuries which were done to their owne perſons, yet *rent their clothes* when they heard the name of God blaſphemed: for thoſe that are vnreconcileable in a particular iniurie, where patience is required, and are not mooued when they heare the holie name of GOD rent with reuilings, ſuch ſhew (I ſay) that they haue no zeale at all in them.

THE XXXVII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *And when Hezekiah heard it, he rent his clothes, and put on ſackcloth, and came into the houſe of the Lord.*

THe Prophet ſhews that nothing remained to this good King but one onely hope of ſaluation; namely, to powre out his complaints into Godsboſome, who is a iuſt iudge: according as it is ſaid, Pſal. 123. 2. The eies of the faithfull wait vpon him, euen as the eies of bond ſeruants wait vpon their maſters and miſtriſſes, when they are oppreſſed. When Ieruſalem then ſeemes loſt, *Hezekias* deſtituted of all humane helpes flees vnto God for his protection. And thus he confeſſeth, that this is the onely remedie when things are become deſperate. Now herein Gods grace ſhined in ſuch wiſe, that it was a manifeſt miracle ſhewed to all, when the King with all his ſubiects were deliuered out of the mouth of the lion. This circumſtance therefore is to bee noted, to the end wee may take knowledge of the excellencie of ſo great a benefit.

God calles vs to him by extreme perils, therefore we muſt not be ſlothfull in craſuing his aid & aſſiſtance.

Heere we are alſo taught what courſe to take in extreme dangers: wee muſt not bee ſlothfull nor idle in craſuing helpe of God, who by this meanes calles vs vnto him. Wee muſt not then ſtand amazed nor diſmaied, but rather be pricked forward by our neceſſities, which preſſe vs to ſeeke his aſſiſtance: for that vſe *Hezekias* makes of his afflictions. He goes forthwith into the *Temple*, no otherwiſe then into a place of refuge, to hide himſelfe and his people vnder the ſhadow of Gods wings.

Hezekias his modeſtie.

Thereunto hee alſo ioines the outward ſignes of repentance, he *rents his garments*, he puts on *ſackcloth*, and couers himſelfe with aſhes, & doth other things, which were then ſolemne ſignes of godly ſorrow, by which (being vnder ſore afflictions) they condemned themſelues before God as poore malefactors, and humbly ſought pardon of him. Now the modeſtie of this holy King is wonderfull, ſeeing he is not aſhamed to proſtrate himſelfe in

in the preſence of his God, though he had brought ſo worthie things to paſſe, and was adorned with ſo many rare and excellent vertues. On the other ſide we may behold in him a wonderfull courage of mind, and ſtedfaſtnes of faith, in that the weight of ſo great a triall hindred him not freely to *ſeeke vnto thas hand* for help which ſharplie aſſailed him. There is not one amongſt an hundred to be found but will murmure if God doe touch him but a little more then ordinarie; yea, they will be readie (if they haue done any good) to twite God in the teeth with it, and thinke themſelues but hardlie recompenced for the ſame at his hands. Others will complaine and ſay, It is but in vaine and time loſt to ſerue God, when they ſee things fall not out as they would haue them. But wee ſee none of theſe things in *Hezekias*, for he is not aſhamed to confeſſe his fault, notwithſtanding he was indued with the true feare of God.

Hezekias his ſtedfaſt faith.

Therefore if we deſire to ſeeke reconciliation with God, and to feele his fauor in the day of aduerſitie, let vs giue ſome teſtimonies of our repentance, and francklie acknowledge and confeſſe our ſinnes: for afflictions comes not out of the duſt, Iob.5.6. but God ſolicits vs thereby to amendment of life. I grant that *ſackcloth* and *aſhes* ſerue to little purpoſe, vnleſſe the affection of the heart go formoſt: for hypocrites (as we know) are but too forward and ouer-liberall in their ceremonies. The Holy Ghoſt (as wee haue ſeene before) requires theſe exerciſes, and giues them their iuſt commendation; yet ſo, as they be alwaies vſed to a right end. And no doubt it was alſo a ſigne of ſingular modeſtie and meeknes, to ſee this good King and all the people by theſe helps to ſtirre vp one another to the feare of God: alſo, in that he clothed himſelfe with this deformed and baſe apparell the more freely to confeſſe his fault, which is an humilitie that Kings and Princes are aſhamed to imitate.

Verſ. 2. *And hee ſent Eliakim the ſteward of the houſe, and Shebna the Chancellor, with the elders of the Prieſts clothed in ſackcloth, vnto Iſaiah the Prophet, the ſonne of Amos.*

3. *And ſaid vnto him, This is a day of tribulation, and of rebuke, and blaſphemie: for the children are come to the birth, and there is no ſtrength to bring forth.*

BY this Ambaſſage he not only meant to call *Iſaiah* to lament this calamitie with him, but alſo to haue ſome conſolation from the mouth of the Lord; for if prayers be not grounded vpon the word of God, they will be but ſo many words caſt into the ayre. Wee know that the vnbeleeuers will make both loude and long prayers, and yet flee away from God, either by deſpiſing, or in vtter reiecting his promiſes. Here is a ſigne of *Hezekias* his true deuotion then, that being kindled with the zeale of prayer, he addes thereunto a cõfirmation of his hope, leſt he ſhould faint vnder the temptation; alſo, in that he keeps himſelfe cloſe to the meanes ordained of God, and deſires to heare his voice by the mouth of his Prophet *Iſaiah*. For albeit he reſted vpon none but God only, yet he reiects not the teſtimonie of a mortall man like himſelfe: and this is the cauſe why the title of the Prophet is here expreſſie mentioned, becauſe he ſent to *Iſaiah* to be confirmed by ſome new propheſie. And thus he names him, not as a priuat man, but as the ſeruant of the Lord, whoſe office it was to comfort the King by ſome word of conſolation.

Prayers vnſtable, vnleſſe they be ſupported by the word.

There are two notable remedies then by which we are ſuccoured in affliction. Firſt, we muſt call vpon God for his deliuerance: Secondly, we muſt ſend for the Prophets of God (if they be to be found) that they may giue vs ſome word of conſolation: for it is their charge to comfort and refreſh the afflicted, by ſetting the pretious promiſes of life before them. But if Prophets be wanting, yet we ſhall haue ſufficient and full conſolation in the word it ſelfe. For we muſt aske counſell of theſe Prophets which God hath ſent, not only during the terme of their liues, but for euer afterwards, and of thoſe that ſucceed them: for although themſelues be dead, yet we haue their bookes ſtill with vs: their doctrine liues, and ſhall remaine for euer: but the ſumme is, we muſt alwaies aske counſell of God.

Two ſoueraigne remedies by which we may receiue comfort in affliction.

2. *Pet.*1.19.

Some may demand, whether *Hezekias* was not ſufficiently inſtructed, and furniſhed with the promiſes, was it not a ſigne of infidelitie in him then to ſeeke for new promiſes of the Prophet? I anſwere, It is not to be imputed to him for infidelitie or diſtruſt that he ſeekes a new promiſe, becauſe being beſt acquainted with his owne infirmitie, he was not aſhamed to ſeeke new confirmations of his faith. The fleſh alwaies ſolicits vs to diſtruſt, therefore we ought not at any time to deſpiſe new ſupplies: nay rather it ſtands vs in hand to vſe all the beſt meanes we can to beate back the multitudes of temptations which dayly preſſe vs. For Satan inuirons vs ſo cloſe on euery ſide, that if we be not well furniſhed indeed, it is not poſſible for vs to wind out of his ſnares and intanglings. Although we be well inſtructed in Gods word then, and haue learned that he will ſurely help vs in the day of trouble, yet when ſome extraordinarie ſurge or waue ariſeth, it is all the need then to get vs to the mouth of the Lord againe and againe, and ſtill to ſeeke out new confirmations to comfort, quicken, and ſtrengthen our faith. We haue no particular propheſies now, but we ought to applie the generals to our particular vſes, becauſe they were written for our learning, Rom.15.

Queſt.

Anſ.

The fleſh euermore ſolicits vs to diſtruſt, therefore we ought neuer to deſpiſe new ſuccors.

Although our faith be well confirmed in the promiſes, yet vpon new aſſaults we ought once yea twice to get new confirmatiõs from the mouth of the Lord.

In that *Hezekias* ſent *Ambaſſadors* to *Iſaiah*, and went not himſelfe, it was becauſe he praid in the Temple: for it appeares the mourning was generall, in regard that both the elders and counſellers were clothed *in ſackcloth*, it is alſo very probable that the King had proclaimed a publike faſt. Let vs alſo note, that *Iſaiah* liued not in the Kings houſe to giue himſelfe

to iollitie there : but in his abſence, God meant to proue the faith of this good King.

Verſ. 4. *If ſo bee the Lord thy God hath heard the words of Rabſhekeh, whō the King of Aſhur his maſter hath ſent to raile on the liuing God, and to reproch him with words, which the Lord thy God hath heard, then lift thou vp thy praier for the remnant that are left.*

Obiect. IT ſeemes that *Hezekias* doubts whether the Lord would heare or no : for the particle *Vlai*, is tranſlated, *if peraduenture* ; and it is taken in this ſenſe almoſt throrowout the whole Scripture. But we muſt note that the faithfull are accuſtomed to ſpeake thus, though they bee moſt aſſured that God will ſuccor them. They are indeed ſomewhat perplexed, but it is onely in regard of the difficultie, of the temptation wherewith they are preſſed. *Hezekias* might well doubt, if we looke vpon the eſtate as it then preſently ſtood: but hauing turned his eies towards the word of God, hee became more certaine of Gods will, and then ceaſed to tremble any more. Now becauſe it cannot be auoided, but the fleſh will alwaies fight againſt the ſpirit in the faithfull, and ſo ouercharge them, that they are faine ſtill to drag ỹ wing or to traile the leg after them, they ſometimes fit their words according to the difficultie which preſents it ſelfe before them. And in other places we may obſerue, that Gods ſeruants haue ſpoken on this manner, though the matter were out of doubt. For when Saint *Peter* exhorted *Simon* the Magician to repentance, he addes ; *If paraduenture* the thought of thine heart may be forgiuen thee : but hee therein counſels him not to tremble, or to pray in vnbeliefe, becauſe ſuch a praier had been in vaine : but he ſets before him the greatneſſe of his ſinne, that hee might quicken him vp with the greater feruencie to awaken at the laſt, that hee might proue a true conuert indeed. This word *if* then, is not put here in a doubtfull ſenſe, but ſignifies that which wee vſually ſpeake, *it may be*, when we dare hope or promiſe ſomething to our ſelues.

Anſ.

Acts 8.22.

Neither doth *Hezechias* ſpeake thus, as if God vnderſtand not what the wicked ſay, or as if he were vtterly ignorant of it, but becauſe this principle was fixed in his heart; to wit, that the Lord is neer vnto all ſuch as call vpon him in truth : he now therefore armes himſelfe with praiers, and is fully reſolued to withſtand all diſtruſt. And for as much as he could not attaine the goale without great ſtrife, he ſaith, *peraduenture*, or, it may be. Note alſo that he addes heere two ſorts of *hearing*, which in part reſolues this queſtion. True it is that at the firſt there ſeemes to be ſome repugnancie in theſe words ; *It may be hee will heare the words which he hath heard :* but it is a very apt kind of ſpeech ; for *Hezekias* is certainly perſwaded that nothing is hidden from God. He onely diſputes in himſelfe, whether God would examin this miſcreants blaſphemies. For in regard that he often defers his puniſhments for a time, and ſeemes to winke at mens impieties, it ſeemed that hee now alſo tooke no knowledge of theſe blaſphemies. Laſtly, he takes it for granted, that all things are manifeſt & naked before Gods eies: onely he askes in ſome perplexitie, whether the Lord indeed will ſhew himſelfe diſpleaſed with *Rabſhekehs* railing, by ſome outward ſigne or no ; that is, not to let him eſcape any longer vnpuniſhed ? To be ſhort, he deſires to ſee the execution thereof, which is then performed, when God ſets thoſe things in order againe, which before were out of frame and confuſed ; and when hee ſhewes himſelfe the Iudge. For then wee proue by experience, that he hath indeed had reſpect vnto the welfare of his people. Thus *Hezekias* askes; Lord, couldeſt thou not heare the blaſphemies of *Rabſhekeh*, to reuenge the ſame ? or, art thou not able to ſhew that the glory of thy name is deere and precious vnto thee ?

When he calles the Lord *Iſaiahs God*, his meaning is not as if hee were peculiarly ſerued by one man onely; neither doth he hereby cut off himſelfe from the number of the faithfull : but becauſe praiers flow from doctrines, this holy King ſpeakes honourably of the Prophets miniſterie, and teſtifies, that he is the true ſeruant of God. Sometimes this relation extends it ſelfe further; for all the faithfull doe iointly call vpon God, who holds them all in the number of his people. But he is called *Iſaiahs* and *Pauls* God, in regard of their particular calling.

How God is ſaid to be the God of Iſaiah and Paul.

Lift vp praiers.] This is the ſecond cauſe for which *Hezekias* ſent his Ambaſſadors vnto *Iſaiah*; to wit, that he might alſo inioy the benefit of his praiers with others. In which we ſee, it is not the Prophets office onely to comfort the afflicted, by ſetting the promiſes of life before them, but alſo to pray for their ſaluation. Let not the Miniſters and Preachers of the word thinke that they haue diſcharged their duty then, when they haue exhorted and taught thoſe that depend vpon them, vnleſſe they adde praiers thereunto; for it is all our duties ſo to doe. But *Hezekias* ſent to the Prophet chiefly, that hee might ſhew the way vnto others by his example.

It is the Miniſters duties not onely to comfort his people out of the word, but alſo to lift vp his praier vnto God for thē in their diſtreſſes.

To lift vp praier, ſignifies nothing elſe but to pray; yet the phraſe of ſpeech is to be noted, for it ſhewes how our affections ought to be ordered in praier. The Scripture in euery place wils vs to lift vp our hearts vnto heauen, for otherwiſe we ſhall pray without any due reuerence at all to Gods Maieſtie. Beſides, our blockiſhneſſe is ſo great, that as ſoone as we enter into praier, there comes groſſe imaginations touching the maieſtie of God into our mindes; ſo as if he ſhould not call vs away from them vnto *heauen*, wee would rather ſeeke him vnder our feete, then there.

What is meant by this phraſe, To lift vp praier.

Lam. 3.41.

To lift vp praier then, is ſo to pray, that our hearts be not glued to the earth, nor yet that we conceiue ought of God, that agrees with carnall or fleſhly conceits : but attributing

ting that vnto him which ſutes beſt with his diuine nature; alſo that we aſpire vnto heauen with an ardenſie of zeale, and with all our affections. It is in this ſenſe that *Dauid* ſaith; Oh, let my praier come before thee as incence, and let the lifting vp of my hands be as the euening ſacrifice.

Moreouer, *Hezekias* deſires *Iſaiah* to pray for the *remnant that were left*. This circumſtance might ſerue to bow the Lord: not that he is to be bowed, as men are: but thus hee deales with vs, and is contented to ſtoope downe to our weakneſſe. Be it that our caſe is ſo deſperate then, as we are euen at the pits brinke, as they ſay; yet muſt we lay forth our miſeries before God, that thereby wee may gather ſome conſolation; becauſe himſelfe proteſts, that he hath reſpect vnto the poore and needie. Yea, the neerer we are to deſtruction, with the greater affection ought we to craue his aid and aſſiſtance; as wee ſee *Hezekias* here doth, when all things were become deſperate.

Pſal. 9.9.18. & 10.17.18.

Verſ. 5. *So the ſeruants of King Hezekiah came to Iſaiah.*

6. *And Iſaiah ſaid vnto them; Thus ſay vnto your Maſter, Thus ſaith the Lord; Bee not afraid of the wordes that thou haſt heard, wherewith the ſeruants of the King of Aſſur haue blaſphemed me.*

AS the Prophet hath told vs before, that the onely refuge the King had, was to aske counſell at Gods mouth: ſo now hee ſhewes that it was not in vaine, becauſe hee receiued ſuch comfort and conſolation from him as his heart deſired.

If in our diſtreſſes wee powre out our hearts before God, he will neuer diſappoint vs of our hope. Note.

By this example we are admoniſhed, that if we ſeeke reliefe from the Lord, by diſcharging all our cares into his boſome, wee ſhall neuer be left ſuccourleſſe. And albeit ſuch Prophets, as *Iſaiah* was, are not alwaies to be had in the world, yet will he not faile to meet thoſe that wait for his helpe in due ſeaſon, and with ſuch meanes as ſhall be anſwerable to their neceſſities.

Now *Iſaiah* ſaith in the firſt place, that he anſwered them *in the name of God*: for hee affirmes that God is the author of this his meſſage. The Prophets were alwaies to haue regard that they ſpake nothing of their owne heads: alſo, it was neceſſary that God ſhould come betweene with his authority, in a matter of ſo great conſequence. Thus then our Prophet ſhewes, that God preuented (as it were) the praiers of this good King. The falſe Prophets brag much of Gods name, yet falſely: but *Iſaiah* being the very organ of the holy Ghoſt, doth iuſtly come *in his name* that ſent him: and in that hee forbids him in the firſt place *to feare*, he therein would haue *Hezekias* to hold faſt his confidence, or at leaſt to wait in hope and ſilence.

As oft as we heare this voice, Feare not: that peace which faith brings forth is commended vnto vs.

As oft as we heare theſe words *feare not*, let vs know that peace which faith begets in vs, is here recommended vnto vs: for all they which in reſting vpon God, doe wait for deliuerance from him out of their trials, ſuch obtaine victory by their patience, ouer all *feares*, ſo as they inioy ſweet *peace* in the middeſt of the ſharpeſt troubles. Moreouer, that this good King might with the more cheerfulneſſe expect a ioyfull and an happy iſſue, our Prophet plainely ſhewes, *that God takes himſelfe as a partie in this cauſe*, which he now minds to take into his owne hands: for he cannot indure that the wicked ſhould abuſe his name. And therefore they are to looke in the end, that he will ſhew himſelfe a iuſt Iudge in puniſhing them for the ſame.

By the word *ſeruants*, hee amplifies the indignitie of the fact: for had the King himſelfe vttered theſe blaſphemies, it had bin a thing inſupportable, that the Lord of glory ſhould haue bin ſo proudly diſdained and reproched by a mortall man; much leſſe then ſhould he indure to be railed vpon in ſuch wiſe by one of his *vaſſals*. And thus the condition of the perſon that railed, makes the offence more odious.

Verſ. 7. *Behold I will ſend a blaſt vpon him, and hee ſhall heare a noiſe and returne to his owne land: and I will cauſe him to fall by the ſword in his owne land.*

SOme tranſlate; I will put my Spirit within him: as if the Prophet ſpake of ſome ſecret inſtinct of heart; but this is too conſtrained. The ſimilitude is very apt, in that hee ſhewes God hath a *whirle-wind* in his hand, which ſhall driue *Sennacherib* away before it into another place. The holy Scripture is often wont to vſe ſuch a kind of ſpeech, in comparing the wicked to ſtraw and chaffe; becauſe God is able with the leaſt *blaſt* of his mouth to ſcatter them whither ſoeuer hee will; euen then when they thinke themſelues at the ſtrongeſt. Hee compares the trouble then which fell vpon the hoſt of *Sennacherib*, to a *whirle-wind*, which *carried him violently* out of Iudea. In the next place, he ſheweth that it will bee as eaſie for God to chaſe this enemy away, as it is for a whirl-wind to driue chaffe or ſtraw before it. The like is to bee ſaid of all tyrants, bee they neuer ſo ſtrong and mightie.

Pſal. 1.4.

We may perceiue that the clauſe, hee *ſhall heare*, is added by way of expoſition: & therefore I had rather reſolue it into a particle of ſhewing the cauſe, thus, *For hee ſhall heare a noiſe*. For he ſpeakes of this *blaſt*, which as ſoone as it was blowne, it forthwith repulſed and conſtrained *Sennacherib* to returne into his owne Countrie, by reaſon of the newes which he heard from Egypt and Ethiopia.

The enemies of the church compared to chaffe.

When the Prophet addes, that this tyrant ſhould *fall by the ſword*, it is as much as if he had ſaid; hee vexeth others, and indeuors to inlarge his Monarchy; but God will raiſe him vp enemies in the middeſt of his *owne Country*, which ſhall bring him to nought. Many expound; the Country, or, the land of

Israel: but it is too constreined, for it is spoken of ỹ countrie of the Assyrian. And there is in this clause a close opposition: He which conquered the Kingdomes and Cities of other Princes, shall not be able to defend his owne, but shall there be slaine.

Vers. 8. *So Rabshekeh returned, and found the King of Ashur fighting against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.*

HE shewes now how *Rabshekeh* returned to his King without striking any stroke, and returned not to the place where he left him: for his meaning is, that *Sennacherib* had raised vp his siege before Lachish, and was gone downe into Egypt to lay siege to *Libna*, which some thinke to be Pelusium: others say, it was a Citie of Iudeah. For it is very probable, that hauing heard newes of the ariuing of the enemie, he directed his armie towards Egypt, to stop the passages before them. Now albeit the Lord abated the furie of this tyrant by new warres, that he might thereby giue some rest to the Iewes, yet he would not ouercome him by the hand of man, but only manifests and brings his vntamed pride forth vpon the stage, because he ceased not still to belch out his wonted blasphemies, notwithstanding himselfe was in great danger, as we shall see afterward.

Vers. 9. *He heard also men say Tirhakah king of Ethiopia*, Behold, *he is come out to fight with thee: and when he heard it, he sent other messengers to Hezekiah, saying,*

BY that which followes we may coniecture what the cause was why the Assyrian so suddenlie departed frō Iudeah. For the *Kings of Egypt, and Ethiopia* had made a league one with another against *Senacherib*, because they saw he grew too mightie, and ceased not to inuade Countrie after Countrie: for they thought if his violence were not resisted betimes, they might be sure to looke for the like measure. These Kings meant not to defend Iudeah by working his woe, but respected their owne safetie, because the power of so mightie a man is for the most part worthelie had in suspition of other Princes and their people. It is wisely done of them therefore that in foreseeing dangers, they ioine their forces together to make resistance ere it be too late: for they had been easily ouerrunne had they been separated one from the other. Thus you see why they ioine their forces into one, to wit, that they may withstand the violence and furie of this Tyrant.

Note.

The Assyrian being intangled in so desperat a warre, send *new Ambassadors to Hezekias*, thinking by threats to inforce him to yeeld: wherein we may see how Tyrants are caried away with pride, and an ouerweening of their owne greatnes, so as they thinke to make all the world to tremble & quake at their words, or at the only hearing of the sound of their names, or at the sight of their very shadow. This man being somewhat preuented by a new & difficult busines, thinks notwithstanding to subdue Iudeah, whence he was forced to depart. It may be he was ashamed to be thus disappointed of his purpose, and thus abruptlie to raise vp his siege: but he thinks to obtaine that in his absence which he could not accomplish in his owne person. Howsoeuer, the Lord did wonderfullie worke in succoring his poore seruants, who esteemed thēselues as sheepe appointed to the slaughter. Now that he might abate the rage of this Tyrant, he occupies his head, and fils his hands with such intricate businesses, as out of which he could not easily wind himselfe: as if one should hamper a furious beast, or should hold him fast by the snout, as the Prophet wil shew anon. I grant, their cruell and reuengefull natures are not tamed thereby, but yet they are so restrained, that they can not doe the hurt they would.

Wee see the truth of this now amongst vs. How many tyrants are there which thirst after the ruin of the Church? How many plots do they lay to bring it about? How busie are they in corners, secretlie taking counsell together? And with what power and policies are they indued? But when they thinke to haue their purpose, it may be the Lord suddenlie descries their designes, and raiseth vp enemies against them. Sometimes hee sets them together by the eares, and brings the cruelties which they thought to execute vpō his children vpon their owne heads. Yet they continue as obstinate and as fierce as euer they were before, and cease not to imagin mischiefe still: as this *Sennacherib*; he is hindred of his purpose you see, yet hee is not wearie of molesting this good King, but domineers ouer him with maiesticall tearmes, as if he had been a poore slaue: yea, he commands him as if he were his vassall. And not content with that, he proudly exalts himselfe euen against the Lord of glorie, and goes beyond the pride of his Captaine *Rabshekeh*. For although *Rabshekehs* words and his are all one in sense, yet hee offers outrage against the Lord with greater impudencie, and with an open throat as it were.

God will turne the counsels of all Achitophels to foolishnes. 2. Sam. 15. 32. and 16. 23.

Vers. 10. *Thus shall ye speake to Hezekiah King of Iudah, saying, Let not thy God deceiue thee in whom thou trustest, saying, Ierusalem shall not be giuen into the hand of the King of Ashur.*

WHat an horrible blasphemie is this? He accuseth God to be a lier and a deceiuer, as if he plaid fast and loose with those that put their trust in him. For take away his truth from him, and what remaines? That is the thing he most esteemes. But he drew these words out from the mouth of this miscreant, who before seemed to reuerence some god. It is not long you see then but he discouers himselfe to the full. Whereas he saith in the person of God, that *Ierusalem shall not be giuen*,

Some

Some do thence coniecture, that the traytor *Shebna* had informed the king of Aſhur of *Iſaiahs* propheſie, and the words doe ſound ſomewhat that way, but there is no neede of any ſuch coniectures, for the Aſſyrian knew well enough that *Hezekiah* truſted in God. The promiſes made to *Dauid*, and ſo conſequently vnto him, were not vnknowne. This is my reſt, here will I dwell for euer, for I haue a delight therein: Pſal. 132. 14. Not that this tyrant ſtudied the prophecies to profite by them; but they were manifeſtly knowne to all, yea, that the Iewes did wonderfully glorie in them, and often boaſted of Gods helpe and protection againſt their enemies. This tyrant oppoſeth his blaſphemies againſt the promiſes; *Let not thy God deceiue thee:* and thus he flies in Gods face as it were, as if hee had been too weake to defend Ieruſalem; and as if himſelfe was not onely ſtronger then all men whatſoeuer, but alſo ſtronger then the Lord of hoſts.

He goes about to proue this by examples. 1 He firſt had vanquiſhed other nations which worſhipped other gods. 2 Secondly, he takes an argument from the power of his predeceſſors; They were ſtronger then the gods of the nations, but I am more mightie then they by many degrees: therefore the God of Iſrael ſhall not ſtand before me. See how the wicked are wont to grow more and more in their ouerweening, by hauing good ſucceſſes; ſo as they euen forget that they are men. For they not onely attribute a diuine maieſtie vnto themſelues, but thinke they are a degree aboue that alſo. Which more is, when they haue reiected all differenee betweene good and euill, they take pleaſure in doing miſchiefe, they glory in the ſinnes of their anceſtors, and thinke themſelues no ſmall fooles, in that they came of ſuch theeues and robbers. For he that ſhall note the riſing of theſe Monarks well, it often falles out that he which is growne the mightieſt, may well bee called the rich ſonne of a great theefe.

Tyrants grow proud by hauing good ſucceſſes.

Tyrants glory in their ſhame.

A rich ſonne of a great theefe.

This tyrant cares not whether it were by right or wrong, that his predeceſſours conquered ſo many Countries: for ſuch neuer reſpect equitie, when they meane to make themſelues great: let them haue the ſtronger ſide, and then it is no matter by what meanes they come by it, iuſtly or vniuſtly, all is one ſo they haue it; all is fiſh that comes to net, as they thinke. They put in practiſe the ſaying of a certaine Poet; If a man will bee wicked, let him get might, that he may be ſo. This vice hath not raigned in one age onely, but wee feele by experience, that it hath the full ſwindge now more then euer heeretofore.

The ſaying of a Poet.

Verſ. 11. *Behold thou haſt heard what the Kings of Aſhur haue done to all lands in deſtroying them, and ſhalt thou be deliuered?*

1 WEe muſt here note a double compariſon; for he compares *Hezekias* to *other Kings of Iudah* (his predeceſſors) which were more mightie then hee, and yet were ouercome *by the Kings of Aſſyria*. But *Sennacherib* 2 on the contrary, being more mightie then any of the reſt, proudly aduanceth himſelfe: it followes then that *Hezekias* is not able to reſiſt him. The other compariſon is of the *Kings of Aſſyria, and Sennacherib* himſelfe, with the idols of the Gentiles. If the idols then could *Verſ. 12.* not protect the people which honoured them; it thereupon followes, that the God of Iſrael is no more able then they, to ſaue his people. But when we read here how ſharply the faith of *Hezekias* was aſſailed by theſe wonderfull tentations: let vs furniſh our ſelues with the like artillerie, and prepare our ſelues to the fight. Yea, whileſt time laſts, let vs carefully ſtore our ſelues, that we may conſtantly and couragiouſly reſiſt when the like danger ſhall approch. If Satan obiect vnto vs the ruin of many nations, let vs diſtinguiſh our condition from theirs: for albeit we are indeed ſubiect to the ſame calamities, yet we haue ſure promiſes touching our ſaluation, which the others had not.

We muſt buckle our ſpirituall armour about vs, to reſiſt tentations before they come.

We muſt diſtinguiſh betweene infidels and our ſelues.

Verſ. 12. *Haue the gods of the nations deliuered them which my fathers haue deſtroyed: as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were at Telaſſer?*

13. *Where is the King of Hamath, and the King of Arpad, and the King of the Cities of Sepharuaim, Henah, and Iuah?*

MEntion is made of *Gozan*, in 2. King. 17. 6. And thence we may garher that it was a Citie of the Medes, although others affirme that it was ſituared in another Country: but it ſufficeth that it ſtood eaſtward from Iudeah. Touching *Charan*, it is often mentioned in the Scriptures. *Plinie* ſaith it Plinie. was a Citie of Arabia: but it is commonly placed in Meſopotamia. Which is confirmed by *Abrahams* voyage, who came thence with his father, when he departed out of Caldea: Gen. 11. 31. Act. 7. 4. The prophane Hiſtoriographers call it Charras in the plurall number, and ſay that *Craſſus* and his ſonnes were ſlaine there.

Verſ. 14. *So Hezekias tooke the letter of the hand of the meſſenger, and read it: and he went vp into the houſe of the Lord, and Hezekias ſpread it before the Lord.*

THe Prophet now ſhewes what refuge *Hezekias* fled vnto in his great affliction; to wit, he went forthwith into the *Temple* to bewaile his miſery (which hee could not remeadie) before the Lord, and to diſcharge his cares and ſorrowes into Gods boſome. For it was no confuſed or diſordered complaint, but by praiers & teares he meant to bow the Lord to his requeſt, that hee might yeeld him ſuccour. By this example we

are

The onely way to escape out of trouble.

are taught, that there is no easier way to wade out of our calamities when they presse vs, then by casting our burthen vpon the Lord: for all comforts besides, shall doe vs more hurt then good, if this be wanting.

He *spreads* not the letters *before the Lord*, as if he had been ignorant of them; but God is well pleased we should deale thus with him: therein applying himselfe to our infirmities. For our praiers, teares, and complaints, discouer not our necessities before his eies, seeing he knowes them all before wee once begin to open our mouthes; or to aske ought at his hands. But we now speake of that which is profitable for vs; to wit, that God may shew that hee hath heard the blasphemies of our enemies; so as those who haue vttered them, may not escape vnpunished. This is the reason and end wherefore *Hezekias* spread the letters of this cursed tyrant before the Lord, namely, to put the greater edge vpon his praiers, and to kindle and inflame his zeale more and more.

Mat.6.8.

Vers. 15. *And Hezekiah praied vnto the Lord, saying;*

16. *O Lord of hostes, God of Israel, which dwellest betweene the Cherubims: thou art very God alone ouer all the kingdomes of the earth; thou hast made the heauen and the earth.*

BEcause *Sennacherib* had been the instrument of Satan to shake the faith of *Hezekias*, hee now opposeth his rampart against him; to wit, that God is the *Lord of hosts*, and therefore of infinit power. For there is no doubt but hee rouseth vp his spirits, in assuring himselfe to obtaine that he askes, when he adornes the Lord with these excellent titles. Will we haue our praiers to preuaile with God? let vs hold this principle; that God will bee found of them that seeke him: Heb.11.6. But this good King had speciall need to lay hold of this sentence; to wit, that Gods power alwaies remaines one and the same, albeit the wicked striue to leſſen it by their railings & scoffes; and to take heart the more freely and boldly vnto him, to set himselfe valiantly against the lets by which Satan indeuoured to hinder his course. Now herein we may behold the heroicall magnanimitie of this good King, who ceased not to resist this tyrant for the maintenance of Gods power, but bare a loyall affection inwardly in his heart thereunto, and also made God a witnesse of his inward affection. Before he begins to frame any praier then, he breaks through the fallacies whereby Satan went about to put him to the wall: so that hee not onely magnifies *Gods power*, but maintaines the *soueraignte which hee hath ouer the whole world*.

A principle euer to be held, namely, that God will alwaies be found of them that seeke him.

Now hee meditates on these things, the better to confirme himselfe in the assurance which he had in Gods prouidence, by which all things in heauen and in earth are ordered and disposed. And this foundation ought all the faithfull first to lay, that so they lose not their labour in praying. The Kings praier had not been of such force and efficacie, if he had onely said, *Incline thine eare O Lord, and heare, &c.* or such like wordes: as when hee keepes this principle first in his heart; that God hath care ouer al the works of his hands. For he perswades himselfe that God will take this cause into his owne hands, and will not suffer the tyrant thus proudly to aduance himselfe; but will rather speedily put him downe, sith the gouernment of the whole world belongs vnto him. Also, seeing *Sennacherib* attributed that vnto himselfe, which of right appertained vnto God; that hee could not escape vnpunished.

Where he subiecteth *all the kingdomes of the earth* vnder Gods hand and power, he applies it vnto his owne particular vse. In the meane while, such a title neuer agrees to any but to God *onely*; because hee rules ouer all Kingdomes. Notwithstanding he denies not but Kings, Princes, and Magistrates haue their iust titles; yet so, as thēselues be subiect vnto God, & maintaine his right & dominion: for it belongs onely to God to be King of Kings, & Lord of Lords, as S. *Paul* saith. Not that hee therefore aboliſheth the names of Kings and Lords, with their dominions, but shewes that all depends vpon God onely, how great or mightie soeuer they be; that they should not thinke themselues haile fellow well met with him, but that they ought rather to acknowledge him to be their Lord and King. Kings then hold their authoritie, as you see; if so be they will keepe the mid way betweene God and men, and will not presume to climbe higher.

1.Tim.6.15.

Moreouer, *Hezekias* gathers this title from the very *creation*; for it is not possible that the Creator of heauen and earth should euer forsake the workes of his owne hands; nay, doe we not see on the contrary, that he gouernes mankind by his prouidence, which is the chiefest part of the world? It were too absurd a thing then to limit the creation within so narrow bounds, that it should onely serue as a witnesse of a certaine power of God, that lasted but a while, and stretched it selfe to a few things: no, it ought to bee extended to a continuall working in all things. By this it appeares, that those tyrants which will take liberty to rule as they list, do therein bereaue God of his honour; and therefore when things fall out otherwise then well vnto them, they may iustly impute it to their owne pride and presumption.

Hezekias also alleageth other epithetes, for the confirmation of his faith. And first, in that he calles him the *Lord of hosts*, he againe extols his power: but when he addes, *the God of Israel*, he notes out a more neere and particular presence: for it was no small signe of Gods loue, to haue taken the safetie of this people into his owne custodie. Hereunto appertaines his sitting *betweene the Cherubimes*: as if he should say; Thou hast placed thy throne here, and hast promised protection to such as call vpon thee before the Arke of the couenant: now resting my selfe vpon this promise,

I come

Exod.25.18. I come to thee as to the only gardian of my ſafetie. But *Hezekias* doubtleſſe had reſpect to the forme of the Arke, which was ſhadowed with Cherubims. Some expound theſe Cherubims, Angels, as if it were ſaid, God reignes in heauen, and ſits among the Angels. But this expoſition ſutes not. For it is ſaid, that *he ſits betweene the Cherubims*, becauſe of the Arke which was thus compoſed. Now wee know it was a true and certaine ſigne of Gods preſence, albeit his power was not ſhut vp within the ſame: but *Hezekias* in mentioning thereof meant to affirme, that God was there preſent, becauſe he had vouchſafed to gather his people vnto him, by ſtretching his wings (as you would ſay) ouer them. For as much then as there is a great diſtance of place betweene God and vs, *Hezekias* layes hold vpon this notable pledge of adoption, and yet kept he his mind free from being tainted with any carnall conceits touching Gods Maieſtie, whereinto the ſuperſtitious plunge themſelues, who ſtriue by all meanes to draw him downe from heauen: but the King contenting himſelfe with faith in the promiſes which he had receiued, concludes, that he needed not to ſeeke farre for Gods fauorable preſence.

Let vs obſerue this phraſe of ſpeech well therefore, which teacheth vs to mount by little and little vnto heauen by the light of the promiſes which doe ſhine clearely before vs: yet ſo, that in ſeeking ſuccour, we imagin not that God ſhould be abſent from vs, ſeeing he hath choſen his dwelling place in the mids of vs. For in regard that his Maieſtie much ſurmounts heauen and earth, it is not lawfull for vs to bound him within the narrow ſcantling of our vnderſtanding: yet we may comprehend him according to the ſmall meaſure thereof, becauſe he hath reuealed himſelfe vnto vs by his word: not that we muſt needs pull him downe from his heauenlie throne therefore; but that our minds which are of themſelues weake and dull, might by degrees approach neerer and neerer vnto him: for we haue good reaſon to preſſe with boldnes towards his highnes, in regard he calles vs vnto him by his word and Sacraments.

If the ſpirituall knowledge of God beares ſway in our hearts, we ſhall not need to tye his preſence to ſtocks or ſtones.

And if we conceiue of theſe things aright, the ſpirituall knowledge of God ſhall alwaies beare ſway amongſt vs, ſo as wee ſhall not need to tye the Lord any more to ſtones nor ſtocks. No, we ſhall imagin nothing of him that is earthlie or carnall: for the neeter we ſhall draw towards him, the more will we endeuour our ſelues to vſe all lawfull meanes which he ſets before vs, that our ſpirits may not reſt vpon earthlie things: for he applies himſelfe to our ſhallownes only, to the end that his Sacraments might ſerue vs as ladders to climb vp vnto him by: but this ſuperſtition hath peruerted and turned it to a cleane contrarie vſe.

Verſ. 17. *Incline thine eare, O Lord, and heare: open thine eyes, O Lord, and ſee, & heare all the words of Sennacherib, who hath ſent to blaſpheme the liuing God.*

HEnce we gather in how great perplexitie *Hezekias* was: for the vehemencie of his prayer diſcouers vnto vs a wonderfull meaſure of griefe, ſo as a man may ſee that he indured great combates which he ouercame not without much adoe. For albeit the affection and zeale of his prayer ſhewes the ſtrength and power of his faith; yet he therein repreſents vnto vs as in a glaſſe his paſſions that boiled within him. As ſoone then as we are to indure any ſuch aſſaults, let vs learne from the example of this good King to oppoſe againſt the paſſions wherewith we are toſſed, that which may beſt ſerue for the confirming of our faith, that by the tempeſt it ſelfe we may be brought to a ſafe and quiet hauen. Let not the ſenſe of our weakenes any whit aſtoniſh vs then; no, not when feare and dread ſhall preſſe vs aboue meaſure as it were. For the Lord will haue vs wreſtle valiantlie euen till we ſweate and tremble, becauſe we muſt not thinke to goe to heauen in a fetherbed, or at eaſe, as we vſe to ſpeake, but after many combates God hath promiſed an happie iſſue to them that fight as they ought to doe, which in the end he will vndoubtedlie beſtow vpon vs.

God will haue vs wreſtle till we tremble and ſweate.

But why doth *Hezekiah* deſire God *to heare?* Thinks he that he ſleepes, or vnderſtands not? No ſuch matter. But wee are wont to ſpeake thus in ſome deſperat caſes, either when wee thinke God abſent, or when hee ſeemes to make light account of our afflictions. Wee ſee he was ſo perplexed then that God (as he thought) had forgotten him; that is to ſay, according to the ſenſe of the fleſh: for had he not beheld him preſent by the eies of faith, he had vtterlie quailed. It is as much then as if *Hezekias* had deſired the Lord euen effectuallie and openlie to ſhew ſome worke for his ſaluation, which he had long hoped for before in the ſecret of his heart.

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But why doth he pray that God would *open his eies, and ſee?* It is as much as if he had ſaid, Lord, let it appeare that thou haſt care of theſe matters. Now he ſufficientlie ſhewes where his paine held him moſt, namely, he longed to ſee ſome vengeance ſhewed vpon theſe blaſphemers which offred ſuch outrage againſt Gods Maieſtie: for albeit this good King tooke great thought for the preſeruation of his kingdome and people, yet had he reſpect vnto Gods glorie aboue all other commodities whatſoeuer. And truly the aduancement thereof ſhould touch vs neerer, and moue vs more then any thing elſe, eſpeciallie when we know that his glorie and our ſaluation are things that can not be ſeparated.

Hezekias reſpected Gods glorie aboue all things whatſoeuer.

Thus *Hezekias* hauing brought forth this Tyrant vpon the ſtage as a blaſphemous and hatefull enemie of God, becauſe Ieruſalem gloried in this title, *The God of Iacob*, and in his protection, he thereupon concludes, that God can by no meanes caſt off his Citie which he hath taken into his owne cuſtodie, vnleſſe therewithall he ſhould renounce his owne

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name alſo. Seeing the Lord then of his infinit bountie is pleaſed to ioine his glorie with our ſaluation, let vs hold faſt theſe promiſes, and let vs fortifie our ſelues with them, namely, that although the wicked goe on in a vaine hope, thinking to ſcape ſcotfree whileſt they blaſpheme God, and caſt vp that poiſon out of their hearts which lurked before in them, yet there is *not a ſillable thereof which he vnderſtands not*, and he will in his due time bring them to an account for the ſame.

Verſ. 18. *Truth it is, O Lord, that the Kings of Aſſour haue deſtroyed all lands, and their countrie.*

19. *And haue caſt their gods in the fire: for they were no Gods, but the worke of mans hands, euen wood or ſtone: therefore they deſtroyed them.*

HEzekias begins here to put a difference betweene the true God and the falſe, which we alſo had need diligentlie to do: for the wicked that are not enlightened haue many confuſed thoughts of ſome diuinitie, which by and by vaniſheth away, ſo as either they thinke there is no God at all, or if there be, yet they regard him not. But God would not haue vs lightlie touched with ſome idle or vading conceit of him, but that we ſhould acknowledge him to be the true God, who by the brightnes of his power ſcatters abroad all the darknes of ignorãce. It is not enough then you ſee to acknowledge a diuinitie of I can not tell what, as prophane ones do, but God ought to be ſo knowne and receiued, that he be diſcerned from all Idols; and the truth ſeparated from lyes. And queſtionleſſe, when he hath once cleared our iudgements; all opinion of falſe religions which poſſeſſed our minds before, will immediatlie fall to the ground.

What knowledge of God is required to be in Chriſtians.

And ſo much the rather are we to hold faſt this doctrine, by how much the more many pleaſe themſelues in fond ſpeculations, thinking it ſufficient for them if they acknowledge a God at randon. Whether they ought to worſhip the god of the Turks or Iewes they know not: and thus they houer in the ayre, and touch neither heauen nor earth, as they ſay. There is not a worſe plague to be found, then ſuch an imagination, for thereby the true God and Idols are mingled together, whoſe Maieſtie is then tumbled downe from his throne, vnleſſe hee bee held as ſupreme head, and all falſe gods with their worſhip laid at his feet. The beginning of true pietie therefore conſiſts in a wiſe diſtinguiſhing of this only God, from all the troupe of idoll gods.

But *Hezekias* vſeth two reaſons by which he ſhewes they were no Gods. Firſt, becauſe they were made of *corruptible matter*: Secondly, they were the *worke of mens hands*. Now what is more abſurd then to ſee a man ſo much paſt ſhame as to be the forger of a God; not only becauſe himſelfe is not eternall, and God is: but becauſe he can not conſiſt by his owne power, not ſo much as one minute of an howre. For example, let all the world doe their vtmoſt to put all the wit & force thereof into one man if it could be, yet is he not able to make a poore flea: what pride is it then for a man at his pleaſure to put his hands to the worke, and to forge as many gods to himſelfe as he liſt? for ſeeing all that is in vs is meerely earthlie and tranſitorie, we can expect but treene gods to come from the worke of our owne hands. Adde further, that it is the greateſt follie in the world to imagin vnder pretext of arte, to faſten a kind of diuinitie to a corruptible and an inſenſible block; as if a peece of wood or ſtone began then to be god, as ſoone as it hath ſome purtraiture giuen vnto it. Thus we may eaſily ouerthrow all the ſuperſtitions which men haue inuented: for ſtedfaſtnes and conſtancie muſt be ſought further off then in mens ſhallow braines: nay, I ſay more, all that which they haue inuented in that ſhop, is condemned as lyes, and things of nought.

All the world not able to forme a ſillie flea.

No follie like this, to imagin that a piece of wood ſhould become a God as ſoon as the workman by arte hath giuen ſome forme or ſhape vnto it.

Verſ. 20. *Now therefore, O Lord our God, ſaue thou vs out of his hand, that all the kingdomes of the earth may know that thou only art the Lord.*

NOw this good King in the concluſion of his prayer ouercomes all feare, againſt which he had fought a long time; for there is no doubt but the helps wherewith he hath hitherunto furniſhed himſelfe, did much incourage him with boldnes to adde this ſhort clauſe. Now albeit God deliuers vs not alwaies from outward troubles, yet in regard he had promiſed to preſerue and keepe the Citie, *Hezekias* was bold to beleeue that this tyrant which plotted his ouerthrow, ſhould little auaile by any of his deuices. And whereas he againe vrgeth the Lord with this motiue, That his glorie ſhall be wonderfullie aduanced, by the deliuerance of this Citie: thence we gather, that we ought to wiſh nothing more then to ſee the ſame floriſh euery maner of way: for it is the principall end of our ſaluation, from which we muſt not turne one iot, if we thinke to find him mercifull vnto vs. In the ſecond place we gather hence, that ſuch are vnworthie of Gods help, who contenting themſelues only with their owne ſaluation, either forget, or ſet light by the end for which they are ſaued. For God by this vnthankfulnes is not only diſhonored, but they therein offer him great outrage in ſeparating thoſe things which at any hand ought to be ioined together. Doth not the glorie of his name ſhine in our ſaluation? And is it not the chiefeſt comfort and conſolation we haue, that it doth ſo, as we haue ſaid alreadie? Yes doubtleſſe.

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Moreouer, *Hezekiah* not only deſires that the God of Iſrael may be *onlie exalted* of men, but would haue him exalted ſo farre forth, that all Idols alſo might be aboliſhed: for many Idolaters at that time would haue bin content that the true God had bin worſhipped amongſt the reſt of their dunghill gods; but becauſe he can away with none to ſit

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check mate with him, all the gods which men haue forged muſt bee brought to nought, that hee onely may obtaine the ſoueraigne Monarchy.

Verſ. 21. *Then Iſaiah the ſonne of Amos ſent vnto Hezekiah, ſaying, Thus ſaith the Lord God of Iſrael; Becauſe thou haſt praied vnto me concerning Sennacherib King of Aſſur,*

22. *This is the word that the Lord hath ſpoken againſt him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion hath deſpiſed thee,* and *laughed thee to ſcorne: the daughter of Ieruſalem hath ſhaken her head at thee.*

NOw behold the fruit of praier: for things being brought to an afterdeale, God ſuddenly reacheth *Hezekias* his hand, by the miniſterie of our Prophet *Iſaiah*. Not that hee ſo reached or ſtretched it forth, that the enemie was forthwith put to flight; but in promiſing deliuerance by *Iſaiahs* mouth, he ſtill exerciſeth the faith of his ſeruant. Now as the Prophet for his part, could not of himſelfe haue giuen this conſolation; ſo had it been but a ridiculous thing to haue promiſed it, vnleſſe *Hezekias* had alſo beleeued that this meſſage was ſent him from God. He therfore contented himſelfe with this bare promiſe, waiting in ſilence till God ſhould manifeſt his power. Now by this wee are taught, that it is our dutie at all times to aske counſell of the Lord, if we meane to feele his comforts in our afflictions and diſtreſſes: for if we ſet light by the meſſage which he ſends vs by the miniſterie of his faithfull ſeruants, we are then vtterly vnworthy to receiue any conſolation from him. But albeit wee be neuer ſo well inſtructed, and filled as it were with the knowledge of this doctrine, yet it ſtands vs in hand to know it euery day better and better, ſtill drawing thence new teſtimonies to confirme our faith withall, to the end we may haue remedies at hand when new aſſaults ſhall befall vs, and may not at any time bee deſtitute of comfort in the middeſt of our greateſt calamities: for hee that is beſt furniſhed and fortified this way, can neuer bee too well prouided. We haue in *Hezekias* here a ſingular example of faith and conſtancie; and yet the Lord contents not himſelfe to haue comforted him once, and by one prophecie onely; as in verſe 6,7. but he now confirmes his faith many waies; that we who are far ſhort of that conſtancie which was in him, might learne to know what need wee haue of many helpes for the ſuſtaining and vpholding of our faith continually.

God will haue our faith ſtill exerciſed.

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Becauſe thou haſt praied vnto me.] The holy hiſtorie expreſſeth no more but this verbe, *I haue heard thee:* the word *becauſe* therefore is a relatiue in that place: but here it is an expoſitiue, or a particle of giuing a reaſon, as in many other places. For it is forced and conſtrained to ſupply the verbe To heare; as manie expoſitors doe: and the ſentence runnes well being reade as it is; when God therein ſhewes that he will ouerthrow all the practiſes of *Sennacherib*, and repreſſe his violence and furie, *becauſe Hezekias hath praied*. As if he ſhould ſay; *I giue thee ſuch an anſwer as fits thy requeſt*. And doubtleſſe whoſoeuer he be that directs his praier vnto God, hee ſhall in the end feele how much the Lord is inclined to anſwer: indeede hee often holds his peace, and offers vs no conſolation by his word, but it is becauſe wee haue been mute in our afflictions.

Aske, and it ſhal be giuen you. Mat 7. 7 See Ezech. 36.37.

The ſumme of the prophecie comes to this; that *Hezekias*, as feeble and deſtitute as hee was of all ſuccour, yet needed not for all that to feare in beholding this tyrant ſo to aduance himſelfe: for God would be the moderator in this caſe, who proteſts that hee will take the quarrell into his owne hand: as if he ſhould ſay; *Sennacherib* indeed hath offered outrage againſt thee and thy people, but the weight of it *falles vpon my Maieſtie*. And thus he ſhewes that hee will be reuenged of the heathen that knew not his name; and withall admoniſheth the faithfull not to ſorrow as men without hope, if the world for a time doe tread them vnder foote, for he hath ſtore of ſuccours readie in heauen to ſuſtaine their infirmities. But it hath much greater force, in that he ſpeakes to the *whole Church*, then if he had ſpoken to *Hezekias* particularly: for this circumſtance augments the indignitie of the fact, becauſe *Sennacherib ſcorned* the meane eſtate of this poore people, as if Gods helpe had been a matter of nothing. The Prophet then taxeth the blindneſſe of this Tyrant, who hauing no reſpect vnto God, thus proudly inſulteth ouer his poore and deſolate Church.

It is an vſuall thing in the Scriptures, to call Cities *daughters*: ſometimes goodlie Cities alſo are called *virgins*, as we haue noted before in another place. But heere *Iſaiah* meant to note out Ieruſalems weakneſſe, who was as a *poore virgin*, ſuccourleſſe and comfortleſſe, which this vile ruffian, and curſed cutthrote vexed and reuiled: whereas God on the other ſide, as the *father* to whom this iniury was offered, ſhewes that he is acquainted well enough with the plots of this miſcreant, as alſo in what eſtate the whole land of Iudea was.

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Verſ. 23. *Whom haſt thou railed on and blaſphemed? And againſt whom haſt thou exalted thy voice, and lifted vp thine eies on high?* euen *againſt the holy one of Iſrael.*

IN the verſe before going, he deſcribed the matter as if it had been ſeen and heard of all: now hee raiſeth their thoughts higher, ſhewing that the Tyrant hath not onely bent himſelfe againſt Ieruſalem, but againſt her God alſo. Let this place come to our remembrance as oft as we are expoſed to the ſcoffes and taunts of the wicked: for albeit wee are forlorne, and there be no eye to pitie vs, nor any

This ſentence ought to be called to mind whē the Church is afflicted.

any to plead our cauſe, in regard of the enemies rage which is more and more inflamed againſt vs, yet our God is at hand, who will couer vs in ſuch wiſe, as we ſhall haue ſtrẽgth and defence ſufficient: for all they that perſecute vs, doe not onely war with vs, but with him which is the liuing God. Theſe things were not written for one age alone; but rather as this promiſe is perpetuall, I will be thy buckler, and thine exceeding great reward: *A friend to thy friends*, and an an enemie to thy enemies: Gen. 17. 7. ſo, euen then when wee haue leaſt meanes and ſtrength to reſiſt, let vs bee ſo much the more reſolued, that the hand of our God is the neerer to deliuer vs. Since God hath been pleaſed then in the perſon of *Abraham* to ſtrike a couenant with vs, vpon condition that himſelfe will alwaies take our quarrell into his owne hands: let vs aſſure our ſelues, that he will faithfully performe his promiſe, and will manifeſt it, that the wrong which is done vnto vs, redounds to his owne perſon. In a word, he is ſo made one with vs in his Chriſt, that hee will haue ours made his, and that which is his, made common to vs.

Gen. 15. 1.

God perfects his power in weaknes.

To be ſhort, hee is ſo conioined with vs, that he meanes to make a communitie of all that is his and ours together. And therefore hee tooke the outrages and wrongs which *Sennacherib* did to the Church, as done to his own perſon: to ſhew, that wicked men greatly abuſe themſelues, when they are puffed vp with an ouerweening of their own greatneſſe, as if therefore forſooth they ſhould eſcape vnpuniſhed, when they haue trod the poore Church vnder their feet. For we know they baſely eſteeme of God his prouidence, and eſpecially when they ſee the faithfull lie panting vnder the burthen of the Croſſe and afflictions, they thinke them vnworthy the ſuccor of God: who for that cauſe awakes himſelfe as it were, and declares by vnanſwerable arguments, that he is no leſſe wronged when his little flocke is thus halled to and fro, then if open violence were offered to his owne Maieſtie. Let it be granted then that our enemies thinke our God cares not for vs, when outward meanes faile vs, and that they then ſpoile with greater liberty, as if we were giuen into their hands for a pray; yet God on the contrarie affirmes, that our ſaluation is deere and pretious ſtill vnto him.

But our Prophet with many wordes ſets forth the pride and inſolencie of this tyrant, as of a man altogether inſupportable; to wit, in his *ſpeeches*, *lookes*, and geſtures which hee vſed with head, hands, feete, and all the parts of his body: for as ſuch proud tyrants haue a vaine conceit of their owne greatneſſe, ſo they aduance themſelues, and behold others with a ſcornefull eye; as if they were ſome pettie gods, newly fallen from the cloudes. For a concluſion, *Iſaiah* addes, that albeit the affaires of this people went but meanly forward, yet God notwithſtanding, who holds them vnder his protection, remaines in heauen, and is as almighty as euer he was: wherein he taxeth the madneſſe of *Sennacherib*, who eſteemed the people according to the outward appearance, neuer conſidering that they were dedicated and conſecrated vnto God. That wee then may reſt ſafely and ſecurely vnder his power and protection, and that he may ſpread his armes ouer vs for our ſuccour in the time of neede; we muſt for our parts be ſure that we be *his Iſrael*; which wee ſhall be, if reſting vpon his word and promiſes, wee quietly ſit vs downe vnder the ſhadow of his wings.

Verſ. 24. *By thy ſeruants haſt thou railed on the Lord, and ſaid; By the multitude of my chariots, I am come vp to the top of the mountaines, to the ſides of Lebanon, and will cut downe the high Cedars thereof, & the firre trees thereof: and I will goe vp to the heights of his toppe, and to the forreſt of his fruitfull places.*

SEe how the indignitie and ſpightfulneſſe of this outrage is further amplified; for the iniurie that is offered by a *ſeruant*, is not ſo eaſilie put vp, as when it is done by the maſter; becauſe the baſeneſſe of the perſon makes the wrong euermore intollerable. And therefore the proud ones of the world, when they will threaten in the moſt deſpightfull ſort, they will brag that their wils ſhall be executed by their *ſeruants* and horſekeepers: that they may make it knowne, how baſely they eſteeme of thoſe whom they purpoſe to miſchiefe. By this circumſtance then the Prophet meant to ſhew how execrable this blaſphemie was, when *Sennacherib* was not content to vomit it out of his owne mouth; but had ſet on his ſeruant *Rabſhekeh*, to make him rent the ſacred name of God in peeces.

As touching that which is recited afterward in the perſon of *Sennacherib*, ſome take it generally for the former victories which hee had wonne, and by this meanes had ſubdued many nations, as we haue ſaid before: but I had rather take it more particularly, in referring it to this laſt ſiege. For when he ſaw the whole land in a maner vnder his obeiſance, and the *mountaines* which inuironed all the Coũtry, poſſeſſed by his ſouldiers, he brags as if he had gotten all, and threatens that hee will inioy the caſtels, *mount Libanon* with his *Cedars*, *fir-trees*, and other commodities: as if he ſhould ſay; Nothing ſhall let me to be maſter of all the forts of Iudah, and to deale with the Country as I thinke good. See how Tyrants glory that the good ſucceſſes of their warres are in their owne hands, although often conſtreined to acknowledge the fight to be dangerous.

Verſ. 25. *I haue digged and drunke the waters, and with the plant of my feete haue I dried all the riuers * cloſed in.*

* Or, of the ſiege.

THis Tyrant proceeds here, glorying ſtill in his forces, and threatens to bring ſo mighty

mightie an armie, that the multitudes of his souldiers shall be able to *drinke the fountaines and riuers of Iewrie drie*. By the *riuers of the siege*, some vnderstand the riuer Shilo, and the Cisterns which the besieged Iewes could not lose but they must forthwith perish for thirst. Yet in the first member he seemes to affirme, that he feares no want of water, though the whole countrie were destitute of it, because he hath men enow to *digge pits*. In the second place he saith, he is furnished with meanes sufficient to drie vp all the waters of the Citie, thinking thus to terrifie the Iewes. His meaning in a word is, that Ierusalem will not be able to indure the siege, nor be able to stand out long against him, but must forthwith be constreined to yeeld. Now when the wicked make their vants on this maner, God sits in heauen, whence at the last he will denounce his iust sentence against them. For the Prophets discourse tends to informe vs of Gods iust and wonderfull iudgement against this Tyrant.

The prophets drift in this narration.

Vers. 26. *Hast thou not heard how I haue of old time made it, and haue formed it long agoe? And should I now bring it, that it should be destroyed* and laid *on ruinous heapes* as Cities *defenced?*

THe expositors for the most part expound this verse as if the Lord should say, That this Tyrant neither hath done nor shall doe any thing but that he hath foretold by the mouth of his Prophet, and thus affirmes, that himselfe is the author of these things. But I expound it otherwise; to wit, that Ierusalem shall be deliuered by Gods assistance, because he is the protector of it: and that his speech might haue the more weight, he names not the Citie, but vseth the pronoun demonstratiue, as if all other Cities were nothing in Gods account in comparison of this.

Others referre these words, *I haue made it*, to the deliuerance which depended vpon the secret counsell of God: but whosoeuer shall diligentlie weigh the scope of the Prophets words, will confesse that it is here spoken of Ierusalem. God complained, as we haue seene, that he was so despightfullie blasphemed; and yet in reciting the words of *Senacherib* he only mentioned Libanon, and the quarters adioining: now to shew that vnder the name of Libanus, warre was proclaimed against himselfe, he affirmes (as in many other places) that Ierusalem was founded with his hand, and built at his command: whence it followes, that *Senacherib* could not ouerthrow it, vnlesse he first plucked God downe from his throne.

This doctrine is often met withall in the Scriptures, and wonderfull comfort is conteined in it, vpon which the faithfull may at all times boldlie leane in all their trials and afflictions, be they neuer so hard and difficult to be borne; to wit, that they shall euer be preserued vnder Gods protection, because he hath elected them. For thus stands the argument, *I haue made and formed the Church: the saluation of it shall stand for euer, because I will not leaue the worke that I haue begun vnfinished, but will bring it vnto perfection.* In a word, the Lord testifies that he will goe on with his worke, and will preserue it, because it concernes his owne honor, and our saluation. Phil. 1. 6.

Gods argument in this place.

Moreouer, he is called the *former* of his Church in another sense then that in which he is said to be the Creator of heauen and earth: for we are his peculiar workmanship, saith S. *Paul*, being reformed by his Spirit: of which point we haue spoken heretofore in other places. This worke therefore of all others is the most excellent, yea, aboue the creation of the whole world. Be it farre from any man therefore to affirme that he was incorporated into the Church by his owne power or industrie: for it is not without cause that we are called *his workemanship*, Ephe. 2. 10. Ephes. 2. 10.

But it may be demanded why the Lord saith *he formed Ierusalem long agoe*, for there were many Cities more ancient then it. I answere, that this ought not to be referred to the outward forme or building, but to the eternall decree of God, according to which he had *chosen* this Citie for his dwelling place. For albeit it was then only said when the Arke was made, This is my rest, here will I dwell, Psal. 132. 14. And by *Moses*, I will come vnto thee into the place wherein I shall put the remembrance of my name, and I will blesse thee, Exod. 20. 24: yet had God long before ordeined it. For we were chosen before the foundations of the world were laid, as S. *Paul* teacheth, Ephes. 1. 4. And S. *Iames* saith, That we were *begotten* by the word of truth, that we might be the first fruites of his creatures, Iam. 1. 18. He will then conserue vs aboue all his creatures, and will neuer suffer vs to perish. Now as Christ is called the first borne of euery creature, Colos. 1. 13. so the Church also, which is his bodie, obteines in this world the preheminence of dignitie and honour. Quest. Ans.

I leaue the Rabbins to their rauings, when they say, that God created the Messiah and Ierusalem with a throne of glorie before he formed heauen or earth. But we must hold this principle, that he will be the faithfull gardian of his Church, seeing he hath vouchsafed to preferre it before all the world besides. Ranings of the Rabbins.

As touching that which followes in the end of the verse, *And should I now bring it to this point?* Some draw it to a sense altogether wrested. I denie not but the Prophets words are in the preterperfectence; Now I haue brought it, and put it: but because ỹ change of the tence is very familiar and vsuall in the Hebrue tongue, it is certaine that the Prophet hauing affirmed that God is in such wise the *former* of his Church, that it is the chiefest of all his works, he now thence concludes, that it can not be ruinated as other common things are. It must be read by an Interrogation then, *Shall I bring it now*, or, *should I suffer it to be brought?* As if he should say, *Should I suffer it to be raced as other Cities which are quite ouerthrowne and laid on heapes?* For he compares Ierusalem with other Cities which were destroyed and subdued by the Assyrian, that so they

they might know that this Tyrant should not so easily obtaine that which he desired, because the difference is great betweene it and other Cities which haue beene raced to the foundation. It must not be compared then with other Cities how well fortified soeuer they be, because they with the earthlie matter of which they consist, shall easily fall: but albeit the Church be but weake and feeble in outward shew, yet hath shee such a stable and firme foundation laid in Gods secret election, that it can neuer be ouerturned by any tempests whatsoeuer.

The glory of the Roman Empire gone.

We see strange changes haue befallen the world: Commonwealths haue been turned topsie turuie, Empires abolished, mightie nations subdued, and their renowne and glorie extinguished. What is now become of the glory of the Roman Empire? What is become of the Nobles of this people, who were the Lords of all the earth? If any reliques thereof remaine (which is very small) is it not brought vnder the miserable slauerie of that cursed monster, I meane Antichrist, who exerciseth his tyranny ouer al the earth? Where is now the liberty which Rome once inioied? Where is that goodly forme of a Commonwealth, which was once to be seene there? Rome may now well be called the shop of all mischiefe and impietie, and a cage of euery vncleane bird? But in the midst of all these horrible confusions, the Lord shewes that he wil *preserue Ierusalem*; that is to say, his Church: and albeit among these changes, she be tossed vp and downe, and diuersly afflicted, yet she shall stand fast notwithstanding. At least, the shakings and persecutions which she suffers, shall not hinder her so, that by many resurrections (as it were) she should not still be reuiued and multiplied from age to age. Now although the members of the Church are not alwaies of one ranke in this world, yet it is one and the same body knit by ioints and bands to one head Iesus Christ. Thus then, *The Lord will keepe and defend the Citie, and will cause the children of his seruants to continue*, that their seede may be established for euer: Psal.102.28.

That Antichrist of Rome, an execrable monster.

Rome may now be called the shop of al impiety.

*Or, For the. *Ebr. are short in hād.

Vers. 27. **Whose inhabitants *haue small power, and are afraid and confounded: They are like the grasse of the field and greene hearb*, or, *grasse on the house toppes, or corne blasted before it be growne.*

THe Prophet now better expresseth that which hee touched in briefe before, to wit, that the estate of the Church is not to be iudged according to that which she is in this world: for though the strongest Cities be taken, that the most valiant doe faile in heart, and fall into their enemies hands; yet the Church shall remaine and florish, because she rests not vpon her owne strength, neither hath she her foundation from earth, but from heauen. For there is a close opposition here betweene strong Cities which the inhabitants cannot keepe, because they are frighted and troubled; and the Church of God, which being vpheld by his onely grace, sustaines all assaults, and is neuer vanquished: for she referres all things to God onely, who giues her beginning and being, continues her strength, indues her with constancie and all sorts of benefits: in a word, with all the parts of her saluation. Hence we are taught, that all the fortresses in the world are nothing, vnlesse God be the watchman. All the forces of men are but as shiuering reeds, vnlesse they be sustained by his power: castels, ramparts, and weapons, bee they neuer so many and inuincible, without him, shall serue their turnes nothing at all.

This is yet better expressed by the similitudes which are added. For it was necessarie that the faithfull should bee well informed touching the loue and singular affection which the Lord bare towards them, lest they should be offended at the prosperitie of the prophane and wicked. Albeit humane forces then be neuer so glorious in outward appearance, and make all the goodly shewes that can be deuised; yet the Prophet affirmes that it is but like *the grasse* and flowers of the field, which are greene and florish for a time, and suddenly are gone. He abaseth them more by the other similitude which hee ads touching *the grasse vpon the house tops*, whose stalkes are high and easie to be seene of all: but if they grow vpon any high place, then are they neerest their withering, being neuer fit for any vse: as the Psalmist saith; *for the reaper filles not his hand, nor the gleaner his lap*; and therefore the passers by say not so much as God speed you: Psal.129.6,7. So albeit the enemies of the Church be like the tall Cedars, whose toppes touch the heauens as it were, and florish by inioying the world at will, yet shall they in a moment *wither* and come to nothing. *As the corne then which growes on the ground*, serues to much better vse *then the vnfruitfull grasse which growes on the house top*, so the Lord shewes that *the base and abiect condition of his seruants, is much more excellent then theirs, who by reason of their power, exalt themselues* so farre, as to iustle against the Lord of heauen and earth.

The first Simile.

The second Simile.

Some thinke that that which is added touching the *corne blasted*, should be the fourth similitude: but as I thinke the Prophet would haue it serue as an exposition of the former similitude: as if he should say; This grasse shall wither away afore it is come to a stalke or to any ripenesse. As the Psalmist also saith, It withereth before it be plucked vp.

Vers. 28. *But I know thy dwelling, and thy going out, and thy comming in; and thy furie against me.*

HE returneth and toucheth the insupportable pride of this Tyrant, who attributed I wot not what to himselfe, as if he had been inferiour to none: yea, he durst blaspheme and raile vpon the liuing God, as if he had been nothing in comparison of him. But God takes downe his pride and arrogancie:

cie: as if he ſhould ſay, *yet doe I know all thy hauntes well enough; yea, thy ſitting downe, and riſing vp.* The wicked exalt themſelues, thinking they ſhould be ſubiect to none, no not to the prouidence of God it ſelfe: but he ſhewes, that they haue no more power but that which is giuen them from aboue.

Sitting and going forth is taken here for conſultations, imaginations, and enterpriſes of the profane and wicked, who inuent ſundrie plots how they may ouerwhelme and deſtroy the people of God: but on which ſide ſoeuer they turne themſelues, and what way ſoeuer they take to bring their purpoſes to paſſe, yet they ſhall not performe a iot more then God hath willed. For they are reſtrained by his prouidence, which drines them to and fro, and often turnes their wicked plots to a good end, though they meant the cleane cõtrarie. But God (whoſe proper office it is to direct mens paths, Pro.20.24.) conducts them which way it pleaſeth him.

He ſaith alſo, *I know thy furie:* thereby minding to ſhew, that whileſt the wicked play the bedlems on earth, God ſits ſtill in heauen laughing their madnes to ſcorne. And becauſe *Sennacherib* behaued himſelfe malepertly, and thought to goe ſcot-free, the Prophet addes theſe words expreſſlie, to the end the faithfull ſhould not imagin this to be new, or vnknowne to the Lord, or as if he eſteemed them not.

Verſ. 29. *Becauſe thou rageſt againſt me, and thy tumult is come vp into mine eares, therefore will I put mine * hooke in thy noſtrils, and my bridle in thy lips, and will bring thee back againe the ſame way thou cameſt.*

* Or, ring.

THe more the wicked are caried away with rage, furiouſlie exalting themſelues againſt God, the more ſeuerely doth he at the laſt oppoſe himſelfe againſt their pride: He lets them take their ſwinge for a time, and ſuffers them to inioy the world at will, but after long forbearance he tames them, and reſtraines them, leſt they ſhould thinke they had all vnder their command. *Sennacherib* is a ſingular example hereof, for the more audacious he is to ſome out his *rage and furie againſt God*, the more heauie did he feele his wrath to fall vpon him whom he thus braued: which all the pack of perſecuters ought to expect as well as he.

Now he doth aptlie and pleaſantlie ſcorne the fond ouerweening of this Tyrant, as if he ſhould ſay, I ſee well enough how the world goes, I ſhall gaine nothing by handling thee gentlie, becauſe thy wrath is become deſperate: ſeeing then thou canſt not be tamed, *Verſe 28.* *I will hamper thee like a wild beaſt.* And thus God ſhewes more plainely, that he is not only acquainted with the plots and imaginations of this miſcreant, but ſo moderates and holds back his tyrannie, that in ſpight of his teeth *he leades them whither ſoeuer he liſts:* as if a wilde beaſt haue a ring put thorow his ſnout, a man may leade him whither he will. Some tranſlate the word *Kaki*, an hooke, but I had rather expound it a *ring*: becauſe an hooke is fitter to catch fiſh withall then wilde beaſts. *Sennacherib* then was conſtreined to turne from whẽce he came, and haſtned away without doing any thing; although his purpoſe was to haue poſſeſt Egypt and Iudah wholly: neither would he haue been diſappointed of his purpoſe willinglie if God had not drawne him away by his ſecret worke.

Verſ. 30. *And this ſhall be a ſigne vnto thee, O Hezekiah, Thou ſhalt eate this yeere ſuch as groweth of it ſelfe: and the ſecond yeere ſuch things as grow without ſowing: and in the third yeere ſow yee, and reape, and plant vineyards, and eate the fruite thereof.*

NOw he directs his ſpeech vnto *Hezekias* and to all the people: for he ſpake not before to *Sennacherib* as if he had heard him; but it was to the end he might the better quicken vp the people to be of good courage, ſeeing the Lord did thus deſpiſe this Tyrant. If he had only ſaid, *Hezekias*, be of good comfort, albeit *Sennacherib* inſults ouer thee, yet I will repreſſe his pride when I ſee it fit; theſe words (I ſay) had not been of ſuch efficacie, as when togeather with the ſame he turnes his ſpeech towards the Tyrant himſelfe, in thundring from heauen vpon him: for by this meanes he imboldens the faithfull to ſet light by all his threates. Therefore hauing firſt ſpoken to the Tyrant, now he turnes himſelfe very fitlie vnto *Hezekias* and to the people, promiſing them deliuerance: and that not only out of the pawes of this cruell beare, but alſo that *Hezekias* ſhould inioy his kingdome ſtill in peace and proſperitie, and that the reſt of the people ſhould likewiſe haue all things neceſſarie for an happie and quiet life. And thus he amplifies the benefit of their deliuerance, the rather to ſhew that he will not only ſuccor his people in one kind only, but many waies: for in deed his deliuerãces are not only limitted to once or twice, but he would haue vs feele his benefits in large and in abundant meaſure, that the fruit thereof might laſt for a long time.

But it ſeemes the Prophet fits not his *ſigne* Obiect.
to the preſent purpoſe, ſeeing that which he promiſeth came not to paſſe till after they were deliuered: for if God meant hereby to comfort theſe poore beſieged ones, it was now ŷ fitteſt time (one would haue thought) to haue ſhewed his power, and not to haue deferd it till the ſiege had been raiſed. I an- Anſ.
ſwere, there are two ſorts of ſignes, one goes Two ſorts
before, and leades vs by the hand as it were of ſignes.
to the thing promiſed, the other comes after 1
and confirmes it, that it may ſtick faſt in our 2
memories, neuer to be raced out. As for example, when the Lord brought Iſrael out of Egypt, he gaue many ſignes afore hand vnto *Moſes*, but afterward he ordained one which ſhould follow the deliuerance: to wit, You ſhall ſacrifice vnto me three daies, Exod.3.12. Why ſo? To the end they ſhould not forget

ſo great a benefit, but might yeeld him thanks, after they had had experience of ſo exceeding a fauour.

Such a *ſigne* is ỹ which *Iſaiah* here deſcribes: & queſtionles, it ſerues alſo for a good cõfirmatiõ of our faith, to haue ſuch an euerlaſting teſtimonie as it were ſtill before our eies, which may cauſe vs to conſider how many mercies ỹ Lord hath ſhewed vs. Now though the enemie was driuen back, yet there was great likelihood of famine to inſue, which vſualie followes warres: for it is not poſſible but great dearth muſt enſue where the fields haue beene waſted and ſpoiled. But againſt this neceſſitie which was likely to befall, the Lord promiſeth continuance of foode, and propounds this as an euident ſigne of their deliuerance, the better to perſwade the people that he was the author thereof, or at the leaſt, to fixe the memorie of it the faſter in their minds. This was a thing incredible, and ſeemed farre to ſurmount all their capacities: but it was needfull that the faith of *Hezekias* and the peoples alſo ſhould be thus awakened, that hauing intelligence of ſo rare a deliuerance, they might be the better prepared to hope, and that the iſſue alſo might ſhew how it came not to paſſe by chance or fortune; vnto which, for the moſt part, theſe ſo many admirable workes of God are attributed.

The Prophets meaning then is, *After the Lord ſhall haue fraied the enemie away, he will hold him ſo ſhort, that he ſhall neuer be able to renue his armie againe: and thus thou ſhalt liue quietly in thy kingdome, which ſhall bring thee forth fruit in ſuch abundance, that thou ſhalt want nothing.* Now in regard that part of their ſtore was ſpent, and the reſt waſted, as it comes to paſſe ordinarily in ſuch publike calamities, and that it was not permitted them to till the earth, being now either beſieged, or elſe fled; hee promiſeth them corne *without ſowing, vnto the third yeere.*

Verſ. 31. *And the remnant that is eſcaped of the houſe of Iudah, ſhall againe take roote downeward, and beare fruit vpward.*

THis appertaines to the former ſentence: for his meaning is, that the Lord will deliuer Ieruſalem in ſuch wiſe, that he will care for it alſo for the time to come, and will keepe it vnto the end. Truely all the benefits the Lord beſtowes vpon vs, are ſo many ſignes and teſtimonies of his perpetuall good will towards vs; to the end wee might aſſuredly know, that hee will neuer leaue nor forſake vs. But in this ſentence wee are chiefly to obſerue that which we haue alſo touched before; to wit, that the Lord defended Ieruſalem, becauſe hee had pitched his Sanctuarie there, out of which alſo the Meſſiah was to come. The word *Peleath*, properly ſignifies Deliuerance; but it is here vſed as a nowne collectiue, which ſignifies thoſe that are deliuered, or, are *eſcaped*: as in other places the word captiuitie, is taken for the captiues. Now it is not without cauſe that he promiſeth *increaſe* to this little *remnant*: for albeit the ſiege was raiſed, yet the people being much diminiſhed, they had ſmall cauſe to reioice: & it was a thing very vnlikely to expect a full reſtauration of ſuch an handfull of people.

That he might a little reuiue their ſorrowfull hearts then, he ſhewes that the Country ſhall be filled with inhabitans, no leſſe then if a faire and goodly plump of trees ſhould fill the granges which were emptie before. But it was not onely the waſte of the land of Iudah, which wounded the hearts of the faithfull thus with ſorrow, but the great diminution of the ten Tribes their brethren, which had alſo beene carried away captiues. Now albeit they were thus ſcattered, yet *Iſaiah* promiſeth that God would ſet them againe into their firſt eſtate, ſo as they ſhould multiply into an infinit number: for the Lord often ſuffers his to be diminiſhed & brought to nothing, that his glory may the better appeare afterwards in their deliuerance. And we at this day are to expect the like fauour from God, which he hath heretofore ſhewed to his people, that when wee ſee the Church at ỹ laſt caſt, giuing vp the ghoſt as it were; yet thẽ we may aſſure our ſelues notwithſtãding, that God hath meanes enow readie at hand to multiply this ſmall remnant againe. For ſuch a reſtauration muſt not be meaſured according to the ſcant ell of our reaſon.

God often ſuffers his people to be brought to low ebs, that his glory might the better appeare in their deliuerance.

But hee ſaith, the Church ſhall bee brought to ſo low an ebbe, that euerie one will eſteeme it quite forlorne, euen as if it were plucked vp by the rootes: and truly the kingdome of Iſrael was a moſt ſorrowfull ſpectacle of this plucking vp. Yet the Prophet in the name of God promiſeth ſuch an increaſe, that the tree which was ſtubbed vp by the rootes, ſhall againe take *deeprooting downwards*. Albeit the church then haue not that goodly outward hew & beautie which the kingdomes of this world haue, yet will the Lord giue it ſuch an inward and ſecret power, that by meanes thereof ſhee ſhall floriſh and grow; contrary to all hope and reaſon of fleſh and blood. Let vs not be out of heart then though the Church ſeeme to want *rootes*: neither let vs not thinke ſhe hath none, becauſe they appeare not to our ſight; for the Lord hath promiſed ſhe ſhall take roote downward.

The Church of God muſt liue by faith, and not by ſight.

Now hee addes the *fruit* alſo; becauſe the Church floriſheth not onely as the graſſe on the houſe top, which is the eſtate of the wicked, as we obſerued in the 27. verſe; but ſhee ſhall bring forth plentifull increaſe: and thus the Lord will finiſh in her the good worke he hath begun.

Verſ. 32. *For out of Ieruſalem ſhall goe a remnant, and they that eſcape out of mount Zion: the zeale of the Lord of hoſts ſhall doe this.*

BEfore, hee promiſed the deliuerance of the Church vnder the ſimilitude of *rootes* and *fruits*: now hee ſets it forth in plaine tearmes, without any figure. In theſe words therefore

therefore he alludes to that ſiege of *Sennacherib*, which incloſed this ſmall remnant of people vp in Ieruſalem, as in a priſon; by meanes whereof they were brought to great extremitie. Now ſaith he, they *ſhall come forth*: that is to ſay, all paſſages ſhall be laid open, ſo as you ſhall walke to and fro againe at liberrie without any annoyance. For *going forth*, is here oppoſed to the ſtraits into which the poore Iewes were brought, in regard of the feare of their enemies. Albeit, this word not onely ſignifies libertie to goe and come, but the multiplying of the people which were few in number. When the land of Iudeah then was ouerſpread againe with great troopes, and that out of theſe ſmall remnants there came forth men and women like flocks of ſheepe, which were diſperſed into all the quarters of the world, it could neuer haue bin brought to paſſe, vnleſſe the Lord of this little handfull, had created, I will not ſay one, but many peoples.

Iſa. 30 26. 17.18.19. 20. & 31. 10,11.12,13. *Zach.* 8.2.3. 4.5.6.7.8.

He not onely oppoſeth the *zeale of the Lord* againſt the counſels of men, that hee might magnifie the excellencie of this worke; but alſo admoniſheth vs that it ſufficeth of it ſelfe for all reaſons wherefore the Lord ſhewes ſo wonderfull and admirable ſignes and tokens of his power. The matter in outward appearãce was incredible, as we haue ſaid: for there were many impediments on euery ſide, and helpes none at all. Thus God manifeſts then, that the loue he beares to his Church is ſuch, that it ſhall be no hard matter with him to worke extraordinarily for the maintenance of it. Hee vſed the like phraſe of ſpeech in Chap. 9.7.

Verſ. 33. *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord concerning the King of Aſſur; Hee ſhall not enter into this Citie, nor ſhoote an arrowe there, nor come before it with ſhield, nor caſt a mount againſt it.*

NOw he comes to the deliuerance whereof he ſpake before: for firſt, God promiſed to driue away *Sennacherib*, verſ. 29. ſecondly, hee promiſeth to furniſh the people with neceſſarie foode, albeit the Country was pilled and waſted: verſ. 30. Laſtly, that he will cauſe this ſmall remnant to increaſe into an infinite multitude: verſ. 31.32. Now hauing ſpoken of the two laſt points, he returnes againe to the firſt; becauſe without it, the other twaine had been little to purpoſe; to wit, vnleſſe the people had bin deliuered out of the hands of this Tyrant. *God* therefore promiſeth *that himſelfe* will ſtand as a braſen wall, *to keepe him from entring in vpon them*: yea, he would ſo preuent him, that he ſhould not ſo much as come neere to aſſaile them at all. For he ſaith, the enemies ſhall not *ſhoote an arrow there*. I thinke the word *Sollah*, ſhould be taken here for a croſſe-bow, or other inſtrument of war, with which they ſhot darts; rather then for a *mount*, for mounts cannot be *caſt*.

1 2 3

Verſ. 34. *By the ſame way hee came ſhall he returne, and not come into this Citie ſaith the Lord.*

WEe haue ſaid before, that *to returne by the ſame way*, ſignifies, To goe his way without performing any thing; as wee vſe to ſay in our common prouerbe; Hee went as wiſe as he came, when one returnes without doing that which he came for, and is preuented in all his enterpriſes. To confirme this, he addes that the *Lord hath ſaid it*. For no ſooner hath he (which cannot lie) ſpoken, but we ought forthwith to receiue and imbrace his word; and that no leſſe then if all impediments being taken away, we ſaw the effect by and by to take place.

Il n'en eſt retourné comme il eſt venu.

Verſ. 35. *For I will defend this Citie to ſaue it, for mine owne ſake, and for my ſeruant Dauids ſake.*

THis is the confirmation of the former ſentence, why *Sennacherib* ſhall not come into Ieruſalem; to wit, becauſe the Lord is her protector. The Prophet here then commands *Hezekiah* and all the people to turne their eies towards God, in regard the ſight of this Tyrant was ſo terrible vnto them, that they could doe nothing but tremble. As when we at this day ſhould conſider the power of our enemies, it would make vs quake for feare; in ſo much ỹ there ſhould reſt ſcarſly one dram of hope in vs: but we muſt notwithſtanding looke directly vp vnto God, and lay hold vpon his promiſes, and to fenſe our ſelues with them, as with a ſhield. It is to him, to him alone, I ſay, that we muſt turne our eies, ſeeing he hath power enough in himſelfe for vs to repreſſe the power of mortall man. For this promiſe muſt not be reſtrained to *Hezekias* his time onely, but it extends it ſelfe to all ages. And yet the Prophets words haue a more ample ſenſe: for he affirmes, that God himſelfe is the protector and keeper of the Citie, becauſe he had taken it into his cuſtodie. Thence therefore he concludes, that it muſt needes be out of danger, becauſe his defence is all-ſufficient.

This promiſe muſt not be reſtrained to Hezekias his time onely, but to ours alſo.

When he ſaith he will do it *for his own ſake*, he thereby brings *Hezekias* and all the people to the conſideration of the free couenant. The Iewes had been often rebuked, and that very ſharply; yet did they not ceaſe euen of ſet purpoſe to prouoke the wrath of God againſt them: in which regard, they not onely deſerued to be left to themſelues in the time of need, but that he ſhould inflict vpon them euident ſignes of his fearefull wrath and indignatiõ. That deſpaire might be preuented then, hee teacheth them that God will bee their defence: not that hee findes the cauſe thereof in them, but becauſe he reſpects his own name. Why ſo? Firſt, that his word might ſtand faſt, which was, that hee would neuer caſt off the poſteritie of *Abraham*, which hee had adopted, nor aboliſh his worſhippe, nor

Ezek 31.32.

put out the remembrance of his name, though the Sanctuarie ſhould be deſtroied: 2 ſecondly, leſt hee ſhould expoſe his name to the blaſphemies & ſcornes of the heathen. There is therefore a ſecret rebuke included here, which this people deſerued to be galled withall, and that iuſtlie: for *Hezekias* no doubt had more adoe to quiet and ſtill the Iewes from their murmurings, then to chaſe away the enemie: for they tooke on no leſſe, then if all had been loſt. We muſt not thinke then that God had reſpect to the deſerts of the people, or to any other particular cauſe, but ſolely to his owne glorie. For wee muſt ſupplie a cloſe antitheſis here, which is expreſſed by *Ezechiel: I do not this for your ſakes O houſe of Iſrael, but for mine holy names ſake*, Ezech.36.22.

What refuge we are to flee to, in the conſcience of our vnworthines.

Now ſeeing the ſame reaſon holds ſtill in reſpect of vs, let vs boldlie oppoſe this buckler againſt all our ſinnes: Lord, although we are worthie by thy iuſt iudgements of a thouſand deaths, yet be thou pleaſed to accept of thine owne free mercie and goodnes to keep thy promiſe with vs. I grant, that hypocrites gaine nothing by this, that God is ſaid to be the perpetuall protector of his Church: but vnto this rock muſt all the faithfull learne to flee for refuge, though they come emptie handed of any thing of their owne to appeaſe his wrath withall: for he will neuer ſuffer his Church to periſh, becauſe he hath built and eſtabliſhed it with a purpoſe to keepe it: but the cauſe that moues him to doe it is nothing elſe but his owne free and infinit loues ſake.

Furthermore it is diligentlie to be noted when he addes, *for Dauid my ſeruants ſake*: for albeit it had been ſufficient for God to haue ſought the cauſe of our ſaluation only in his free and vndeſerued loue which he beares to his people: yet it is not without cauſe that he placeth a moſt certaine pledge of it in *Dauid*, in whoſe hand he had renued the couenant, promiſing to be his father. Neither doth the Prophet propound him here as a priuate perſon, but as that holy King, whoſe throne was eſtabliſhed by God, that vnder his gouernment ỹ Church might inioy peace and ſafetie. In a word, he was the mediator as it were betweene God and man, in which reſpect he was ſuperior to the very Angels: for he repreſented the perſon of Ieſus Chriſt.

2.Sam.7.14.

Now albeit ſoone after his Throne was throwne downe, and the Diadem torne in peeces, yet was not this confirmation vaine, that God would ſtill for a time *keepe the Citie*, becauſe he would in no ſort breake his promiſe made to *Dauid* in his truth, touching the perpetuitie of his kingdome. For wee know that his ſucceſſors loſt not the principalitie by the exile of the people till Chriſt came; who for this cauſe in Hoſea 3. 5. is called *Dauid*. By this we ſee how ridiculous the Papiſts are, whē they affirme we are pardoned by the merits of Saints: for there is great difference betweene the Saints and *Dauid*, in regard of the promiſe which was made vnto him. He might as well haue named *Abraham*, or any other renoumed Patriarke in the Church: but becauſe he now ſpeakes of the Church, and of the eternitie of Chriſtes kingdome, he ſpeciallie names *him*, whom aboue all others had expreſſlie receiued this promiſe, Behold, this is my reſt, here will I dwell: for I haue a delight therein, Pſal.132.14. Seeing the Prophet then reſpects the promiſe, and not the perſon, the Papiſts then are worthilie branded with ỹ name of abſurd Doctors, in thinking that the interceſſion of Saints (a dreame of their owne deuiſing) can be any whit confirmed by this place. Nay, that which they pretend here, directlie croſſeth their error: for *Dauid* which is heere placed betweene, beares the image of the only Mediator, who aboliſheth all newfound interceſſions. Reade 1.Tim.2.5. 1.Iohn 2. 1. 2.

Ezech.21. 26. 27.

Pſal.132.11.

Ieré.30.9. Ezech.37. 24.

Papiſts ridiculous in vrging the merits of Saints as a cauſe why God ſhould pardon vs.

The Prophet reſpects the promiſe, not Dauids perſon.

Verſ. 36. *Then the Angell of the Lord went out, and ſmote in the Camp of Aſſhur an hundreth fourſcore and fine thouſand: ſo when they aroſe earely in the morning, Behold, they were all dead corpſes.*

NOw the Prophet ſhewes what befell the Aſſyrian, that wee might not thinke the Lords words to be but winde: he teſtifies then that his propheſie tooke effect in deed; that ſo they might be the better perſwaded he was ſent of God, and had ſpoken nothing of his owne head. But this ſo admirable a worke muſt not be reſtrained to this one propheſie alone, but to the whole ſcope of his doctrine, which by this miracle was authoriſed, himſelfe knowne to be the ſeruant of God, and his calling ratified and confirmed. For doubtleſſe he annexeth this norable and rare example of Gods iuſtice as a thing then very freſh in mind, to teſtifie to the end of the world that it was God which ſpake by his mouth.

But now where the Angell made this ſlaughter, it appeares not. The common opinion is, that it happened whileſt Ieruſalem was beſieged; but it might well happen alſo in the way, that is to ſay, when *Sennacherib* came to lay ſiege againſt Ieruſalem. But I leaue it as a thing in ſuſpence, becauſe it is of no great moment: albeit we may eaſily iudge by the ſcope of the text, that this Tyrant came not ſo neere that he could throw any of his darts againſt the Citie.

Moreouer, we are to reiect an inuention of Satan, who hath indeuored by help of prophane hiſtories to darken ſo manifeſt and admirable a iudgement of God, which affirme, that part of *Sennacheribs* hoſt died of ỹ plague in the warres of Egypt, by reaſon whereof he was inforced to returne home into his owne countrie. But who will ſay that there died ſo many men of the peſtilence in one night? This father of lies (according to his ancient cuſtome) honors the Egyptians with this miracle, which God purpoſely wrought in fauor of his Church. The fact it ſelfe makes it more then manifeſt, that Ieruſalem was miraculouſlie deliuered, as from the gates of death, ſpeciallie if we way the meſſage which *Iſaiah* brought, as we haue ſeene before: by which he apparantlie teſtified that God wrought this

this worke rather for the Iewes then for the Egyptians.

And leſt any man ſhould imagin this miracle came to paſſe by naturall cauſes, it is expreſſe added, that all this multitude was ſlaine by the *ſtroke of an Angell*. Now it is no vnwonted thing for God thus to vſe the miniſterie of *Angels*, in procuring the ſafetie of the faithfull, for whoſe ſakes he hath created all the armies of heauen. It alſo ſerues greatly for the confirmation of our faith, when we ſee there are *ſo many thouſands* of them which wait for our ſaluation. The Lord himſelfe is ſtrong enough, and his truth it is which onely keeps vs: Rom. 8. 38. For the Angels are but his hands as it were, in regard whereof, they *Eph. 1. 21.* are called powers and principalities: but hee prouides exceedingly for our weakneſſe, by giuing ſuch celeſtiall miniſters to be our gardians and protectors. And yet the whole glorie muſt be aſcribed to God alone, we are to acknowledge the Angels but his inſtruments; for otherwiſe wee ſhould eaſilie ſlip into the error of the Papiſts, who aſcribing more then is meete to them, doe rob God of his power, to clothe them with it. With which error alſo, the learnedſt men of our time haue bin bewitched, as we know.

Now we cannot affirme certainly whether this were done by the hand of one, or manie Angels; neither is it much materiall: for the Lord is able eaſily to effect one and the ſame thing, by one or a thouſand of them. For he vſeth not their miniſterie, as if hee ſtood in need of their helpe, but rather to ſupport our infirmitie, as we haue ſaid before: yet it is moſt probable, and anſwers beſt to the Prophets words, that one Angell alone had commiſſion to doe this ſeruice. Euen as in the antient deliuerance, one Angell paſſed thorow the land of Egypt in a night, to ſlay their firſt borne: Exod. 12. 29. Sometimes God alſo executes his iudgements by wicked angels: but he choſe one of his voluntarie ſeruants here, to deliuer his Church, as by his hand.

An hundred, fourſcore, and fiue thouſand.] We are not to maruell that this was ſo great an armie, as ſome ignorants doe, who eſteeme it but a fable, when they heare tell of ſuch an huge multitude of ſouldiers; becauſe a leſſe number ſerues the turne now a daies. But hiſtories doe plainly teſtifie, that the eaſterne people mannaged things cleane contrarie to vs; and it is to bee ſeene among them yet at this day. It was no maruell they brought ſo many forth to battel, becauſe they were much more inabled to indure cold and heat then wee, they had more able bodies to labour, they were more ſparing in diet; neither were they giuen to delicious and daintie fare, with which vice our ſouldiers are corrupted.

As touching the manner of this diſcomfiture, here is nothing ſet downe for certaine. *Rabbins too bold in coining fables,* The Rabbines without any teſtimony or likely coniecture, affirme, that they were ſmitten with thunder and lightning. For as they are bold to coine fables, ſo are they not afraid to auouch any thing that comes in their heads, euen as if they had found the ſame recorded in ſome authentique hiſtorie. But the words ſhew, that this was no ſuch apparant ſlaughter: for the Prophet ſaith, that they lay all dead vpon the earth: if they had bin ſmitten with lightning, euery one would haue perceiued it, neither would the Prophet haue concealed it. The cõiecture of the Rabbines then you ſee, is confuted out of the very text: but I had rather laue off in the mid way. It ſufficeth that wee know thus much; the Lord was minded to deliuer Ieruſalem out of the hand of the Aſſyrian; and he ſmote the hoſt with ſudden death, altogether without mans helpe.

Verſ. 37. *So Sennacherib King of Aſſur departed, and went away, and returned, and dwelt at Nineueh.*

NOw *Iſaiah* ſhewes, with what diſhonour this Tyrant retired; who before, in his conceit, had deuoured all Iudeah, and durſt challenge the Lord himſelfe. In that he expreſſeth his recoiling backe, with ſo manie words to one purpoſe, it is to caſt diſgrace vpon his cowardly flight: for it is no ſuperfluous repetition when he ſaith, *he departed, hee went his way, and he returned.* The name of *King* is alſo added to his further ſhame. As if he ſhould ſay; See this King, this *great King*, Chap. 36. 4. whom *Rabſhekeh* extolled ſo highly, becauſe of his power. Hee came not into Iudeah to returne with infamie; but God for his mercy and truthes ſake droue him out thence, euen as chaffe before the wind. *Il partit, il s'en alla, il retourna.*

Where it is ſaid, hee returned to dwell *in Nineueh*, it ſhewes vs further, that hee not onely left his courage, but his forces alſo quailed; for hee would not willingly haue ſtaied at home, if deſpaire had not been as a chaine to keepe him in: he contented himſelfe with his kingdome then, whereof *Nineueh* was the mother Citie. Afterwards when the Caldeans had ſubdued the Aſſyrians, the Monarchy was tranſported vnto Babylon; to wit, ten yeeres after the death of *Sennacherib*, in which time *Eſar-haddon*, (of whom mention is here made) reigned. For *Paricadis* being winked at, and ſupported by many, the forraigne enemies might eaſilie conquer and ſubdue a nation full of factions: and therefore *Merodach* hauing made vſe of this occaſion, inuaded the Aſſyrians, and brought them vnder his command.

Verſ. 38. *And as hee was in the Temple worſhipping Niſrock his God, Adramelech and Sharezer his ſonnes ſlew him with the ſword: and Eſar-haddon his ſonne reigned in his ſtead.*

THe Rabbines giue themſelues the like li- *Rabbins bold in coining fables.* bertie heere to coine deuices; for they faine that *Sennacherib* asked his idoll, why he could not vanquiſh the Iewes: and it anſwered, becauſe *Abraham* meant to haue ſacrificed his ſonne to God. And then this Tyrant following this example, determined to offer

vp

vp his sonnes, to get the fauour of his god, but his sonnes being prouoked to wrath by the crueltie of their father, slue him in the temple of his Idols. But what haue we to doe to hearken to such coniectures, in which the Iewes bewray their (more then) shameleſse impudencie?

The miserable end of Tyrants.

We may see heere as in a glasse, the wretched end of Tyrants, whom the Lord cuts off without mans hand, euen then when they thinke to swallow vp all by their furie: and not only so, but exposeth them and their rage to the scorne of all posteritie. *Sennacherib* 1 came into Iudeah with a mightie host, and returned to his owne house with a few followers, and God the Conqueror leades him 2 captiue by way of triumph. But this is not all, for in the middes of his kingdome, in the 3 middes of the chiefe Citie of his kingdome, yea in his very Temple (the reuerence whereof would haue been a meanes to haue preserued the meanest abiect) he is slaine: not by forren enemies, not by popular sedition, not by traytors, nor by his seruants, *but by his* 4 *owne sonnes*, that so his end might be the more ignominious. Herein let vs consider, that these insatiable gulfes who haue delighted to bathe themselues in the blood of others, are slaine by those that are neere vnto them: and cut off by those, of whose loyaltie they seemed to be most secured. Such an act is much more horrible, then if strangers had done it: but thus the Lord punisheth the crueltie of those who with an ambitious desire aspiring to be aloft, spare not the very innocents. There are diuers examples of such things in prophane histories, where the iust iudgements of God may easily be discerned. *Senacherib* therfore receiues ỹ iust recõpence of his insatiable couetousnes, in that he plotted how to enlarge his Monarchy, and in the meane while takes no order for his busines at home, how to bring vp his sonnes in vnitie: for because he loued some, and cared not for the rest, thence proceeded this conspiracie. To conclude, this Tyrant was not only murdered; but his kingdome also soone after was brought to nought, as wee haue said before: and, that his successor might not deuise any thing against the Iewes, God occupied them at home with ciuill warres, and dissentions.

THE XXXVIII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *About that time Hezekias was sick vnto the death, and Isaiah sonne of Amoz came vnto him, and said vnto him, Put thine house in an order, for thou shalt die, and not liue.*

NOW the Prophet shewes how sharply this good king was assailed with another kind of tentation; to wit, with so dangerous a sickenes, as there was no hope left of his recouerie: and not only that, but he was also greatlie grieued in regard he receiued sentence of death *from the mouth of the Lord*, no lesse, then if he had struck him on the head with a thunderbolt from heauen. We cannot certainly affirme in what time this happened, whether afore, or after the siege, neither need we stand long to discusse the matter. It may easily be gathered from the holy historie, that this sicknes fell out about the fourteenth yeere of his reigne, either about the time that the Assyrian came to lay siege to the Citie, or after his deliuerance. For he reigned 29. yeres; in the fourteenth *Sennacherib* inuaded Iudea: fifteene yeeres are added to his daies by promise made him here from the Lord; here are the 29. yeeres then. Thus it appeares that *Hezekias* was sicke in the fourteenth yeere of his reigne. All the difficultie is, whether it were in, or after the siege. The likelieſt coniecture as I thinke is, that he fell sick after the siege: my reason is, if it had happened during the siege, no doubt but the Prophet would haue made some mention of it. But he shewed before that *Hezekias* sent Ambassadors to pacifie *Rabshekeh*: also, how he went vp into the Temple and spread the letters before God; lastly, that he sent messengers to aske counsell of the Prophet: now all these actions, as you know, should hardlie agree to a sick man: for had this affliction fallen out with the other, the Prophet would not vtterlie haue passed this circumstance ouer in silence. In a matter which is somewhat doubtfull therfore let vs follow that which is the most probable: to wit, that this good king being rid of the enemie, fell forthwith into a grieuous sickne which had almost cost him his life. 1 2 3

In the meane while it is not without cause that this historie is annexed to the former, one following as it were in the neck of another: for thereby we perceiue that God gaue him scarcely so much respit as to take his breath: being escapt the sands, he then falles by and by vpon the rocks. Let vs be admonished therefore that the faithfull are subiect vnto diuers temptations, so as they are first tried by warre, then by sicknesses: yea sometimes afflictions come in so thick and threefold vpon them without intermission, that they indure combates all their life long. Why so? To teach them, that when one billow is ouer, they must expect another to follow presentlie. For they ought to be in such readines, that if the Lord shall be pleased to heape sorrow vpon sorrow, yet they must not breake in sunder, nor yet be discouraged vnder any calamitie whatsoeuer. If he giue them leaue a little to take breath, let them know he doth it in respect of their weaknes: but I aduise such not to imagin that these short truces should presage any long time of peace vnto

The faithfull subiect to diuers temptations, sometimes all their liues long.

Note.

vnto them: no, let them rather in the meane while gather new ſtrength, that hauing finiſhed their courſe, they may looke for reſt when they haue attained the quiet hauen of Gods kingdome.

1 *Vnto death.*] Such a ſickneſſe might well trouble this holy perſonage; for ſuch diſeaſes are commonly dolorous, eſpecially if the vlcer be inflamed. But that which moſt afflicted him was, becauſe ſome ſignes of Gods anger were mixed therewithall, whereby he might iudge that hee was now become his aduerſe partie; becauſe being but lately paſſed out of one greeuous calamitie, he is now ſuddenly ſeazed vpon by death, as one vnworthy to hold his Kingdome any longer. Beſides, hee had then no children; ſo as it ſeemed after his death things were likely to be wonderfully confuſed. Thus then the apprehenſion of Gods wrath doth more wound the conſciences of the faithfull, then any bodily infirmitie whatſoeuer: neither can it be auoided, but they muſt needs forthwith be ouerwhelmed, hauing loſt the ſweet taſte of his fauour. But the Lord minding indeed to adde affliction to affliction, in expreſſe termes tels him, *thou ſhalt die.* And that it might ſtrike the deeper impreſſion, he takes from him all hope of life: for theſe words, *thou ſhalt not liue*, are not ſuperfluous; but are added by way of confirmation, or augmentation of the thing. As if he ſhould haue ſaid; there is no way but one with thee. Men are wont to trifle out the time when death hath but areſted them, and they turne their eies euery way to ſpie out ſome ſtartingholes: to the end therefore that *Hezekias* ſhould not ſuffer his mind to roue vp and downe (as we are wont to doe in vncertaine things) hee telles him twice for failing, *that he muſt die.* And that he might indeed bid the world farewell, the Prophet warnes him to *ſet his affaires in order* with all ſpeede; that his Counſel might know what to doe after his death: as if he ſhould haue ſaid; If thou wilt haue death to reſpite thee a while, then ſet thine houſe in an order quickly.

2 Here we ſee then (but I will ſpeake it by the way) that God approues of the practiſe which is vſuall among men. What is that? Men that die giue their kinsfolks or neighbours charge to performe their will, and to take order alſo for diſpoſing of the familie.

Ionathan hath tranſlated; Leaue thine houſe to ſome one: but the conſtruction of the words teach the contrary. Well, we ſee that euery one which paſſeth out of this life, ought to ſhew that he ſtands charged with a dutie; to wit, to take order for his familie for the time to come. Notwithſtanding the chiefe care conſiſts not in teſtaments and heires, but concerning the ſaluation of thoſe whom God hath committed vnto our charge.

3 The apprehenſion of Gods wrath doth more wound the conſciences of the faithfull, then any bodily infirmitie whatſoeuer.

Mens laſt wills and teſtaments approued.

Two things ought to be reſpected in teſtaments.

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Verſ. 2. *Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and praied vnto the Lord.*

NOw hee ſhewes how *Hezekias* was affected with this meſſage, that his faith and pietie might the better appeare vnto vs. He neither fumes nor frets as the vnbeleeuers doe, but takes vp his croſſe patiently: he ſtands not to reaſon the caſe with God; to wit, that he had ſuſtained ſorrow enough already at the hands of his enemies, and therefore needed not now preſently to bee ſo roughly dealt withall, by a new kind of affliction. This is indeed the triall of true patience, euen to beare the croſſe quietly: that is to ſay, not for once, but to perſeuere vnto the end, and to bee alwaies ready to indure new aſſaults. But aboue all, we are to bow vnder Gods iudgements, and not to murmure at his ſeueritie, how hard ſo euer the caſe goe with vs: as *Dauid* alſo confeſſeth, that hee held his peace, becauſe God had done it: Pſal. 39. 10.

The true triall of patience.

To this appertaines that which is added, *that he turned his face to the wall.* for being caſt downe with ſhame and ſorrow, he gathers in his thoughts, as if hee would leaue the preſence of men, to turne himſelfe wholly vnto God, and ſatisfie himſelfe in him alone. The geſture which he vſeth is a thing indifferent in it ſelfe; but we aduantage our ſelues much when we turne our eies from all ſuch obiects as might carry away our thoughts in praier: for ſo, wee get the greater freedome of ſpirit to powre forth our deſires in the preſence of God. Surely we are all of vs ſhettle witted by nature, a little thing eaſilie diſtracts vs: and therefore we cannot be too carefull in vſing all meanes to hold our thoughts ſhort from wandring. If we be to pray with others, ſhame hinders vs from doing it with ouermuch vehemencie, leſt wee ſhould be taxed of pride and hypocriſie; or we feare to vſe thoſe geſtures that might be thought vnſeemly: it is therefore fit wee ſhould preuent all lets and impediments. *Hezekias* turnes not his face to the wall then, as one in a paſſion, or rebelliouſly and diſdainfully reiecting the meſſage that was brought vnto him; but as one who by this geſture framed himſelfe with the greater ardencie to this dutie of praier.

Our praiers are much furthered by hauing our ſenſes freed from outward obiects.

Wherefore Hezekias turned his face to the wall.

Whereas hee vtters nothing in expreſſe words, as he did before when he went vp into the Temple in the ſight of the people, it was a ſigne that his thoughts were much perplexed, ſo as it ſeemed his whole body was as it were ſhrunke in with heauineſſe. And yet he leaues vs a ſingular example of pietie, that being *iudged to death, he yet ceaſeth not ſtill to call vpon God.*

But theſe words, *thou ſhalt die, and not liue*, did not onely tend to gall him a little, but to pierce and wound him to the very heart: as if God had meant at once by his ſoueraigne power to haue deſtroied him. For it was a ſigne of his fearefull diſpleaſure thus on a ſudden to cut him off in the flower of his youth, and to take him from off the earth, as one vnworthy to inioy the ſocietie of men any longer. Doubtleſſe hee wreſtled not againſt death onely, but againſt hell it ſelfe, and the torments thereof, wherewith for a time he was ſharply aſſailed. Whence it followes, that hee conceiued ſomewhat more in his thoughts, then the Prophet mentions: but howſoeuer

howsoeuer he could not by and by dispatch himselfe out of these incumbrances, yet the holy Ghost did suggest into this confused and perplexed spirit of his, such groanes, as could not be expressed. And in truth it had been an vncoth and absurd message, if so bee God had not conforted him inwardly by the secret worke of his Spirit, who was now as good as stricken downe to hell with the outward sound of the Prophets words. Now for as much as hee would neuer haue repented, being seased on by despaire, mortification went formost; next, followed that secret worke of the Spirit, which consecrated this poore dead body a liuing sacrifice acceptable vnto God.

Rom.8.26.

Vers. 3. *And said, I beseech thee, Lord, remember now how I haue walked before thee in trueth, and with a perfect heart, and haue done that which is good in thy sight: and Hezekiah wept sore.*

IT seemes here that he meant to reason the case with God, and to rip vp his former life vnto him, as one being wrongfully afflicted: but he meant nothing lesse. He rather furnisheth himselfe with arguments to buckle against the sharpe and dangerous temptations which might follow. For when the Lord dealt thus roughly with him, he might thinke himselfe forlorne, forsaken, and reiected, as if God had disliked of all that he had done before: for which cause he fortifies & cheeres vp himselfe, by protesting that *all his actions proceeded from the vprightnesse of his heart*. In a word, hee concludes that his indeuors were not displeasing vnto God, though hee were presently taken away: and thus he makes way for good hope and praier.

Hezekias opposeth not his merits against Gods righteousnes, but armes himselfe against a sharp temptation.

Hee opposeth not his merits then to the righteousnesse of God, neither complaines he as if he were punished vniustly, but armes his selfe against a sharpe temptation, to the end Gods dealing might not seem too seuere in his eies, in regard that hee had so well reformed and taken away corruptions, which had then the full swinge in his kingdome, but chiefly in the Church.

God admits his children sometime to glory in their well doing.

I denie not but the Lord sometimes admits his children to reioice in the things which they haue well done: not as vanting of their deserts in his sight, but to acknowledge his benefits, and to be so touched with the remembrance thereof, that they may the better fit themselues thereby to beare all their aduersities patiently. Sometimes also the importunitie of their enemies constraines them to glory with an holy boasting, that they may commend their cause to God, as to him that is the Iudge and defender of it: and so *Dauid* boldly opposeth his *innocencie* against the slanders of his aduersaries, and that *euen before the iudgement seate of God*: Psal.7.9. and 17.3. But *Hezekiah* meant here to preuent Satans sophistrie, whereof the faithfull haue sufficient experience, whilest vnder pretence of humilitie, hee ouerwhelmes them in despaire. We must be very warie therefore, that our hearts be not swallowed vp of it.

It is an old practise of Satan, vnder colour of humilitie, to driue vs into despaire.

Besides, from his words we gather the true rule of a well ordered life; to wit, when *the integritie of the heart* holds the first place: for there is nothing that displeaseth God so much, as when we goe about to cosen either him, or mē by our dissimulatiō: for as a glistering shew of works is wont to dazle our eies; so nothing prouokes his wrath more thē feined holinesse, in regard his name is thereby most profaned. We know he is a spirit: is it not good reason then that he should be worshipped spiritually, especially seeing he protesteth that a *double heart* is an abomination vnto him? *Hezekiah* therefore had good cause as you see, to beginne at the *vprightnesse* of his *heart*.

The rule of a well ordered life.
The first rule.
Nothing prouokes God more then fained holinesse. *Iob.4.*

The word *Chalem*, which is translated *perfect*, is nothing else but that integritie and soundnesse of heart which is opposed to hypocrisie; which also appeares by the word *truth*, according as Saint *Paul* saith, that the end of the law, is loue out of *a pure heart*, a good conscience, and faith vnfeined. Moreouer, *Hezekias* sets downe the fruits which issue from a pure heart, as from the roote; not onely to animate himselfe, but others also, especially concerning those things which might giue them any occasion of stumbling. Hee staggered not then, but meant to remoue the impediments which peraduenture might discourage many. 1.Tim.1.5.

Againe, let vs note how our life must be ordered, if we desire that God should approue of vs; to wit, that we doe nothing *vvithout his commandement*: for as hee reiects and condemnes all outward shewes, whereby hypocrits would bee thought iolly fellowes; so esteemes he nothing at all of any newfound seruices, wherein the superstitious sort trauaile in vaine, thinking they merit much at his hands, whilest they cast his word behind their backs. But *Hezekias*, who knew that obedience was better then sacrifices, 1.Sam.15. 22. saith not onely that he ran, (which some often doe, though cleane out of the way) but also that he squared his whole life to the *commandements* of God, which onely is the competent Iudge thereof. Now from this place wee may gather, how much this holy personage was kindled with the affection of praier: for albeit he sees nothing about him but signes of Gods wrath, yet hee ceaseth not to haue recourse vnto him still, and exerciseth his faith, by powring out his praiers & *teares* in his presence; which all faithfull hearts ought carefully and diligentlie to practise, and that euen in their deepest distresses.

The second rule.
And haue done that which was good in thy sight.
Hezekiah not onely ran, but he ran well.
God must be sought vnto by praier, when hee seemes most angrie.

Vers. 4. *Then came the word of the Lord to Isaiah, saying;*

ISaiah went his way, and left his sting behind him, as they say; leauing him as a dead man, whom in the name of the Lord he had adiudged to die. In the meane while we may gather from his song, how restlesse his thoughts

thoughts were, or rather, with how great terror he was ſurpriſed. It is not eaſie to define of the intermiſſion betweene the Prophets departure, and his returne: yet it is out of queſtion, that the promiſe both touching his recouery, and life, was not made till he had felt himſelfe forlorne; yea, after he had a long time been toſſed vp and downe with furious ſtormes and tempeſts. For his faith was tried to the vtmoſt when God thus hid his face from him, and ſuffered him to lie plunged in the darkneſſe of death: yet we haue told you already, that the faith of this King was not ſo quenched, but that ſome ſparks thereof appeared, though hee were left deſtitute of all outward comforts. For by the ſecret inſtinct of the holy Ghoſt, he breathed out vnutterable groanes from this bottomleſſe gulfe, which aſcended vp into the eares of the moſt high. From whence we gather, that the faithfull are ſo heard in the day of their diſtreſſe, that the fauour of God manifeſts not it ſelfe vnto them at the firſt cry, but hee deferres of purpoſe to let them feele it, till hee ſees they be throughly humbled.

Now if it were needfull that ſo excellent a king and ſeruant of God ſhould be in a manner thus ouerwhelmed with ſorrowes, that he might be the better fitted and prouoked to deſire Gods fauour, and to ſigh and grone vnto him, being at the laſt caſt, and almoſt ſwallowed vp of the lower hells: let vs not wonder if ſometimes he leaues vs perplexed with feare and anguiſh, and deferres that comfort long which we deſire. But ſome may thinke it ſtrange that God forthwith called back his ſentence, as if he repented himſelfe of that which was gone out of his lips: for there is nothing leſſe agreeable to his nature then to be changeable. I anſwere, *Hezekias* was not adiudged to death in the decree and counſell of God: but his meaning herein was to trie and examin the faith of his ſeruant. Wherefore in this denunciation there muſt be a condition ſupplied; for otherwiſe *Hezekias* could neuer haue bowed the Lord, nor diſanulled his irreuocable decree neither by his prayers nor teares. But the Lord threatned him as he did *Abimelech* king of Gerar for taking *Sarah*, *Abrams* wife, Gen. 20. 3. And as *Ionas* did the Ninenites, Ionas 1. 2. & 3. 4. But it will be further obiected, that it is contrarie to Gods nature to ſpeake one thing & thinke another: for thus his words ſhall loſe their authoritie, becauſe men will eſteeme of his promiſes and threatnings as things of little weight. But wee muſt iudge of the forme of theſe words, as of the ſenſe of thoſe which I haue alreadie expounded. GOD gaue ſentẽce of death vpõ *Hezekias*, becauſe he would not that he ſhould die: neither had it been needfull nor profitable to haue ſent him this meſſage, had not the remedie been neere at hand. Beſides, as it was the meaning of God to humble his ſeruant with feare and aſtoniſhment, that by a voluntarie condemning of himſelfe he might by prayers and teares eſcape this chaſtiſement: ſo alſo it was no leſſe his purpoſe to bring him low by this ſharp and biting ſpeech, *Thou ſhalt die*, to the end he might require life, and to haue it reſtored as to him that was now ſhut vp as it were in his ſepulchre. The Prophet ſupplied an infolded condition therefore, which *Hezekias* eaſily eſpied, although he perceiued it not at the firſt. We can not conclude then that God vſed any diſſimulation here, ſeeing he fits his ſpeech to the capacitie and reach of the perſon to whom he ſpeakes: for it is no vnwonted thing with him to kill before he quicken. He only then holds part of his ſpeech in ſuſpence, that by the outward appearance of death, *Hezekias* might by little and little be framed to newnes of life.

First obiection.

Obiect.

Anſ.

A condition muſt be ſupplied in the denuntiatiõ.

Obiect. Second obiection.

Anſ.

He only held part of his ſpeech in ſuſpence.

Verſ. 5. *Goe, and ſay vnto Hezekiah, Thus ſaith the Lord God of Dauid thy father, I haue heard thy prayer, and ſeene thy teares: behold, I will adde vnto thy dayes fifteene yeeres.*

IN his firſt ambaſſage, verſ. 1. he meant only to terrifie *Hezekias*, and therefore contents himſelfe with a bare propounding of the name of God, *before whoſe iudgement ſeat he ſummoned this poore guiltie perſon: but now when hee brings meſſage of conſolation, he addes a particular title, *to ſhew from what fountaine this fauour proceeded: as if he ſhould ſay; God is now mooued to ſhew mercie, ſo as he will not deale extreamely with thee, becauſe he reſpects the Couenant which he hath made with *Dauid*.

Why God propounds his name to Hezekias in a diuers forme.

*As in verſ. 1.

*The God of Dauid thy father.

We know there is nothing more hard then to cheere vp the hearts of ſuch as haue deeply taſted of Gods wrath, with good hope of mercie; and to cauſe them indeed to feele that God is now become fauorable and gracious vnto them. This confirmation therefore was neceſſarie, to the end this good king, being forlorne in himſelfe, might perceiue that life was to be reſtored him, whereof he was in a maner vtterlie depriued, becauſe the promiſe touching the perpetuitie of the kingdome of Iudah could no way be broken.

Nothing more difficult, then to comfort the hearts of ſuch as haue taſted deeply of Gods diſpleaſure.

Thus he being in a maner halfe dead by reaſon of this meſſage, Thou ſhalt dye, the Prophet to incourage him puts him in mind of that promiſe which was then familiarlie knowne of all. I haue ſworne once by mine holines, that I will not faile *Dauid*; His ſeed ſhall indure for euer; and his Throne ſhal be as the Sunne before me, Pſal. 89. 35. 36. Vpon this boord or planck, *Hezekias* caſts himſelfe to ſaue his life from ſhipwrack in theſe boyſterous ſtormes: for he ſpeakes not of *Dauid* here as of a priuat man, but as of an eternall King, which had the promiſe, whereupon *Hezekias* might ſtay himſelfe. I ſay *eternall, not in himſelfe, but in the bleſſed ſeed*. Now becauſe this eternitie was to be manifeſted at the length in Ieſus Chriſt, of whom *Hezekias* and the reſt of the kings of Iudah were figures, he had good cauſe to hope well, in regard himſelfe was the *ſonne and ſucceſſor of Dauid*.

As often therefore as our ſinnes do ſhut vp the way againſt vs from approching vnto God, that we might haue part in his fauor;

let this preface be present before vs. For howsoeuer by our own default he be estranged from vs, yet he is the *father of Christ our head*, in whom our saluation lies alwaies hidden for vs. To be short, God who a little before spake as a Iudge, speakes now as a louing father, by looking vpon the mediator Iesus Christ, who euer appeaseth his anger.

Hauing left him way for hope, he now tels him that his *praiers were heard of God:* which doubtlesse should be as a goad in our sides, to pricke vs forward to the dutie of feruent praier. For albeit God of himselfe be carefull enough of our saluation, and hath euermore preuented vs by his louing kindnesse, and that not onely whilest we slept, but euen before we were borne: notwithstanding when he signifies vnto vs that all the benefits hee bestowes vpon vs, are as the *fruits of our praiers*, our slothfulnesse is vtterly inexcusable, if being so liberally inuited to come vnto God, we scorne to open our mouthes to call vpon his name. Yet we must not thinke that our praiers doe therefore merit, because God accepts so fauourably of them; but in giuing that freely, which of fauour he hath promised, he addes this declaration of his liberalitie, to the end he may the better exercise our faith. For it is no small priuiledge to haue accesse into his presence at all times, & frankly to powre out our hearts before him, and familiarly to cast all our cares and anguishes into his bosome. Had not *Hezekias* praied at all, yet the Lord no doubt would haue taken order by some other meanes, that the gouernment of the kingdome should still haue continued in the stocke of *Dauid:* but that which he was bound to doe in respect of his truth, is attributed vnto *Hezekias* praiers, to the end hee might acknowledge how great the fruit was he receiued from his faith, which he exercised in his praiers.

The Prophet mentions his *teares*, as a signe of his repentance, and also of his zeale and affection: not that they obtaine grace, or that they can appease God of themselues: but to shew that by meanes hereof, praiers which proceede from affection, are distinguished from those which proceede from the lippes onely.

Praiers which proceed from affection, distinguished from those that proceed from the lips onely. Obiect.

In the last place hee addes, that God prolonged the daies of *Hezekias fifteene yeeres*, which at the first might seeme absurd; because we are created vpon condition, not to passe one iot or tittle of that time which God hath set downe: as *Iob* saith; Thou hast set him his bounds, which he cannot passe: Iob.14.5. But the solution is easie, that this length of time must bee referred to *Hezekias* his cogitation: for he was excluded from hope of a longer life, so as he was to account the yeeres following, as the lease thereof renued againe: no lesse then if he had been taken out of his tombe, to liue vpon the earth the second time.

Ans.

Vers. 6. *And I will deliuer thee out of the hand of the King of Assur, and this Citie: for I will defend this Citie.*

THose who thinke that *Hezekias* was sicke during the siege, ground their argument vpon this verse; because otherwise they think this promise should be superfluous: but their reason wants weight. For the Assyrian might well gather his forces together againe, and prepare a fresh armie, both to inuade Iudeah, and to besiege Ierusalem. Yea, that discomfiture which he had before, might so kindle his rage and furie, as to giue a new onset. The Iews then, you see, might iustly tremble when any should signifie some newes to them touching the enemies approching. This promise therefore is not superfluous, for with the hope of life, *Isaiah* secures him from feare of *the Assyrian*, whom *Hezekias* might alwaies haue had in some iealousie, if by this meanes the same had not been preuented. In which, we see how God still amplifies and addes new mercies to the former, which he had shewed him: as in the Chapter before going, God promised him abundance of the fruite of the earth, with deliuerance from the siege.

Vers. 7. *And this signe shalt thou haue of the Lord, that the Lord will doe this thing that he hath spoken:*

8. *Behold, I will bring againe the shadow of the degrees, (whereby it is gone downe in the diall of Ahaz by the Sunne) ten degrees backward: so the Sunne returned by ten degrees, by the which it was gone downe.*

THe holy historie orderly recites, how *Hezekias* asked a signe of the Lord, which was granted vnto him: our Prophet wil onely touch it in the end of the Chapter: but it is no new thing with the Hebrewes thus to set those things last, which should be first, &c. Moreouer, the Lord offers some *signes* voluntarily vnasked. Againe, he grants them to others that require them. Now in regard that the generall vse of signes is to sustaine our infirmitie, God for the most part staies not till they bee asked, but from the beginning hath alwaies ordeined such as himselfe knew would be the most profitable to his Church. If the faithfull then at any time haue desired that their faith might be confirmed by *signes*, we must not by and by follow them therein; because it was a thing very rare: as to Gedeon, who being taken from the flaile to gouerne the people, he gaue *two signes which he asked*, to the end he might be the better confirmed in his calling: Iudg.6.17,36. As touching other signes, hee was wont ordinarilie to giue them to helpe mans weakenesse: as to *Adam*, the tree of life, Gen.2.9. to *Noah*, the raine-bow in the cloudes: Gen.9.13. afterwards, the cloud, the pillar of fire, and the brasen Serpent in the wildernesse: Exod.13. 21. Numb.21.8. The like is to be said of the Passeouer, Exod.12.3. and of all other sacraments which haue been ordeined both vnder

2. Kin.20.8.

The generall vse of signes.

Signes asked. Gedeons fleece.

Signes giuen vnasked. To Adam the tree of life. To Noah the rainbow. To the Israelites the cloud and pillar of fire. The brasen Serpent. The Passeouer, &c.

der the Law and vnder the Gospell, without being asked of God at all.

Obiect. But it seemes *Hezekias* offers iniurie to God, in that he beleeues him not vpon his bare word, when he *asks* a signe.

Anſ. I answere, he is not therefore to be condemned of infidelitie, because his faith was weake: for where is the man to be found that euer had a faith so perfect that was not mingled with vnbeliefe, or which was not faultie? Whereas he seekes some stay to vphold his wauering, he is not to be blamed for it: for hauing imbraced the promise offred him by the Prophet, he shewes himselfe to haue faith in God, in seeking remedie against his distrust. Were there no infirmitie in men, what need should we haue of signes? It is no wonder then if *Hezekias asks one*, seeing the Lord is pleased to offer the same voluntarilie vnto others. Yet we are to note, that the faithfull haue not asked signes of their owne heads, but were led so to doe by the speciall instinct of the holy Ghost, which may also be affirmed touching miracles: for if *Helias* asked raine and drought, it is not lawfull for others to do the like, 1. King. 17. 1. Wee are therefore to consider what the Lord permits vs to do, lest whilest hauing neglected his word, we presume to indent with him according to the vnbridled desires of our owne flesh.

The faithfull haue not asked signes of God rashly, but were moued to do it by the speciall instinct of the holy Ghost.

The *signe* that is here giuen to *Hezekias*, *is the bringing back of the shadow in the dyall with the Sunne tenne degrees*, whereby it was ascended, that is to say, gone forward vpon the Horizon. This signe hath affinitie with the thing it selfe, as all other signes also haue: for it is as if he should haue said, Euen as it is in my power to alter the houres of the day, and to cause the Sunne to come back againe, so am I able to prolong thy life. In that the Sunne went not back so many degrees as there were yeeres added to his life, it could not well be done, because there were but twelue degrees in the Quadrangle: for the dayes were diuided into twelue houres longer or shorter, according to the diuersitie of the seasons. Wee neede not busie our heads much then as touching the number, it is enough that the proportion and similitude of the signe and of the thing it selfe sutes so well together.

The signes that God giues, haue affinitie with the things signified.

Fables of the Iewes. The Iewes doe here inuent fables according to their vsuall maner, affirming, that the day in which *Achaz* died was shorter by ten houres, so as the chastisement inflicted vpon him for his iniquities, were turned to the good of *Hezekias*, in regard the shortnes of one day was the cause of the length of another. But what ground haue they for this here? Truly not so much as any shew at all: for here is nothing said touching the death of *Achaz*, nor of any change which then happned, but of the dyall only which he erected.

Vers. 9. *The Writing of Hezekias king of Iudah when he had been sick, and was recouered of his sicknes.*

ALthough the holy historie mentions not this *writing*, yet is it worthie our obseruation, and to be kept in continuall memorie: for therein we see that *Hezekiah* would not by his *silence* either lightlie passe ouer, or by *forgetfulnes* blot out the remembrance of so excellent a benefit which he had receiued of God. All the faithfull by his example are taught what to doe when God for their sakes manifests his power miraculouslie, or by extraordinarie meanes: it ought not to suffice them that those of their owne times should be made acquainted withall, but as much as in them is they are so to prouide that the posterities to come may be informed of it, as we see *Hezekias* here doth by this his song. *Dauid* in like maner composed many songs to this purpose after he was deliuered out of great dangers; being carefull to haue that sung to the worlds end, which was worthie of euerlasting memorie: see Psal. 18. 2. & 27. But he especiallie whom God hath aduanced to high degree either of honor, or power, euen as one being placed by God vpon a scaffold: he, I say, ought well to know and vnderstand that he is inioined to imitate this godly King in this behalfe: and yet both great and small are diligentlie to beware of ambition, lest whilst they seeme to imitate *Dauid* and *Hezekiah*, they seeke to glorifie their owne names rather then the name of God.

What the faithfull ought to do when God works their deliuerance by vnwonted meanes.

Vers. 10. *I said in the cutting off of my dayes, I shall goe to the gates of the graue: I am deprined of the residue of my yeeres.*

BEhold here a very mournefull song, for it conteines in it complaints rather then prayers. Whence it appeares, that this good King was so straited with distresses, that being oppressed inwardlie, he forceth himselfe to teares and lamentations, and dares not freelie open his mouth to frame a well ordered prayer. In mutterings by himselfe then he layes forth the greatnes of his sorrow: but this may seeme strange if wee consider the cause. Was it beseeming so holie a personage for the desire he had to prolong this transitorie life, so greatly to abhorre death? The first rudiments of the heauenly doctrine do teach vs, that we are but wayfaring men here, and therefore ought swiftlie to runne the race that is set before vs towards eternall life. But *Hezekias* seemes to be so much giuen to the earth, as if he had neuer tasted so much as one dramme of true godlines. He flees and detests death, as if he had been vtterlie vnaquainted with y word of God. What meanes he then to set downe his boiling passions in this maner? It seemes he meant rather to draw the faithfull by his example to a kind of intemperancie, rather then to keepe them within the lists of Gods hests. Are we not all of vs too much inclined to rebellion of our selues, but we must also haue a Scholemaster to instruct vs?

Obiect.

But if we shall rightlie and aduisedlie consider of the matter, we shall see it was most profitable for vs, that the image of this man (in a maner ouerwhelmed with sorrowes)

Anſ.

ſhould be thus liuely painted out before vs in liuely colours. It was not his purpoſe to purchaſe praiſe in the world by preaching his owne praiſes. Truly his praier was an vndoubted teſtimonie of his faith and obedience: but being ſurpriſed with feare and aſtoniſhment, and caſt downe with heauineſſe of ſpirit, he leaues praier, and rather mutters forth paſſionate whiſperings. God therefore in acquainting vs with his infirmitie, meant to inſtruct all his children in humilitie, and therewithall to extol his goodneſſe, by which he was drawne as it were out of the iawes of death.

Now whereas being ready to die, hee bewailes his condition, as if hee had ſet vp his reſt on earth, or as if by death men are brought to nothing; we are to conſider that there was a ſpeciall cauſe of it. For albeit death bee not deſirable in it ſelfe, yet ought the faithfull to mourne daily, in regard they ſerue ſinne too much, whileſt they remaine in this priſon of the fleſh. They are forbidden alſo to lament, as vnbeleeuers do: and on the contrary, they are commanded to lift vp their heads, when they are to depart out of this life, in regard they ſhall change for a better: Luke 21.28. The Church vnder the law was not deſtitute of this conſolation; for albeit the knowledge of the reſurrection was then obſcure, yet that which they had was ſufficient to aſſwage the dolours of the faithfull of that time. For if that falſe Prophet *Balaã* was cõſtrained to cry out, O let me die the death of the righteous, Numb. 23. 10. how much more cauſe had the faithfull ſo to doe, thinke you, in whoſe eares and hearts ſounded this voice, I am the God of *Abraham*? Exod. 3.6. But howſoeuer they aſpired to this heauenly life in ſure and certaine hope, yet is it no wonder to ſee that in *Hezekias*, which *Dauid* cõfeſſeth of himſelfe, Pſ. 30.8,9. who yet quietly left the world when his time was expired, & died ful of daies: 1. King. 1.10. It appears then that neither of them both were diſmaied ſimply, in regard of the feare of death; but they therein perceiued euident tokens of Gods wrath; and for that cauſe they *praied with teares* to be deliuered from it. For wee muſt remember that the Prophet was ſent vnto *Hezekias*, as an Herald of Armes to pronounce ſentence of death vpon him, and that in the name of the moſt high God. Such a meſſage might well drinke vp all his ſpirits, and caſt him as it were into ſuch horrible and fearefull plagues, that in ſeeing nothing but Gods wrath & curſe to ſeaze vpon him, he wreſtled againſt deſpaire it ſelfe.

Thus we ſee how his faith was tried, when being arraigned as it were before the iudgement ſeat of God, he enters into the conſideration of his ſinnes. For firſt, this cogitation
1 might come into his head; What is the cauſe that God ſhould correct his ſeruants ſo ſeuerely, and in the meane while ſpare thoſe that contemne his Maieſtie? And thus *Dauid* himſelfe was tried, Pſal. 73.3. Secondly, he
2 ſaw himſelfe expoſed as a laughing ſtocke to the prophane, who by this occaſion would
3 inſult ouer true religion. Hee alſo perceiued that his death might cauſe the hearts of all the faithfull to wauer. But aboue al, the wrath 4
of God preſſed him the neereſt, and that no leſſe then if he had been already condemned to the pit of hell, and to the eternall curſe. In a word, ſeeing our onely felicitie is to be at one with God, *Hezekias* was driuen into no cauſeleſſe feare, when he felt himſelfe ſeparated as it were from this vnion. For theſe words, *thou ſhalt die and not liue*, verſ. 1. had almoſt wholly ſeazed vpon his ſoule, ſo that he was as a man laid in graue. Which is yet better expreſſed by this clauſe, *I ſaid*; which not onely ſignifies (in the Hebrewes language) to vtter or pronounce words with the lips, but to bee perſwaded and reſolued of it in the heart. Though God threatens the hypocrits neuer ſo much, yet they gaze about for ſtarting holes, and thinke themſelues ſafe, if they can eſpie any corner wherein to ſhroud themſelues, that afterwards they may bee as iocund as euer they were before. But *Hezekias* being the true ſeruant of God, neuer minded the ſeeking of euaſions, but giuing credit to the Prophets words, he prepares himſelfe to die, ſeeing God was pleaſed to haue it ſo.

Our onely felicitie ſtãds in our ſpirituall vnion with God.

The meaning of this phraſe, I ſaid.

He ſpeakes in the ſame ſenſe of the *cutting off of his daies*, feeling that God as his enemie in anger was determined to ſhorte the courſe of his life. For he ſpeakes not after the common maner, when hee ſaith, that a violent death ſhall cauſe him to depart this life; but knowes that Gods iudgement is the cauſe of it. I grant that our life is alwaies *cut off*, be it that wee die young, or in the prime of our youth, or whether we die old: but it is ſaid of thoſe which die in the flower of their youth, that their life is *cut off*, becauſe it ſeemes they are taken away too ſoone, as fruit gathered before it be ripe. But *Hezekias* had another drift, to wit; he ſaw the *reſidue* of his daies ſuddenly *cut off* by the ſword of the Lord, in regard hee had prouoked him to anger by his offences. He complaines then that God ſuddenly depriues him of that life, which might haue continued a longer time; as if hee had been vtterly vnworthy to inioy it. Thereunto appertaines that which he ſaith of the *reſidue of his yeeres*: for albeit we ought to prepare for death euery moment, in regard we are all borne mortal, yet it being denounced heere againſt him as a puniſhment, hee complaines not without cauſe, that he is *depriued* of the *reſidue of his yeeres*; which hee was likelie to haue inioied by Gods aſſiſtance.

Verſ. 11. *I ſaid, I ſhall not ſee the Lord,* euen *the Lord in the land of the liuing: I ſhall ſee man no more among the inhabitants of the world.*

HEzekias ſhould paſſe his bounds in deſiring ſo earneſtly to continue in the world, were it not that the feeling of Gods wrath augmented his griefe. In regard therefore that hee ſeemes to be violently drawne to death by his owne deſert, euen as one vnworthie

worthie to behold the face of the Sunne, he cries out, and pronounceth himselfe miserable, in that for the time to come he shall *neither see God, nor man.* Among the faithfull this exception is held, to wit, whilest we liue in this world we are absent from God, but hauing put off the hindrances of our flesh, we shall enioy the presence of God. 2. Cor. 5. 6.

I grant there is a restraint in these words, *in the land of the liuing.* But hereby it seemes that *Hezekias* ties the *sight of God* to this life present, as if death did wholly depriue vs of all light and vnderstanding. We are therefore to call to minde that which I said erewhile, to wit, This good King hauing receiued the message as proceeding from the indignation of the Lord, was so terrified therewith, as if he had bin vtterlie depriued for euer of his louing fauor. For if he were *vnworthie to liue*, how durst he hope for greater things? not that all hope was botted out of his heart, but because he only considers the curse of God, so as he can not so speedilie aspire to heauen to sweeten the sorrow that presseth him, by the sweet taste of a better life. It falles out sometimes that the vnderstandings of the faithfull are so blinded, that for a time they fare as those that are forelorne: but although their comfort seeme for a while to be smothered, yet is it still hidden within, and anon breakes forth. In the meane while *Hezekias* shewes his pietie, in that (from the lawfull and right vse of this present life) he manifests to all how cumbersome it is vnto him to be depriued of it.

The end of our life and that of the beasts farre different.

The very beasts are loth to die, yet haue they no other vse of their life but to eate and drinke, to labour, and to fill their bellies. But the end of our life is farre more excellent: for we are created and put into this world that we should dayly exercise our selues in the knowledge of God. And in regard that this is the chiefe end of our life, he shewes the vehemencie of his affections, in repeating the name of God twice, I shall see no more, saith he, *the Lord, the Lord.*

Obiect. Ans. 1

If any obiect, that wee *see not God* in this world, the answere is easie. For first he is to be seene in his works, in regard that by the creation of the world his eternall power and Diuinitie may be seen, as S. *Paul* saith, Rom. 1. 20. And therefore Hebr. 11. 3. this world is called the Mirror of inuisible things. But be- 2
cause he manifests himselfe more clearely to the faithfull, therefore *Hezekias* mournes for the want of this spirituall sight; as *Dauid* also saith, that *those behold the face of God* who haue freedome to come into his house, that they may confirme their faith by the exercises of religion. As touching the word *men*, he is sorrie to be depriued of their societie, because we are borne to aid and comfort one another. *Psal.* 28. & 42.

Vers. 12. *Mine habitation is departed and remoued from me like a shepheards tent: I haue cut off like a weauer my life: he will cut me off from the height:* * *from day to night, thou wilt make an end of me.*

* Or, he will cut me off by leannes or sicknes.

HE goes on with his complaints, disciphering out his life by a very fit similitude, for he cõpares it to a *shepheards tent.* For such in deed is our present condition here in appearance: but he stands not so much to shew what it is which commonlie falles out to others, as what befell himselfe in particular. The vse of *tents* was more frequent in those countries then in ours, and oftentimes shepheards change their abode, by reason of shifting their flocks from one place to another. Thus he not only saith, that others dwell for a very little space in an house of clay whilest they passe thorow this world: but that himselfe being quiet in his royall Palace, euen his state was changed, as if a Shepheard hauing pitched his tent for two daies in the field, should the third day be forced to remoue it to another place.

But we are to note, that sometimes he assignes the cause of his death to *himselfe*, and then also *vnto God*: and therewithall giues alwaies distinct reasons of his speech. For in 1
making *himselfe* the author of his griefe, he therein acquites the Lord; and complaines not of him for taking away of his life: but accuseth himselfe, and layes all the fault where it was in deed, for so much his words import, which is expressed in an vsuall prouerb, My selfe hath wouen this web, so as my selfe and none other is the cause of my death. And yet it is not without good reason that in the second place he assignes the cause also *vnto* 2
God, which before he wholly charged vpon himselfe: for albeit we our selues giue him cause to deale seuerely with vs, yet is he the Iudge, who inflicts his owne chastisements vpon vs. In all our troubles therefore let vs euer learne to magnifie his iust iudgements, because he doth vs but right in executing his office, when he corrects vs according to our deserts.

Wee must euermore magnifie Gods iust iudgements.

Towards the end of the verse, some translate the word *Middallah*, leannes, or sicknes. Others, In drawing out: the first deriue this noune from the verb *Dalal*, which signifies to lessen: the others from *Dalah*, which imports as much as to draw out, in lifting vp. But let the readers consider whether the word *to lift vp* agrees not best, because it seemes *Hezekias* complaines that his life is suddenlie smitten downe whilest he indeuored to list it vp, and to draw it out longer: as if God should cause the Sunne to set as soone as it begins to rise only.

By and by after he addes, That he shall be brought to nought in a short space, which he further expresseth by the circumstance of the weight of Gods wrath, which suddenlie *consumes* men by his only breath. For to be cut off in *a day*, signifies as much as to die hastilie.

See the exposition of the latter clause of this 12. verse in the next.

Vers. 13. *I reckoned to the morning, but he brake all my bones like a lion: from day to night wilt thou make an end of me.*

OThers reade, I stayed, or sate downe: the word here signifies that which we vsual-

lie say, I made my account. From this verse we may gather, that *Hezekias* was sicke about two daies: for in the former verse he said the maladie was so vehement, that he looked for nothing but death. That day being past, he euen waits vnto the dawning of the next day following; and from thence, till night: so as he expected death euery minute of an houre. The sense then is; that although hee came to the *day breake*, yet he ranne hastily to death, by continuall turmoilings: for being smitten with the stroke of Gods fearfull iudgement, hee makes no account to liue. And as the Greekes when they will shew that nothing is so vaine a thing as man, do terme him a daies bird: so this good King puts the life *of a day* here for that transitorie life of a man, which is but of small continuance.

Man termed a daies bird by the Greekes.

Whereas he compares *God* to a *lion*, it is no new thing, albeit God of his owne nature be gentle, mercifull, and louing, and nothing sutes better to his nature then these titles: but we cannot feele this sweetnesse when we haue prouoked him by our vices, and made him seuere by our rebellion. Nay, which is more, there is not the crueltie nor sternnesse of any, nor of all the bruit beasts, that can so amaze or astonish vs, as doth the bare mentioning of the very name of God in this case: but most iustly. For his strokes must of necessitie haue that efficacie in them, as to bring downe all loftinesse, and to humble vs to the very gates of hell, that so being in a maner stripped of all comfort, wee may lie gasping after it, and yet in the meane while apprehend nothing but dread and horror. And of such terrors *Dauid* speaks in Psal. 22. 17. where he saith; I may tell all my bones. Againe, Psal. 6. 6. I water my couch with teares. Also, My soule is sore troubled: Psal. 6. 3. And the graue hath opened her mouth to swallow mee vp. Now it is needful that ỹ faithful should sometimes bee feared in this wise by the sense of Gods iudgements, that they may be so much the rather prouoked to desire his fauour.

Psal. 38.

Vers. 14. *Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter; I did mourne as a doue: mine eies were lift vp on high: O Lord, it hath oppressed me, comfort me.*

HEzekias cannot fit himselfe with wordes sufficient to set forth the greatnesse of his miserie, which brought him to that extremitie, that he was not able to speake *distinctly*, but to mutter forth a confused sound of words, euen as those that lie at the point of death. Whence it appeares that he was wonderfully perplexed, seeing his griefe was so great, that hee wanted words to expresse it. His wordes stucke as it were in his throat: nothing could bee heard but whisperings: whereunto appertaines these similitudes of the *crane and swallow*, which the Prophet here vseth.

Yet euen these confused voices doubtlesse doe pierce the eares of God: and albeit al our senses be surprised with heauinesse, and that our sorrowes haue shut vp our mouthes, yet he beholds our hearts still, and heares the sighes which be breathed from faith. Yea often times such broken sentences are sent forth with more force & efficacie, then words rightly framed, prouided that they proceede from the spirit of God, who stirs vp in vs such gronings, as cannot be expressed: Rom. 8. 25. There is no childe of God but in this case feeles by experience, when extreme sorrow causeth his tongue to cleaue to the roofe of his mouth, and his heart to be closed vp, so as his praiers are but stutterings and stammerings. Some translate that which followes in this sense; Mine eies are sunke in: but so the particle, *on high*, should not agree. And therefore it is best to retaine the naturall sense, which is; that his eies were wasted with often and much looking: or, that hee ceased not to *lift vp his eies on high*, albeit he was halfe dead; or was neuer so far out of heart, but he knew well that it was his dutie to wait for succour from God.

Let vs learne with *Hezekias* to *lift vp our eies to the heauens*: and let vs also know that our God requires no great rhetorique of vs in our praiers. He confirmes this sentence in turning his speech by and by vnto God, to desire his helpe: for in regard the violence of the disease *oppressed him*, he intreats the Lord to *comfort* him. Some translate, Answer for me; which we haue thought best to turne, *comfort*, or, *glad mee*: vnlesse any had rather receiue their translation who read it, Make mee to rest. How euer it be, he demands succour of God, to the end the weight of his afflictions might not ouerwhelme him: we also ought to assure our selues in this case, that God will be so much the more ready to *comfort* vs, by how much the more wee shall be *prest* on euerie side with many calamities.

Hezekias his example set before vs. God requires no Art of Rhetorike in the praiers of his seruants.

Vers. 15. *What shall I say? For hee hath said it to me, and hee hath done it: *I shall walke weakelie all my yeeres in the bitternesse of my soule.*

*Or, shall walke in trembling.

THe most thinke that these words are vttered by way of an exclamation, such as proceedes from ioy: as if *Hezekias* reioiced in hauing obtained his request: but I am of another opinion. For it seemes to me that hee goes on still in his complaints, because hee speakes as those commonly doe, who are oppressed with sorrow: *What shall I say? He which hath said it to mee, hath done it.* That is to say, life and death are in his hands, I plead but in vaine with him: it is but lost labour to complaine so much as I doe. Many such wordes and sentences are to be found in the booke of *Iob*. This therefore, as I take it, is the verie true sense of the place. For before, *Hezekias* looked euery way, to seeif any comfort would present it selfe vnto him: but now, seeing that God had giuen sentence of death vpon him, hee concludes, there is no resisting, I must obey.

Iob 7. 4. & 13. 24.

In the meane while, these words are to be well weighed; to wit, that God accomplisheth that in effect, which hee threatned in words.

For

For thoſe ſay ſomewhat (I grant) but not all, who expound ſimply thus; God hath performed that which the Prophet pronounced of me. Becauſe *Hezekias* doth not thus barely affirme, that he felt the effect of the word, but ſetting before his eies the power of God, hee puts an end to all his complaints and cries. Thus *Dauid* in the 39. Pſalme ſaith; I held my peace, Lord, becauſe thou diddeſt it. If the feare of Gods power reſtraines vs not, wee will neuer ceaſe murmuring: and therefore *Iob* conſidering that he had to doe with God, ſaith; I wil lay my hand vpon my mouth: I will make humble ſupplication to my Iudge: Iob 9.15. *Hezekias* then puts himſelfe to ſilence, for hee ſaw it was but vaine for him to ſtand diſputing the caſe with God. And thus hee confeſſeth, that hee was but as a dead man, becauſe the Lord made him feele how forcible his threatnings were. By reaſon whereof, this good King concludes, that hee profites himſelfe nothing at all with replies, becauſe diſcourſes to and fro haue no place in this behalfe. I grant that theſe words proceeded indeed from deſpaire: for in feeling God his enemie, he ſhuts vp the gate againſt the paſſage of his praiers. But it is no new nor ſtrãge thing; for ſuch words (which turne vs from praier) now and then to eſcape vs in extreme griefes; prouided that on the contrarie, wee cleaue cloſe to the proppe of praier; yea, although the ſenſe of the fleſh doe ouerſway vs ſo far for a time, as to perſwade vs that all is but in vaine.

Iob 39.37.

Wee may coniecture that this good King was ſo intangled with perplexed thoughts, that he fainted in his languiſhing diſeaſe, but eſpecially in that he ſaw it was the beſt way for him to be ſilent, as I haue ſaid: for hee did but loſe his labour to plead with God, as it ſhall appeare more fully in the courſe of the text. Whence we gather, that he now ſets before him the fearfull power of God, to the end hee may diſpoſe himſelfe to true humilitie.

Moreouer, becauſe the verbe *Dadah* ſignifies to moue ones ſelfe, to goe ſoftly; ſome expoſitors tranſlate; I ſhall be remoued, or, toſſed: others, I ſhall walke ſoftly. But I verily thinke hee ſpeakes of a weake and *trembling* gate; for he was ſo weakened, that he thought he ſhould neuer recouer his former ſtrength againe. This *trembling* muſt be referred to feare; for he addes by and by after, *in the bitterneſſe*: as if he ſhould ſay; The anguiſh which oppreſſeth mee, is ſo faſt rooted in mine heart, that it can neuer be plucked vp: and thence came this *vexatioſſe* whereof hee ſpeakes.

Auricular confeſſion.

Now becauſe the vulgar tranſlation hath; I will acknowledge: the Papiſts haue wreſted this place to proue their auricular confeſſion; but ſo vnaptly, that old dotards may laugh them to ſcorne. For it plainely appeares, that he ſpeakes not heere of confeſſion, but of an aſtoniſhment and trembling, wherewith *Hezekias* ſhall bee ſmitten, euen *all the daies of his life*, as he himſelfe here ſaith.

*Or, all thoſe that ſhal liue after me, ſhall know the life of my Spirit, becauſe thou haſt made me to ſleepe, &c.

Verſ. 16. *O Lord,* * to them *that ouerliue them, and to all* that are *in them the life of my ſpirit* ſhall bee knowne, *that thou cauſedſt me to ſleep, and haſt giuen life to me.*

THe Prophets words are ſo ſhort, that it hath cauſed many interpretations, amongſt which, this that followes is the moſt approued: O Lord, others ſhal liue after theſe yeeres: that is to ſay, their life ſhall bee prolonged. As if he ſhould ſay; Seeing thou haſt prolonged my daies, thou wilt alſo cauſe others to inioy the like fauour from thee. But this ſenſe agrees not with the text, and I iudge it too far fetched. I ſhould rather deem *Hezekias* his meaning to bee this; *O Lord, all thoſe which ſhall liue after thoſe yeeres which thou haſt added vnto my life, ſhall know the life of my ſpirit.* And therefore the relatiue (which) muſt bee ſupplied; for it is a thing vſuall among the Hebrewes not to expreſſe it: and ſo this will bee no conſtrained expoſition. For it is not to be doubted, neither can it be denied, but hee ſpeakes of the yeeres which the Lord had giuen him as an ouerplus. His meaning is then, that the fauour which God hath ſhewed him, ſhall not bee knowne to thoſe of his time onely, but of the poſteritie alſo. Thus he ſets forth the greatneſſe of the benefit, which ſhall be renowned for the time to come, and ſhall remaine ingrauen in the memories of all, euen after *Hezekias* ſhall be dead: ſo as it ſhall be called a kind of reſurrection. The word *to ſleepe*, ſignifies to die; according to the Hebrew phraſe, Gen. 47.30. Thus hee compares his ſickneſſe to death, to which he was ſo nie, that he made none account of life.

1. *Cor.* 7.39. & 11.30. 2. *Pet.* 3.14.

Verſ. 17. *Behold, for felicitie I had bitter griefe;* * *but it was thy pleaſure* to deliuer *my ſoule from the pit of corruption: for thou haſt caſt all my ſinnes behind thy backe.*

*Or, thou haſt loued my ſoule in the pit of perdition.

AGaine he amplifies the greatneſſe of his griefe by another circumſtance: for ſudden calamities which we thinke not of, doe trouble vs much more then thoſe which wee ſee approching. His ſickneſſe was the more cumberſome and inſupportable, becauſe it ſurpriſed him vnawares, whileſt he was quiet and in proſperity, thinking nothing leſſe then to be ſo ſoone bereaued of his life. We alſo know that the faithfull now and then doe pleaſe themſelues too much in their proſperitie, promiſing vnto themſelues a conſtant and ſetled felicitie; which *Dauid* confeſſeth himſelfe was guiltie of: I ſaid in my proſperitie, I ſhall neuer be moued; but when thou hiddeſt thy face I was troubled: Pſal. 30. Nothing therefore could aſtoniſh *Hezekias* more then to heare he muſt die, when hee made account to liue in peace, his enemie being driuen away and cut off: for I thinke hee fell ſicke after *Sennacherib* was repulſed, and his hoſt ſlaine; as we haue ſaid before. See then a ſore diſeaſe which now comes to vex him

vehemently, in the middes of this ioy and tranquillitie which preſented it ſelfe before his eies.

We muſt not looke to inioy a ſetled eſtate any long time.

This ſhewes, that we muſt make no account to reioyce in any ſetled eſtate long, nor to lull our ſelues aſleepe in iollitie, ſeeing there is nothing ſtable nor ſtedfaſt in this life: but we may be bereaued of all our ioyes in a moment. Therfore whileſt we are in peace, let vs euen meditate of warre, aduerſitie, and perſecutions. Aboue all things, let vs carefullie ſeeke that peace which is grounded vpon Gods fatherlie loue and compaſſion, wherein our conſciences may reſt ſecurely.

The peace which is grounded vpon the aſſurance of Gods fauor, is to be ſought for aboue all things.

Soule taken for life.

The ſecond part of the verſe may be expounded two waies, becauſe the verb *Chaſchak* ſignifies To loue, and ſometimes To will: This ſenſe agrees not amiſſe, *It was thy pleaſure to deliuer my ſoule:* but if nothing be ſupplied, the ſenſe will ſtill be perfect, *O Lord, thou haſt loued my ſoule when it was in the Sepulcher.* It is knowne to all, that the *Soule* is taken for the life: but the Prophet here extols the bountie of God, who vouchſafed to loue *Hezekias* though he were halfe dead.

It was thy pleaſure &c.

In the next place he giues the reaſon of it, in bringing vs to the fountaine from whence this deliuerance iſſued: for otherwiſe, one might imagin that he hath ſpoken of nothing hitherunto but of bodily health. But we may now ſee that he looked much higher, to wit,

1 firſt vnto his guiltines before God,

2 ſecondly to the free reconciliation. He confeſſeth in deed that he hath receiued his life anew, but yet he eſteemes his reconciliation with God more then a hundred thouſand liues. Truly it were better for vs neuer to haue beene borne, then to liue long, heaping ſinne vpon ſinne, and ſo to hale downe the more horrible iudgemẽts of God vpon our own heads. *Hezekias* then reioyceth chiefflie, in that the light of Gods countenance did ſhine clearely vpon him: for our only felicitie conſiſts in hauing him good and gracious to vs. Yet herewithall he ſhewes, that we muſt impute the euils which God laies vpõ vs to our *ſinnes:* for ſuch as accuſe him of ouer-much ſeueritie, doe nothing elſe but double their owne woe. This good King condemnes not himſelfe of one ſinne only, but confeſſeth himſelfe guiltie of many *ſinnes*, and therefore ſtood in neede of more then one pardon. If we then deſire to be truly comforted in afflictions, let vs begin heere: for if God be appeaſed towards vs, no euill can hurt vs, ſeeing he delights not to haue his beloued ones lie languiſhing in their miſeries. It fares with vs therefore as with inconſiderate patients, who neuer thinke of their diſeaſe, but only of the accidents thereof, and of their griefes which they feele: but it is more wiſedome for vs to follow the counſell of the skilfull Phyſitian, who conſiders of the cauſe of the diſeaſe firſt, and aboue all things indeuors to remoue that: for they know that outward remedies are not only vaine, but hurtfull, if the inward diſeaſe be not diſcerned. Why ſo? Becauſe remedies in ſuch wiſe applied, do driue the diſeaſe further in, and ſo ſettles & augments it there, that afterwards there is no hope left for healing of it.

Hezekias eſteemes his reconciliation with God aboue an hundred thouſand liues.

To accuſe God of ouermuch ſeueritie, is but to double our owne woe.

Simile.

Hezekias therefore like a wiſe patient, acknowledgeth the cauſe of his ſicknes; to wit, his *ſinnes*: which being forgiuen, he then knew the puniſhment was likewiſe remitted and ceaſed. Now by this we may ſee the ſottiſhnes of the Papiſts touching their diſtinction between the fault and the puniſhment: for *Hezekias* teſtifies here that the one was pardoned as well as the other.

Hezekias looked into the cauſe of his ſicknes.

The ridiculous diſtinction of the Papiſts betweene the fault, and the puniſhment.

Wee are alſo to obſerue this phraſe of ſpeech which the Prophet vſeth, to wit, *Thou haſt caſt all my ſinnes behinde thy backe:* for his meaning therein is, that God had whollie aboliſhed the remembrance of them. As in Miche.7.9. Thou haſt caſt all their ſinnes into the bottome of the ſea. And in Pſal.103.12. He ſeparates our ſinnes as farre from vs, as the Eaſt is from the Weſt. All which ſentences may aſſure vs that God will neuer impute the ſinnes vnto vs which he hath once pardoned. If it fall out that we be corrected afterwards, he doth it not as a iudge, but as a tender and mercifull father, that he might thereby inſtruct and keepe his children in awe. The Papiſts therefore deceiue themſelues in dreaming that the corrections which follow are ſatisfactions or recompences, as if he would exact that at our hands, becauſe he is loth freelie to remit all. No, Gods only purpoſe in correcting vs is, that he may thereby prouide for our ſaluation for the time to come.

Afflictions no ſatisfactions.

Verſ. 18. *For the graue cannot confeſſe thee: death can not praiſe thee: they that goe downe into the pit, cannot hope for thy truth.*

WHere he ſaith, that he can not ſet forth the *praiſes of God* if his life be taken away, he promiſeth to do it, if ſo great a benefit may be granted vnto him; and therewithall ſhewes, that the only cauſe why he deſires to liue, is, that he might *praiſe God*. Now albeit there is not a better ſigne of a godlie heart then to deſire life, vpon condition to glorifie God continuallie by the ſame: yet it ſeemes *Hezekias* ſpeakes ſomewhat too ſtrictly. For the faithfull glorifie God no leſſe by their death, then by their life: by death they come to be perfectlie conioined with him, and neuer ceaſe to ſing his praiſes with the elect Angels. But there is yet another difficultie which moued *Hezekias* ſo much to flee death, and ſo earneſtlie to deſire to liue ſtill on earth. Which ſecond queſtion, albeit we haue diſcuſſed heretofore, yet the readers ſhall againe be put in minde that this terror proceeded not from the only apprehenſion of death: for when the houre came that he ſhould die, he recoiled not back, but willinglie went vnto his God. But at this time being ſmitten with the ſenſe of Gods wrath, his only ſorrow is, that his ſinnes had bereaued him of his life, fearing he ſhould neuer taſte any of Gods bleſſings or fauours afterward. Hereupon alſo depends the ſolution of the firſt queſtion: for what maruell is it if this good man ſeeing he muſt die, his death alſo proceeding

The faithfull glorifie God no leſſe by death then by life.

The cauſe why Hezekias was ſo loth to die.

ceeding from the anger of God kindled againſt him, to take vengeance on his ſinnes: what maruell is it, I ſay, if he ſorrowed and lamented to be condemned to die, as one vnworthy to bee imploied any longer in the aduancement of Gods true religion and ſeruice?

Whoſoeuer he be that is once ſtrucke with this thunderbolt, can not freelie magnifie the name of the Lord, neither in life nor in death, but muſt needes be mute, becauſe deſpaire hath ouerwhelmed his ſpirits. In this ſenſe *Dauid* ſaith; In death there is no remembrance of thee: Pſal.6.5. And the whole Church in Pſal.115.17. ſaith; The dead praiſe not thee, O Lord, neither any that go downe into the *place* of ſilence. Why ſo? Becauſe thoſe who feele the guilt of their ſinnes, and Gods anger preſſing them, want matter of thankſgiuing. And yet wee muſt note, that when the Saints ſpake thus, they conſidered not what their condition ſhould bee after death; but from the dolour which they felt they onely looked to the end for which God had created & preſerued them in this world. The chiefeſt end of mans life we know, is to ſpend the ſame in his ſeruice: who for this purpoſe conſerues his Church vpon earth, as hath been ſaid, becauſe hee will haue his name alwaies praiſed. Now he that ſeemes to be caſt off, in regard he is vnworthy to be any longer accounted among the number of Gods ſeruants, cannot diſtinctly conſider with a ſtill and quiet mind, what ſhall become of him after death, but being ouerſhadowed with ſorrowes, takes from the *dead*, the faculty of *praiſing* God, as if all exerciſes of pietie ceaſed after this life, becauſe (as hee thinkes) Gods glorie is buried in the graue with thoſe that ſhould bee the witneſſes of it.

Note.

The principall end of mans life.

Verſ. 19. *But the liuing, the liuing, he ſhall confeſſe thee, as I* doe *this day: the father to the children ſhall declare thy truth.*

HE comprehends not all men generally within this ſentence, ſeeing many *liue*, who notwithſtanding as much as in them is, labour to extinguiſh Gods glory by their ingratitude: ſo far are they off from thinking they were borne to ſet forth or magnifie the ſame. But his meaning onely is, that men may be true and lawfull Preachers of the glory of God, as long as it pleaſeth him to retaine them aliue in the world, becauſe he by his liberalitie daily & hourly ſummons them to the performance of this dutie. This oppoſition ſhews that his former ſpeech, The graue cannot confeſſe thee, death cannot praiſe thee, &c. ought to be referred to this point, namely, that ſuch as are cut off from the world, where they imploy their time in praiſing God, are by death depriued of ſo excellent a benefit. Beſides, he proteſteth that himſelfe ſhall now bee one of the witneſſes of Gods glory; thereby ſhewing a ſigne of his thankfulneſſe: for he ſaith hee will neuer forget ſuch a mercie, but will magnifie the Lord, and preach to others what fauour hee hath taſted of. And not onely to thoſe of his owne time, but to the poſteritie alſo, that they may euerie one ſet forth theſe praiſes, and reuerence the author of ſo great a bleſſing.

Verſ.18.

Hence wee are to gather a very profitable inſtruction; to wit, that men haue *children* beſtowed vpon them, on condition to bring them vp in the information of the Lord, euerie one indeuoring withal his might to leaue behind him for his ſucceſſors, ſome good occaſions to ſet forth Gods praiſes. Fathers of families therefore ought carefully to record vnto their children, the mercies which God hath ſhewed them. By the word *truth*, wee are to vnderſtand the fidelitie which God keepes with his ſeruants, and with all thoſe that are witneſſes of his grace, whereby hee manifeſts vnto them the truth of his promiſes.

Vpon what condition God giues men children.

Verſ. 20. *The Lord was* ready *to ſaue me: therefore we will ſing my ſong all the daies of our life in the houſe of the Lord.*

HEe acknowledgeth that his deliuerance proceeded not from the induſtry of men, but from the onely fauour of God. Whereas ſome tranſlate; It is the Lord which can deliuer mee; they expreſſe not the thing ſufficiently; it alſo ſeemes they miſſe the very letter: for hee not onely magnifies the power of God, but alſo his worke, by which his power was cleerly manifeſted. In a word, he oppoſeth this his deliuerance to that death vnto which he was iudged of God: for as before he apprehended him as a ſeuere Iudge, ſo now he leaps for ioy in acknowledging him to be his redeemer. For this cauſe he prepares himſelfe againe to ſing *a ſong* of thankſgiuing; yea, he calles others to him to aid him therein. He mentions the *Temple*, becauſe there the faithfull met together.

Had he been but a priuat man, and one of the common ſort, yet he was bound to haue offered a ſolemne ſacrifice for the incouraging of others, as well as for the diſcharge of his owne dutie. He therefore being a king, was to be much more carefull in bringing others with him to giue God thanks, eſpecially ſeeing the ſafetie of the whole Church conſiſted vpon his deliuerance. He will therefore indeuor, he ſaith, to make it knowne to all, what fauour God ſhewed him; and that it ſhould be remembred not for a day or two, *but all the daies of their liues*. Truly it had been a moſt vnworthy thing euer to haue ſuffered ſo ſingular a benefit to haue vaniſhed away, or to die at any time: but in regard of our owne forgetfulneſſe and dulneſſe, wee haue need to haue ſpurres to pricke vs continually forwards to the performance of this dutie. Thus alſo hee ſhewes to what end God hath appointed holy aſſemblies, euen to the end that all with one heart and mouth, may praiſe one God in Ieſus Chriſt, and ſtirre vp one another to the exerciſes of pietie.

Why God ordained publike aſſemblies.

Verſ.21.

Vers. 21. *Then said Isaiah; Take a lumpe of dry figges, and lay it vpon the boile, and he shall recouer.*

Isaiah shewes now what remedie hee gaue *Hezekias*. Others thinke it was no remedie, because figs are contrarie and hurtfull to vlcers: and therefore they say that the King was aduertised, and by this signe more fullie instructed that this recouerie onlie proceeded from the free grace of God. For example, the bow in the cloudes whereby God meant to testifie that the world should neuer perish againe by the flood, seemed notwithstanding to signifie the cleane contrarie: for it appeeres only when great raines gather together, and are readie to drowne the whole world. They thinke then that the Prophet hath of set purpose applied a remedie nothing fitting for the healing of the disease, because it might appeere to all, that *Hezekias* was healed without the help of any salues. But seeing the Physitians of our times do vse plaisters of figs to ripen the Plague-sore, it may be the Lord added the salue to his promise, as he often doth in other cases: for this medicine lessens not ỹ promise, which without the word had bin vaine and vnprofitable. He also had receiued a supernaturall signe, which no doubt taught him, that it was God, and none but he who restored his life vnto him, which in his conceit was lost.

Gen.9.13.

Vers. 22. *Also Hezekias had said, What is the signe that I shall goe vp into the house of the Lord?*

Some expound this verse as if this had bin giuen *Hezekias* for a signe; and therefore they referre it to the former sentence: but it is more likely that the order of the thing is here changed, which often falles out among the Hebrues, so as that which should be said in the beginning, comes in towards the latter end. *Isaiah* mentions not in the beginning of the Chapter that *Hezekias* required this signe, yet it is recorded in the holy historie that he so did, 2. King. 20. 8. He now addes that therefore which was omitted at the first. *That I shall goe vp.* In these words his meaning is that the chiefe care of his whole life was, to bestow it to the glorie of God: for he desires not to liue that he might consume his daies in voluptuousnes, but that he might maintaine the honour and pure worship of God. Let vs be admonished then that our daies are not prolonged to the end we should giue our selues to iollitie and dissolutions, but to honour him that hath so much honoured vs; to further one another in his feare; to meete together in the holy assemblies, to magnifie his mercie and truth.

Why God prolongs our dayes on earth.
1
2
3

THE XXXIX. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *At the same time Merodach Baladan, the sonne of Baladan King of Babel, sent letters, and a present to Hezekias: for he had heard that he had bin sick and was recouered.*

THE expositors thinke that this *Merodach* was the first King of the Chaldeans, because his father *Baladan* held the superioritie amõg the Babilonians, without hauing the title of King. After this *Merodach* then had reigned 12. yeeres, he subdued the Assyrians, and made them tributaries vnder the Caldeans. For those are deceiued who thinke that the warres were begun by *Nebuchadnezar*: It may well be that he made an end of them, and whollie subdued the Assyrians, whose power was then like enough halfe spent, there remained nothing for him then but to confirme ỹ kingdome in his owne hands which was cõquered by ỹ power of his predecessor. Now howsoeuer ỹ Prophet in few words telles how *the Ambassadors were sent*; yet we must obserue that *Merodach* did this guilefullie to guggle *Hezekias* with his flatteries. He threatned the Assyrians alreadie whom he knew the Iewes hated for good cause because of their continuall warres: that he might get him a companion then, and a fellow helper in his intended warres, hee insinuates himselfe cunningly into the amitie of this good King: whose heart, as you see, was forthwith surprised with pride, in that hee was too forward in accepting the fradulent flatteries of this Tyrant, and suffered himselfe to be poisoned therewith.

And yet the pretence was nothing else forsooth, but that the Ambassadors came to *congratulate* with him, in regard of the late recouerie of his health: howbeit the holy historie seemes to alleadge another reason; to wit, that *Merodach* was moued to send by a miracle: 2. Chron. 32. 31. No doubt but this going backe of the Sunne was renowned far and neere: neither could it be, but many nations were much moued by the report of so vnwonted a thing. But it is hard to say, that so profane a man respected any other thing, then to catch *Hezekias* by this meanes in his nets. And because God had by so excellent a signe, signified how deare the safetie of *Hezekias* was vnto him, *Merodach* thought with himselfe (as the wicked and vnbeleeuers are wont to abuse such testimonies of Gods fauour, to the seruing of their own turnes) that his warres which he meant to vndertake, must needes succeed wel, and be blessed from heauen, if he might get such a one as *Hezekias* to take his part. Thence it was that to manifest his good will, he sent his Ambassadors to him with a *present*: for he meant to winne him, because

cauſe ſuch an acquaintance ſhould be fit and profitable to aid him againſt the Aſſyrians, whom the Iewes (as he well knew) hated moſt deadly. Thus you ſee the policies of Kings and Princes, to wit, by cloſe conueiances to ſerue their owne turnes, neuer caring by what meanes they procure aid, ſo they may make themſelues ſtrong againſt their enemies.

The practiſes of idolatrous Kings and Princes.

Verſ. 2. *And Hezekias was glad of them, and ſhewed them the houſe of his treaſures, the ſiluer, and the gold, and the ſpices, and the pretious ointment, and all the houſe of his armour, and all that was found in his treaſures: there was nothing in his houſe, nor in all his kinkdome, that Hezekias ſhewed them not.*

THe Prophet plaies the hiſtoriographer. For firſt hee telles plainly what *Hezekias* did: next, he will ſhew why he did it; to wit, 1 2 becauſe *ambition* had blinded his eies: and thus he meant to make himſelfe great in the ſight of the Ambaſſadors. Thus he taxeth this inordinate *ioy*, from whence proceeded ſo great care at length to feaſt and welcome them. He that ſhall reade the hiſtorie barely, wil thinke there is no great fault to be found in *Hezekiah* for any thing he did. Was it not humanitie in him to receiue ſuch Ambaſſadors with *gladneſſe and magnificence*, and to ſhew them all ſignes of loue? Who can denie it? Nay, hee had ſhewed himſelfe more then barbarous, if hee had reiected thoſe who in ſuch kind manner came to viſit him; or, if he had ſet light by the friendſhip of ſo mightie a King. Notwithſtanding all this, 3 *his heart was too farre tickled with vanitie and oſtentation.* For he meant *to ſhew his greatneſſe*, to the end the Babylonian might know that this amitie ſhould ſerue him to good purpoſe; which he further inſinuated by ſhewing his *riches, munitions*, 2 and *furniture for warre*. Hee was alſo blameworthy, for deſiring to bee ſupported by ſtrange and vnlawfull meanes: for therein he bereaued God of his honour, who had freely deliuered him out of two great dangers: otherwiſe, the Prophet would neuer haue reproued him ſo ſharply for this fact.

Heere is a faire looking glaſſe therefore, in which euery one may ſee that there is nothing ſo dangerous, as to bee blinded with proſperitie: to which purpoſe it was well ſaid long agoe; It is a harder matter to beare proſperitie then aduerſitie. We wax vnruly and inſolent when things fall out as wee would haue them; neither can we be kept in awe by any threatnings or admonitions whatſoeuer. If this befell *Hezekias*, whom the Prophet before hath ſo much commended, whoſe onely *treaſure was the feare of God*: Chap. 33. 6. how ought we to watch ouer our owne hearts, leſt we fall into the like dangers?

Nothing ſo dangerous, as to bee blinded with proſperitie.

He ſuffers himſelfe to bee ouerſwaied with vaine oſtentation, and neuer remembers that being halfe dead before, the Lord drew him out of his graue by a miracle from heauen. In the 20. verſe of the former Chapter, hee vowed *to ſing the praiſes of God all the dates of his life, in the aſſemblie of the Saints*. Now when he ſees ſome ſuing for his friendſhip, and that a mightie Monarch ſends from far to ſalute him, he preſently forgets God, with al the benefits which he had receiued at his hands. Do we ſee this good King ſo ſoone ouerthrowne, and ouerſwaied with pride and ambition, let vs learne to hold our ſelues within the liſts of modeſtie, by which we may daily be preſerued in the feare of God.

If ſuch a mightie Cedar fell, what ſhall become of ſuch low ſhrubs as we be?

Modeſtie the meanes to hold vs in the feare of God.

Verſ. 3. *Then came Iſaiah the Prophet vnto King Hezekias, and ſaid vnto him; What ſaid theſe men? and from whence came they to thee? And Hezekiah ſaid; They are come from a farre Country vnto me, from Babel.*

HEe goes on with the ſame narration ſtill, but he addes doctrine vnto it. And howſoeuer he vtters not a word of Gods ſending of him, yet it is moſt certaine that he did this by the inſtinct and commandement of the holy Ghoſt; for which cauſe he adornes himſelfe with the title of *Prophet*: wherein he ſignifies that he came not as a priuat man, but as hee that was to execute the office which God had inioined him; to the end *Hezekias* the *King* might know, that he had not to doe with *Iſaiah* the *Prophet* now, as with a mortall man. In that he ſaith *he came*, we may gather that the King called him not, but let him reſt at home in his houſe, whileſt hee ſhewed and diſcouered all his riches: for Prophets are not wont to be called, when ſuch matters are in hand. Before, when calamities beſieged him, and that *Rabſhekeh* had proudly and diſdainfully blaſphemed the God of Iſrael, then *Iſaiah* the Prophet was ſought out and ſent for, to intreat him to lift vp his praier for the remnant that was left: Chap. 37. 4. and to giue him ſome word of conſolation and comfort. Thus the Prophets are ſought vnto when aduerſitie and troubles are neere, or vpon vs: but all things being quiet and well, the Prophets are forgotten; nay, they are reiected becauſe they trouble the feaſt (as they ſay) by their wholſome admonitions, and ſeeme to fill all the company with nothing but melancholie.

The King called not for Iſaiah now.

Prophets vſually ſent for in extremitie, but forgotten in proſperitie.

Iſaiah came notwithſtanding vncalled for; wherein we are behold his conſtancy: whoſe example may teach vs, not to tarrie till wee be ſent for by ſuch as ſtand in neede of our office, whileſt they pleaſe themſelues in moſt hurtfull vices, and plunge themſelues into perill by their lightneſſe, ignorance, or malice. It is our duties to gather the diſperſed ſheepe together; yea, we ſtand bound to doe it carefully, though no man ſhould require this dutie of vs.

Iſaiah his conſtancie to be noted.

Now howſoeuer *Hezekias* deſerued to bee ſharply rebuked, in that he ſuffered himſelfe to be ſo ſoone corrupted by the King of Babylon, neuer asking counſell of God; yet the great modeſtie that was in him is worthy of memorie.

The modeſty of Hezekias

memorie. Why so? He repulseth not the Prophet, neither disdaines he his message, as if hee had reproued him without cause, but giues him a mild answer, and in conclusion receiues his hard censure peaceably. He had done better if he had inquired at the mouth of the Lord at the very first, as it is in Psalm. 119.24. Thy statutes are my counsellers: but hauing failed herein vnawares, it was a singular vertue in him obediently to receiue the reproofe of his fault which he had committed.

The first question.

What said these men?] The Prophet hits him not home at the first, but prickes him gently, that he might bring him by degrees to confesse his fault. For *Hezekias* flattered himselfe, and thought himselfe in as good ease as might be. It was needfull therefore he should be awakened out of this his sleepe by little and little. I grant this first blow was a very piercing one: as if he should haue said; I pray thee *what hast thou to doe with these fellowes?* Oughtest thou not much rather to haue fled from so contagious a pestilence? He askes also what the *summe* of their *message* was, to shame *Hezekias*, who was ignorant of the serpent which lay hidden vnder the sweet flowers: for he finds no fault with the gratulation of these Ambassadors, although poison was also mingled therewithall: but he aimes at the snares which the Caldeans had set to trap *Hezekias* his feete. Notwithstanding it seemes by his *answer*, that he was little moued by this light reprehension, because he pleased himselfe too much as yet, in that which he had done; for he vaunts that these men were come to him from a *farre Country, from Babylon*. No doubt but *Isaiah* knew this Countrie well, so as *Hezekias* needed not so eloquently to haue described the farre distance of the place: but thus he flattere himselfe, because ambition possessed him. It was requisite therefore that his sore should bee gaged to the bottome, and lanced with sharper instruments.

Vers. 4. *Then said hee; What haue they seene in thine house? And Hezekiah answered; All that is in mine house haue they seene: there is nothing among my treasures that I haue not shewed them.*

The second question.

AGaine he said, &c.] Hee continues on his couert admonition, to see if *Hezekias* will at last bee touched and displeased with his sinne. But he cannot yet win so much of him, albeit it is almost incredible that the King should be growne so senselesse, as not to feele such prickings. For he knew wel enough that the Prophet came not as curious folkes doe, to inquire of newes, or to passe the time in meriment with the King; but to conferre with him about some matter of importance. How euer it were, yet his calme answer is to be commended; for he falles not out with the Prophet, but modestly confesseth how all things went. But no signe of repentance appeares, neither confesseth he himselfe faulty: for hee considered not his sinne in this his drowsinesse.

Ambition a deceitfull witch.

Ambition is so cunning a witch, that shee not onely bewitcheth men with her sweete poison, but takes away all their senses: so as though they be admonished, yet they repent not at the first onset. When we therefore see this good King smitten with such a benummednesse, that hee feeles no reprehensions, neither can bee brought to the knowledge of himselfe, wee ought by his example carefully to beware of so dangerous a plague.

Vers. 5. *And Isaiah said to Hezekiah; Heare the word of the Lord of hostes:*

6. *Behold, the daies come, that all that is in thine house, and which thy fathers haue laid vp in store vntill this day, shall be carried to Babel: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord.*

Hezekias had not faulted lightly.

BY this iudgement heere pronounced by God, we may see that *Hezekias* his sinne was not small, howsoeuer common reason would iudge it otherwise. For in as much as God keepes alwaies a measure in his chastising of men; from the greatnesse of the correction we may gather, that this was no light offence, but an horrible crime. And hereby we are also admonished, that men can neuer discerne aright, neither of their words nor workes, but that God is the onely competent Iudge thereof. *Hezekias shewes his treasures:* were they gathered together to lie alwaies hidden vnder locke and key? *Hee receiues the Ambassadors courteously*; Should hee haue driuen them away? *Hee heares their message:* but since the enemie of the Assyrians seekes amitie with him, should he set light by such a commoditie? In a word, what fault is to bee found in all this, if you looke to the outward act? But God, from whom no secrets are hid, spies first of all *ingratitude* in *Hezekias*, in this his *gladnesse*: for he forgets the miserie which pressed him but a little before, and sets the Caldeans (as it were) in the place of God, to whose honour his body and goods were to be consecrated and dedicated. Secondly, he notes his *pride*; because hee indeuoured beyond measure to be renowned, in regard of his magnificence and riches. He was faultie also touching his disordered affection, in making such a *league* as was the destruction of the whole state. But the greatest fault of all was his *pride*, which after a sort strippes mens hearts of all feare of God: for which cause *Augustine* rightly breakes out into this exclamation; O what and how great is the poison of ambition, which cannot be cured but by a counterpoison! For he had respect vnto that place in the Corinths, where the Apostle saith; the angell of Satan was sent to buffet him, lest he should be exalted about measure: 2. Cor. 12.7.

God keepes a measure in his chastisements: Ier. 30.11.

God the only competent Iudge both of our words and workes.

1

2

3

1

2

3

Augustine.

The poison of pride not to be cured but by a counterpoison.

Hezekias was inuincible whilest all things

stood

ſtood in a deſperat caſe: and now he is ouercome by theſe allurements, and is not able to conquer nor reſiſt his owne vaine ambition. Let vs conſider how dangerous a malladie this is, and let vs keepe ſo much the more diligent watch ouer our falſe and treacherous hearts. Now in regard the Prophet was to pronounce ſo heauie a ſentence, he ſaith firſt, that *God* enioined him to ſpeake: *Heare the word of the Lord*, ſaith he: in the next verſe he repeates it againe: not that he laies the matter whollie vpon God, becauſe he feared ill handling; but to the end he might touch the heart of the King to the quick. Wherein we may againe note his great boldnes and conſtancie. He dreads not the preſence of the King, he feares not to diſcouer his diſeaſe, nor to threaten Gods iudgemẽt againſt him. For although Kings eares were then ſomewhat nice and delicate, yet being aſſured that *God* had ſet him a worke, he executes his charge couragiouſlie, how vnpleaſant ſoeuer his meſſage was. The Prophets were indeed the Kings ſubiects, and therefore vnder ſubiection: neither attributed they any thing vnto themſelues, vnleſſe they were to goe on Gods errant. But then, what high imagination is there which ought not to be brought downe vnder his Maieſtie? Had he minded to haue retained the fauour of his Prince he would haue bin mute as flatterers are: but he had an eie to his calling, and indeuors to diſcharge the ſame faithfullie.

Iſaiah his boldnes and conſtancie.

Nothing ſhall be left.] The maner of this chaſtiſement wherewith the Lord threatens *Hezekias* is to be obſerued: for he takes away from his ſucceſſors thoſe things wherein he gloried ſo much, to the end they might not haue occaſion to doe the like. See how God puniſheth the ambition and pride of men: for their name, or kingdome, which they imagined ſhould laſt for euer, is raced out: they are deſpitefullie intreated, and their memorie is curſed: In a word, he ouerturnes their fond conceits, ſo as they find the cleane contrarie to that which they conceiued in their fooliſh braine.

Obiect. If it be obiected, that it is no reaſon a whole citie & kingdom ſhuld be deſtroyed or caried away captiue for one mãs fault; ſeeing ỹ holy Ghoſt in many places pronounceth, that the open and vniuerſall obſtinacie of the Iewes was the cauſe why God gaue both Citie and Countrie for a pray to the Caldeans: I anſwere, that no abſurditie can enſue, if God be ſaid to puniſh the ſinne of a particular perſon, and that of a whole nation together. For ſince his wrath laid the whole Countrie waſt, all were to acknowledge their offence; and euery one in particular was to conſider what he had deſerued: that ſo none might lay the fault vpon another, but euery man might rather condemne himſelfe.

Anſ. God can puniſh the ſinne of a perticular perſon, and that of a whole kingdome together.

Furthermore, ſeeing the Iewes were culpable alreadie before the iudgement ſeate of God, *Hezekias* was iuſtly permitted to fall, that the way might be opened for God his wrath to breake forth, and to haſten the execution of his vengeance. And the like we know fell out in *Dauid*. For it was not by chance that he was moued to number the people, but it came to paſſe by the fault of Iſrael, whom the Lord meant by that meanes iuſtly to chaſten. The wrath of the Lord, ſaith the text, was kindled againſt Iſrael, and he moued *Dauid* againſt them to number the people, 2. Sam. 24. 1. So alſo in this place *Hezekias* is threatned with a iudgement: but the ſinne whereby he prouoked the wrath of the Lord to burne, was a iuſt vengeance vpon the whole people for the ſinnes committed by them before.

Verſ. 7. *And of thy ſonnes, that ſhall proceed out of thee* and *which thou ſhalt beget ſhall they take away, and they ſhall be Eunuches in the Palace of the king of Babel.*

THis might ſeeme worſe then the former threatning to *Hezekias*, and therefore it is referred to the laſt place, to amplifie the iudgement. If any calamitie do befall a countrie, Kings, and theirs, thinke to be exempted from it, becauſe they are none of the common ſort. When the Prophet telles him then that his *ſonnes* ſhall be caried away captiues, we may well ſay, that this ſeemed a very hard ſentence to him indeed.

Moreouer we may from hence gather how much God deteſted this confidence which *Hezekias* repoſed in his riches and outward eſtate (whereof alſo he vanted in the preſence of theſe infidels) ſeeing he takes vengeance of this crime as of a ſinne irremiſſible by ſo horrible an example, becauſe the King had ſhewed his treaſures to theſe heathens and infidels.

Verſ. 8. *Then ſaid Hezekiah to Iſaiah, The word of the Lord is good, which thou haſt ſpoken: and he ſaid,* * *Yet there ſhall be peace and* * *truth in my daies.*

* Or, at leaſt, let there be.
* Or, ſtabilitie.

FRom this anſwere of *Hezekias* we gather, that he was not rebellious nor preſumptuous, ſeeing he quietlie heard the Prophets reprehenſion, though he was not much moued with it at the firſt: for hearing that the Lord was angrie, *he condemnes himſelfe* without any replies, and confeſſeth, that he is iuſtlie puniſhed. In whom we haue a paterne of true teachablenes and obedience: for when he heard the iudgements of God denounced againſt him, he ſtood not vpon termes with the Prophet, but ſhewed himſelfe modeſt and meeke. From the example then of this good King, let vs learne to hearken to the Lords voice quietlie, not only when he exhorts or admoniſheth; but alſo when he condemnes and terrifies vs, in giuing iuſt ſentence vpon vs.

Wee muſt hearken to the Lords voice not only when he admoniſheth vs, but whẽ he pronounceth ſentence of condemnation againſt vs.

In ſaying, that the *word of the Lord is good*: he firſt of all commends his iuſtice, and with patience accepts of that which for the tarnes of it might haue driuen him to ſwelling and impatiencie: for the very reprobates haue ſometimes confeſſed the fault, and yet their ſtubborne hearts haue neuer bin ſo ta-

med, but they haue grudged against the reuenging hand of their Iudge. To the end that Gods threatnings may haue a sweet relish therefore, it is necessarily required that wee conceiue some hope of pardon in the middest of Gods displeasure: otherwise, our hearts will bee alwaies so stuffed with bitternesse, that nothing but gall and wormewood will proceed out of the same. But he which in his heart is perswaded that though God corrects, yet he ceaseth not still to retaine the louing affection of a father; such a one will not onely acknowledge God to be iust, but will also meekely and patiently beare his temporarie seueritie. To be short, where the feeling of Gods loue takes place, so as this principle be once fixed in our hearts, that he is our father, it shall not much dismay nor trouble vs to be heaued vp, or cast downe, according as it pleaseth him: for faith will teach vs that there is nothing more profitable then his fatherly chastisement.

Faith will teach vs that nothing is more profitable for vs then Gods fatherly chastisement.

In this sort *Dauid* in all humilitie answers the Prophet *Nathan*, who sharply rebuked him: *I haue sinned against the Lord:* 2.Sam.12.13. (which imports as much as that speech of old *Heli*; *It is the Lord, let him doe that which is good in his eies:* 1.Sam.3.18.) For he is silent, not because it could aduantage him nothing at all to murmure; but because hee willingly submits himselfe to Gods iustice. It seemes that *Sauls* silence tends to the same end, when *Samuel* told him that the kingdome was rent from him: 1.Sam.15.24. But because the punishment onely terrified him, he was touched with no compunction of heart at all for his fault. It is no wonder then though he be full of garboilings inwardly still, albeit hee set a faire countenance of it outwardly; because he could not resist accordingly as he would: for malefactors that haue fetters on their heeles, and mannacles on their hands, are wont to intreat those Iudges, whom they could find in their hearts to tumble frō their seates, and to stampe them vnder their feete. But because *Dauid* and *Hezekias* are in such wise hūbled vnder the mightie hand of God, that they lost not the assurance of pardon, they chose rather willingly to beare the blowes wherewith they were smitten, then to pull their necks out of the yoke.

Simile.

It is also very remarkeable, that *Hezekias* not onely confesseth that this sentence of God is *good*, but that also, *which Isaiah had spoken:* for this word *then*, hath great weight in it, in that hee is contented with all reuerence to receiue the *word*, though *spoken* by a mortall man; for hee looked to the chiefe author of it.

The libertie which *Isaiah* tooke might haue seemed somewhat too harsh and combersome in the eies of a King: but taking him (as he was indeede) for the seruant of God, he suffers himselfe to bee censured of him. Which being so, their niceneſse is insupportable, who can beare no admonitions nor reprehensions at all, but in disdaine, obiect against the Pastors and Ministers of the word: Are you not men as well as wee? As if forsooth God were not to be obeied, vnlesse he should send an Angell to admonish them: or, vnlesse himselfe should speake vnto them from heauen. Hence also we may learne, what to thinke of such fantasticall spirits, who seeming to reuerence God, doe notwithstanding wilfully reiect the doctrine of the holy Prophets.

But if they were so readie to obey God, then would they giue as much audience to him in the person of his seruants, as to himselfe if hee should thunder from heauen. I confesse wee must distinguish the true Prophets from the false, and the voice of the Pastor from the stranger: but we must not reiect all, hand ouer head, vnlesse we meane therewithall to reiect God himselfe. Yea, they must be heard of vs, not onely when they exhort and reproue, but also when they condemne and threaten vs (in the name of God) to be punished for our sinnes.

Those that are indeed willing to obey God, will giue him as much reuerence whē he speakes by the mouth of one of his seruants, as if himselfe should speak vnto them out of a thūder from heauen.

The particle *Ci*, is taken heere for an exception: and therefore I haue translated; *Yet* there shal be peace. For *Hezekias* addes somewhat more therein to the former; to wit, hee thanks God in that hee hath mitigated the punishment which he had deserued. As if he should say; The Lord might haue raised vp enemies against mee forthwith, that might haue driuen mee out of my Kingdome: but now he spares me, & in deferring the iudgement, moderates the punishment which I should of right sustaine.

This sentence may also be expounded by way of a praier, *yet let there be peace*: so as *Hezekias* should request that the correction might be deferred to another time. Notwithstanding, it is more probable that he applies that to the cōforting of his sorrowfull heart, which the Prophet had said of the daies to come; that thereby hee might arme himselfe with patience, because a sudden iudgement would haue astonished him much more. This exception then agrees well for the tranquillitie of his minde; *yet God will spare for the terme of my life*. Notwithstanding, if any had rather expound it, *For there shall bee peace*; I hinder him not. Some take the word *truth*, for the seruice of God and true religion; as if in dying, hee should render thanks to God that the pure doctrine should remaine vncorrupted: but I had rather take it for stabilitie, or a quiet state of the Kingdome: vnlesse any had rather take it to signifie an assured prosperitie, and of long continuance.

Now *Hezekias* might seeme cruell, in that he vtterly neglected his posterity, as one that cared not much what became of things after his death. For these are horrible blasphemies which swinish Epicures and others of that rout haue in their mouthes at this day; When I am dead, let the earth bee on a flaming fire. Againe, When I die, let all die with me. But *Hezekias* had a far other meaning: for albeit hee desired the prosperitie of such as should suruiue him, as much as his owne; yet hee could not set light by the signe of Gods mercie, who deferred the execution of this iudgement till after his death. For he might conceiue hope from thence, that his succes-

Horrible blasphemies of swinish Epicures.

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ſors ſhould in the end bee partakers of this fauour and mercie. Some thinke he reioiced for this delay, becauſe wee ought not to care for to morrow, conſidering that the day hath enough with his owne griefe: Mat. 6. 24. But this ſutes not well in this place: for *Hezekias* contemnes not the poſteritie, but perceiuing that God did fauourably mittigate the chaſtiſement which hee had deſerued, hee thanks him for it, (as we haue ſaid) in regard it was his dutie to accept of the preſent mercie offered, howſoeuer the iudgement was deferred till after his death. Truly wee for our parts are to performe all ſeruices to the age in which we liue, and to haue ſpeciall regard vnto it: wee muſt not caſt off all care for the time to come; but it is our duties to imploy our vttermoſt indeuors for that which is preſent, and now moſt preſſeth vpon vs. Wee which liue in theſe times together, are more neerly conioined in affection by the Lord, that by our mutuall communication, wee might helpe one another as much as in vs lies.

We ought to performe our ſeruices to the vtmoſt to that age in which we liue.

It is alſo to be noted, that in reſpect of *Hezekias* his ſinne, hee had iuſt cauſe to feare, leſt the Lord might againe ſhorten and cut off the courſe of his life, which had been prolonged before, euen when hee lay at deaths doore. Hearing therefore the promiſe to be ratified and confirmed, hee giues thanks to God, and is the more patient, in regard of the calamitie to come; although it could not but bee irkeſome and greeuous to him to thinke of it.

THE XL. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Comfort yee; Comfort yee my people, will your God ſay.*

The occaſion of this propheſie.

NOw the Prophet enters vpon a new argumẽt; for he lets the people alone, which made no vſe neither of admonitions nor threatnings whatſoeuer, in regard they were become maliciouſly deſperate: and turnes him towards the poſteritie to come, to ſignifie to thoſe which ſhould bee humbled vnder the croſſe, that they ſhould not be left *comfortleſſe* in the end; no, not in their deepeſt diſtreſſes. It is very likely that this propheſie was written by him, when the time of the captiuitie drew neere, that after his death he might not leaue the Church behind him ouerwhelmed with greeuous calamities, without hope of reſtauration. Now albeit that to the ſame end hee hath before mingled threatnings and terrors with his propheſies, yet it ſeemes hee had a principall regard to thoſe that then liued: but all that which followes hereafter, toucheth the eſtate of the Church to come, which was reſtored long after the Prophets death. For he will now ſet downe a perpetuall doctrine, which is not to bee reſtrained to any particular time, ſeeing hee diſcourſeth both of the beginning and progreſſe of Chriſts Kingdome. Of ſo much the greater importance therefore ought this propheſie to bee vnto vs, by how much the more it belongs particularly vnto vs for our vſe. For albeit wee may euidently diſcerne in the former propheſies, that the doctrine therein contained, is proper vnto vs as well as to the Iewes; yet in regard he now leaues the Iewes that then liued, and ſpeakes to their ſucceſſors, and indeede to all the faithfull to the worlds end, it ſeemes indeede that the doctrines following are more peculiar vnto vs. The Lord meant therefore to awaken the hearts of the faithfull by this exhortation, leſt they ſhould faint vnder ſo many calamities. Firſt then he ſpeakes to the Iewes, which ſoone after were to be led away captiues into miſerable ſeruitude, where they ſhould be depriued both of the ſacrifices and Prophets, and left deſtitute of all conſolation, had not the Lord bin pleaſed to haue releeued them by the comfortable doctrines of theſe propheſies enſuing. In the ſecond place he directs his ſpeech to the whole Kingdome of Chriſt, which ſhould ſucceed them ſoone after, to the end they might then take heart vnto them, when in all likelihood they might ſeeme in the eies of the world to be vtterlie forlorne. But to the end his words might haue the more efficacie, and might indeede come neere the heart, *he brings in God raiſing vp new Propheis*: whom hee commands to ſweeten and aſſwage the dolours of his people, by an amiable conſolation. The ſumme is, that after theſe poore baniſhed exiles ſhall haue ſeemed to haue beene forſaken for a time, that Gods fauour and louing kindneſſe ſhall breake forth, as out of the darkneſſe; and the propheſies which were ceaſed, ſhould then be brought to light againe.

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The time when this propheſie was written.

The propheſies that went before, reſpected thoſe that then preſently liued: theſe that follow, the eſtate of the Church to come.

The ſumme of this propheſie.

Why the propheſies following, ought to be more highly eſteemed of vs then the former.

Now to amplifie this their ioy, he vſeth the plurall number; *Comfort yee*: thereby ſhewing, that he will not ſend one or two, but many by troopes; which alſo came to paſſe indeed: wherein alſo we may more cleerly behold the infinite loue and mercy of God. Moreouer, it is diligently to be obſerued, that the verbe is put in the future tence; *will your God ſay*. Which ſome expoſitors tranſlate in the preſent tence, or in the preterperfect tence; but therein they both change and corrupt the ſenſe: for the Prophet cloſly notes out the time wherein the people ſhould be greeuouſly afflicted, as if God had not ſeene them at all. For howſoeuer the Lord at that time left them not deſtitute of hope touching their deliuerance, by ſending ſome Prophets vnto them; yet in regard he deferred them long, and that whileſt they were miſerably perſe-

cuted, and in a maner halfe dead: this consolation had no great efficacie, till they saw some euident signes of their returne.

Comfort ye, comfort ye. The verb *Comfort* therefore is to be applied to the present time, which being twice repeated, not only confirmes the truth of the prophesie, but also sets forth the power and efficacie of it: as if he should say, in this message there shall be a full, perfect, and perpetuall occasion of gladnes.

But especiallie they were to retaine the futurtence, *will your God say?* for in these words there lies hid a close opposition betweene that dolefull silence whereof I haue spoken, and that comfortable doctrine which came in place of it.

This prophesie is like to the complaint of the Church, Psal.74. Wee see not our signes, our Prophets are not, and there is none left that can tell vs how long: in which we know she laments, as one left destitute of true consolation, because she could heare no promise of comfort in her distresses. The Prophets meaning in this place then is, The Lord will not suffer you to be left destitute of Prophets which shall comfort you in your extreame aduersitie: for then he will raise vp men to whom he wil giue that commission which you haue so long desired, and then will he shew he hath care of you.

Now I referre this verb *will say*, not only to the captiuitie of Babylon, but to the whole time of our deliuerance; which comprehends in it the kingdome of Christ vntill his last cõming. We must adde, that he *will say* to ỹ *Prophets*, whom he will ordeine for this purpose: for in vaine shal they vtter their voice, vnlesse the Lord speake not to them first, and put that into their mouthes which they shall publish vnto others. Thus then there is a mutuall relation betweene God and his Prophets. But as I haue said, these things are not to be wholie restrained to the captiuitie of Babylon; no, they haue a further extent, and comprehend vnder them the doctrine of the Gospell, in which this power to *comfort* is chiefliе conteined: for it is the proper office thereof to refresh the afflicted, & those that are brought low, to quicken the dead, and to reioyce such as are in heauines: in a word, to bring with it tidings of all ioy and gladnes; for which cause it is called the Gospell, that is to say, good newes: which began not then to be published when Christ first appeared to the world, but long before, to wit, from the time that God first manifested his fauour.

The proper office of the Gospell.

Gospell, that is, glad tidings.

Daniell. *Daniell*, he first raised vp the standard, to the end the faithfull might prepare themselues to returne home: after him, *Haggai*, *Zachari*, *Malachi*, *Nehemiah*, *Ezra*, and others after them, vntill Christes comming, alwaies exhorted the faithfull *to be of good comfort*, and to hope against hope. The last of them that wrote was *Malachi*, who knowing there should be no more Prophets after him, sends the people to the law of *Moses*, that they might learne what the will of God was both touching his threatnings and promises, Mal.4.4.

Haggai. Zachurie. Malachi. Nehemiah. Ezra.

Now from this place we gather that which is chiefliе to be sought in the Prophets, to wit, they set before vs the sweetnes of Gods fauor, that the faithfull might conceiue hope for the time to come: that they should not quaile vnder afflictions, but might perseuere in prayer. But the matter being alwaies incredible, he calles to minde the couenant; as if he meant to say, That it was vnpossible for God to forget that which he once promised to *Abraham*. Howsoeuer the Iewes then had fallen from the grace of God by their sinnes, yet he auoucheth notwithstanding that he is *their God* still, and that they were *his peculiar people* which depended vpon his election: and therefore in regard there were many reprobates among them, he only directs his speech *to the faithfull*, for he lets the wicked languish and consume away in their incredulitie. But the godly haue here an inestimable consolation, to wit, that albeit they be pressed with griefe and anguish for a time, yet because they put their trust in him who is the father of mercies and God of all consolation, they shall in the end feele that the promises of grace were conserued and kept for them as an hid treasure, to glad their hearts in due season. See heere an excellent commendation of the propheticall office, which serues to susteine the faithfull in aduersitie, lest they should faint or sinke vnder the burthen: contrariwise, this place shewes, that God is exceeding angrie whē he depriues vs of such faithfull teachers as may bring glad tidings to the Church whereby to refresh the wearie soule, and to strengthen the weake.

What is chiefly to be sought in the Prophets.

My people.

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Vers. 2. [a] *Speake comfortablie to Ierusalem and crie vnto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquitie is pardoned: for she hath receiued of the Lords hand double for all her sinnes.*

[a] Or, speake to the heart of Ierusalem.

HEre God giues his seruants the Prophets a Commission, and puts that in their mouthes which they were to vtter, when fit time serued, for to *comfort* the faithfull that were sorowfull. And yet he stands not so much to exhort or imbolden the Prophets to discharge this their dutie manfullie and faithfullie, as he is earnest in giuing of hope to the godly, wishing them to possesse their soules in patience, vntill the Prophets were sent vnto them with this ioyfull and comfortable message. *To speake according to the heart*, signifies nothing else but to speake that which is acceptable to vs: for our heart abhorres all vnpleasant tidings, but it effectuallie imbraceth, and runnes (as it were) to meete with that which is well pleasing vnto it. Now because the people were in a maner reiected and forsaken, what newes could be better welcome then reconciliation with GOD, whereby *all their sinnes were pardoned?*

Vnder the word *Ierusalem* by a Synecdoche, we are to vnderstand the Church, which is so euident, that it needs no proofe.

Ierusalem signifies the Church.

The word *crie*, signifies, that this promise of grace shall be cleare and euident; it shall sound so in their eares, that all shall vnderstand: for if the Prophets should mutter or whisper

whiſper onely, the aſſurance of this conſolation might ſeeme doubtfull or weake: but all doubting is taken away, ſeeing it is to be deliuered freely and with a loud voice.

Her warfare is ended.

That her warfare is ended.] This is that acceptable tidings; to wit, that God hath *put an end* to the afflictions of his people. Some take the word *Tſeronah*, which we haue tranſlated Warfare, ſimply for *the time*: as if hee ſhould ſay, Her time is accompliſhed. Others thinke that the time of viſitation is here noted, but vnfitly; becauſe this word properly ſignifies among the Hebrewes, a ſet and appointed time to finiſh and end ſome buſineſſe or worke in. But this ſimilitude is doubtleſſe taken from ſouldiers that haue libertie to returne home from war; for he ſaith, *the end* and iſſue of their afflictions are at hand: as if hee ſhould ſay; God will not alwaies ſuffer the rod of the wicked to reſt vpon the lot of the godlie, but keep a meaſure in humbling of them. He therefore compares the time of their captiuitie in Babylon, to *a long warfare*, which being *ended, the ſouldiers that want implements, are ſent home to their houſes, to liue there in peace and quiet.*

Her iniquitie is pardoned.

He ſaith in like manner, that *her iniquitie is pardoned*; becauſe God will be ſo fauourable vnto them, that hee will no longer in rigor purſue them: this therefore is the expoſition of the former words. For as the Phyſitians in healing bodily diſeaſes, doe firſt remoue the cauſes from whence they ſpring, euen ſo the Lord deales with vs. The rods wherewith he beates vs proceedes from our *ſinnes*: he muſt of neceſſitie *pardon them* then, before his ſtrokes can ceaſe: and therefore the Prophet ſaith, that *her warfare is accompliſhed, becauſe her iniquitie is no longer imputed.* Some take the word *Auonah*, for miſerie, and ſay that it ſhall haue an end: which ſenſe alſo ſutes well, for ſo the Prophet affirmes one and the ſame thing two waies: for to ſay that her warfare is ended, and that her miſeries are finiſhed, are things that haue one meaning. But yet wee muſt hold this principle; that God ceaſeth to correct when he is reconciled: ſo as the remiſſion of ſinnes ought alwaies to goe before as the cauſe, although, as I thinke, wee may ſay that God was ſo pacified, that hauing pardoned the ſinnes of his people, hee is now readie to receiue them againe into his fauour.

Simile.

Our ſinnes muſt be forgiuen, ere our afflictions can ceaſe: See Chap. 38. 17.

Double.] This place is expounded two waies: for ſome affirme, that he people which had deſerued double puniſhment, were adorned with double grace: others, that God would chaſtiſe them no more, becauſe they had had enough already. Now howſoeuer the firſt expoſition containes a fruitfull and profitable doctrine, yet wee will let that paſſe now, becauſe it agrees not with the text: for it appeares the Prophet meant onely to ſay, that God ſatisfied himſelfe ſufficiently with the miſeries which his Church had ſuffered. I wiſh therefore that thoſe had bin more modeſt which blamed Saint *Ierom* and other authors for this ſecond expoſition, which is much more fitting; and not the other ſubtilie, that the Lord will render double grace for double affliction. The ſumme is, that the Lord will puniſh his people no more ſo long, nor ſo ſharply, becauſe his louing kindneſſe hath ouercome his diſpleaſure, and will not ſuffer him to exerciſe ſo rigorous a courſe any longer: thus the word *double*, ought to be taken for largely, or abundantly. For we muſt not imagin that the chaſtiſement was equall, or greater then their ſinnes; for their blaſphemie is to be abhorred who accuſe God of crueltie, as if he corrected men too ſeuerely. What puniſhment is ſufficient for the leaſt of our offences, committed againſt his infinite Maieſtie? This ought therefore to be referred to the mercies of God, that hee alwaies ſmiting in meaſure, as it is in Chapter 27. 8. will giue them no more blowes, neither yet continue them any longer. Why ſo? Becauſe the former ſtrokes haue ſufficed him, albeit the people deſerued to bee beaten againe and againe with much more ſeueritie. The Lord ſhewes himſelfe like a father, who hauing compaſſion on his children, neuer chides but vnwillingly, and therefore is willing to pardon them their faults.

Double, is taken for largely, or, abundantly.

God is as willing to pardon our faults, as we would haue them pardoned.

Saint Ierom.

Verſ. 3. *A voice crieth in the wilderneſſe; Prepare the way of the Lord, make ſtraight in the deſert a path for our God.*

HEe goes on with the argument begunne, and ſhewes more plainly, that hee will ſend meſſengers to the people (in appearance forlorne) which ſhall comfort & cheere them. And thus hee preuents an obiection which ſome might make; Thou telleſt vs indeed of *comfort*, but where are the *Prophets* that ſhould bring the ſame vnto vs? For we ſhall be in a deſert. Whence then, I pray thee, ſhall this conſolation come? Thus he telles them then that the *deſert* ſhall be no meanes to debarre them of this conſolation. The *deſert* heere is taken figuratiuely, for that deſolation which ſhould come vpon them: though I denie not but the Prophet alſo alludes to the way betweene Babylon and Iudeah; for the tedious paſſage thorow the deſert, might ſeeme to take away all hope of returning home againe. Notwithſtanding he promiſeth, that albeit all the paſſages were ſtopped, and that there were no way ſet open for them, yet that the Lord would eaſilie make the roughеſt waies ſmooth and plaine for himſelfe, and for his ſeruants. Some ioine the particle, In the deſert, with the member following, and expound it thus, Prepare the Lord a way in the deſert. But it ſeemes rather that the Prophet brings in a *voice*, which ſhould gather theſe baniſhed ones together, which were driuen out of the habitable lande. As if hee ſhould ſay; Indeed you ſee nothing but an hideous deſert before you; but yet you ſhall heare this comfortable *voice*, by the mouthes of my Prophets. Now theſe things muſt bee referred to that miſerable bondage wherewith they ſhould bee oppreſſed in Babylon.

But to whom is this *voice* directed? Is

To whom this voice is directed. Cyrus. The Medes, and Persians.

it to the faithfull? No such matter. To whom then? To *Cyrus*, to the Medes and Persians which held this people captiue, who because they were no voluntarie seruants of God, they were constreined to deliuer them whether they would or no. This is the cause why they are commanded to *prepare* and make readie *the way*, that the people might passe home into Iudea, as if he should say, Make passage for them in those wayes where none was before. And this sets forth the efficacie and force of this prophesie, for when God giues power to his seruants to commaund cruell tyrants giuen to robberie (and were then conquerors ouer the Babylonians) to prepare the way for his people: he thereby shewes, that nothing shall be able to foreslow the accomplishment of his promise, because he will serue his turne of the Medes and Persians, as of his hired seruants.

A singular consolation.

What an excellent consolation is this, to heare that God vseth the seruice of Infidels, yea and when his Church hath need, to make all creatures put to their hands for the helping forward of our saluation?

Where he saith, the way shall be *prepared*, not to the Iewes, but *to the Lord* himselfe: in this also we haue a singuler testimonie of the loue he beares vs, in attributing that *to himselfe* which in deed belonged to his people. What need had he of any *way* to be made for him, or to haue a *path* prepared? None at all. But thus it pleaseth him to make knowne that we are so neerely ioined vnto him, that he counts it as done to his owne Maiestie which is done to vs. This maner of speech is found often in other places, as when it is said, *that God went forth* for the saluation of his people, *euen* for the saluation with his annointed, Abac.3.13. Also that *he went through Egypt*, and led them in the wildernes like a flock, Exo.11. 4. Psal.78.52.

Now this place is alledged by Matth.3.3. Mark.1.3. Luk.3.4. Iohn 1.23. and applied to *Iohn Baptist*, as if these things were foretold of him, and very rightlie: for he was the first and most excellent messenger and herault of our saluation and redemption, of which, the deliuerance from Babell was only a type and figure. And in very truth when the poore and afflicted Church recouered health in *Iohn Baptist* his time, the deformitie which it had, did rather resemble a *desert*, then the captiuitie of Babylon. But Gods will was that in the desart where the Baptist preached, the figure and image of this horrible scattering might be perceiued, which had almost consumed and wasted all the beawtie of the Church. So then that which the Prophet saith here vnder a similitude, was then fulfilled indeed: for *Iohn Baptist* held forth the banner of gladnes, when things were very desperate and confused.

Iohn Baptist, the first and most renoumed herauld of our redemption.

I grant this voice sounded before by the mouth of *Daniell*, *Zacharie*, and others; but the redemption being then neerer, *Iohn Baptist* spake with more efficacie: for he pointed out Christ with his finger.

Iohn 1.29.

But because the besotted Iewes were nothing touched (for the most part) with the true feeling of their scattering, therefore *Iohn the Baptist* sought out *a solitarie and desert place*, that by the beholding of him he might awaken the drousiest of them to the hope of the promised deliuerance. In that he said he was no Prophet, it was in regard of the end of his calling, and of the summe of his doctrine: for he was not sent to exercise any particular function for any set time, but to *prepare many hearts* to receiue his Lord and Master. He also referres that properlie to all men which is said here, touching the remouing of the impediments out of the way: namely, because the peruersitie of our nature, the ouerthwart turnings of our vnderstandings, and the rebellion of our hearts, doe shut out the Lords passage, and causeth vs that we can not so denie our selues as to yeeld him the obedience which we owe him.

Iohn 1.21.

Vers. 4. *Euery valley shall be exalted, and euery mountaine and hill shal be made low: and the crooked shall be streight, and the rough places plaine.*

The former sentence confirmed and expounded.

HE both confirmes and expounds the former sentence: for he shewes, that the Lord will suffer *no impediments* stand in his way to hinder him from redeeming and restoring of his Church, whē it seemes good vnto him. These words may well be translated in the imperative, so as the Lord should make the whole verse a charge giuen to the Prophets to prepare and make plaine the way, but the difference is not very materiall: let it suffice vs to haue his meaning, which is, *that Gods hand shall preuaile, though many difficulties and lets do arise in the way to hinder this deliuerance.* Thus we may see that many hindrances present themselues as often as God once begins to worke for the saluation and succour of the afflicted: wherein notwithstanding his glorie shines so much the more; neither is it any way hurtfull for vs. For his admirable power is manifested before our eies, seeing all the forces, enterprises, and imaginations of mans braine can neuer so hinder, but that his decree must of necessitie come to passe: for he will bring his seruants as easily ouer *mountaines*, and through *rough waies*, as if they passed through euen and smooth waies. It is certaine that by *mountaines and hils*, the Prophet vnder a figure meanes all sorts of obstacles: for Satan neuer ceaseth plotting how to hinder our saluatiō. For whē the matter cōcerns our spirituall deliuerance, no doubt but these words comprehend in them all inward and outward impediments, as carnall lusts, and crooked affections, ambition, vaine confidence, impatiencie, &c. all which do wonderfullie withstand our passage, but the Lord wil remoue them all: for whē he stretcheth forth his hand, nothing shall be able to turne or hold vs back.

God no sooner begins to worke for the saluation of the afflicted, but many impediments comes in the way.

Impediments hindring vs in our spirituall course.

A singuler consolation.

Vers. 5. *And the glorie of the Lord shall be reuealed, and all flesh shall see it together:*

together: for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.

HIs meaning is, that this worke of redemption ſhall be ſo glorious, that the Lord will make it knowne to all, that himſelfe is the author of it, and will cauſe his power and maieſtie to ſhine therein. It is true that they may bee perceiued in all places, and in all things; but he promiſeth eſpecially to *reueale* his *glory* in the *protection* and *deliuerance* of his Church; and not without cauſe: for the redemption thereof euen from the beginning vntil Chriſts cõming, was as an incredible renuing or ſecond creation of the world. This promiſe therefore came in due ſeaſon, when Gods power which he was wont to manifeſt, was now almoſt ſo extinct, that there ſcarſly ſhined any ſparkles thereof: as it is ſaid, Pſal. 74. We ſee not our ſignes, &c. I ſay, it was to good purpoſe that the Prophet promiſed the *ſigns* ſo vnwonted and memorable, by which they might euidently perceiue, that God had infinite meanes in his hands to helpe his Church, although hee ſeemed to defer it for a time.

Hee amplifies this miracle afterwards by another circumſtance; that is, it ſhall not onelie be glorious among the Iewes, but alſo in ſtrange Countries far remote from them: for by theſe words, *all fleſh ſhall ſee*, hee meanes that all nations vnder the Sun ſhould know, that the returne of the Iewes out of captiuitie, was a worke wrought from heauen, and that God ſpake not to them by his Prophets in vaine.

Wherein hee taxeth the incredulitie of men, who reſt not vpon Gods promiſes, but hold all that the Prophets ſpeake in his name for fables, till they ſee the performance thereof with their eies. By this place we are alſo taught, what is the true meanes to correct our vnbeleefe; euen to exerciſe our ſelues daily in the meditation of Gods promiſes, that ſo our faith may be confirmed by all the teſtimonies of his loue, which hee ſets before vs. For thus we muſt ioine practiſe to the promiſes. The bare view of Gods works doe profit vs little, and therefore he ſends his word to open our vnderſtandings: and in the ſecond place, he ſeales vp the truth thereof by the effect it ſelfe.

The right way to correct our vnbeleefe.

Verſ. 6. A voice ſaid, Crie. And he ſaid, What ſhall I crie? All fleſh is graſſe, and all the grace thereof is as the flower of the field.

HE ſpeakes heere of another voice, then that which he mentioned verſ. 3. For hitherunto he hath ſpoken of the *voice of the Prophets*: now comes in the *voice of God*, who commands the Prophet to *crie*. I denie not but the voice of the Prophets is alſo the voice of God, whoſe inſtruments they are, ſeeing they ſpeake not of themſelues: yet this diſtinction is neceſſarie, to the end wee may know when the Lord commands, and when it is that the Prophets and Miniſters doe execute his commandements. There is a fit compariſon betweene the *two voices* then, that we might learne to receiue the meſſage which the Prophets bring in the name of the Lord, with as much reuerence as if himſelfe ſpake vnto vs from heauen: for they ſpeake as from his mouth, and as his Ambaſſadors vtter nothing but that which his Spirit ſuggeſts vnto them.

The voice of the Prophets the voice of God, yet it is neceſſarie to diſtinguiſh them.

Moreouer, by this preface we are admoniſhed, that the Prophet meanes to ſpeake of ſome great matter: for howſoeuer he alwaies proteſts faithfully to deliuer that to others, which himſelfe receiued from the Lord; yet here to ſtir vp the more attention, hee tells vs that the words which hee pronounceth, were put into his mouth by *the expreſſe voice of God*.

Why the Prophet vſeth this preface.

Hereunto appertaines the verbe *To cry*: as if he ſhould ſay, Thou muſt publiſh this meſſage with a loud voice, that it may indeed go to the quicke. But *the interrogation* which is added, imports much: for the Prophets meaning therein is, that hee ranne not of his own head, nor bragged of things he vnderſtood not; but that *they* were taught him at leaſure, and diſtinctly; he being well aduiſed, and very attentiue.

The interrogation hath an emphaſis here.

From the matter it ſelfe we may gather, that here is nothing ſuperfluous, in regard that two principall points of the heauenly doctrine are here to be handled ſummarilie. Firſt, that howſoeuer *men bee nothing in themſelfe but ſmoke and vanitie*, and that all his excellencie vades and periſheth as the ſhadow, or like the *flower*; yet the faithfull haue good cauſe notwithſtanding to reioice, becauſe they ſeeke their ſaluation out of themſelues. Secondly, albeit they be ſtrangers vpõ earth, yet they are inriched with heauenly glorie, becauſe the Lord vnites himſelfe vnto them by his word; for our abaſement ought to inflame vs with a deſire to partake of Gods grace.

What is to be gathered from the matter it ſelfe.

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The Prophet knew well enough what he was to teach, but he meant to rouze vp their ſpiries by this interrogation; thereby to ſhow, that himſelfe and all his fellow ſeruants were conſtrained by this neceſſitie to vtter this ſentence, and that they could not otherwiſe diſcharge their duties well, though they ſhuld intreat and admoniſh neuer ſo much: for the truth is, nothing ſhall bee gained by ſpeaking, if they hold any other tenure then this.

What ſhall I cry?

The word *cry*, may ſignifie a libertie and cuidence in the words: for the Prophets were not to whiſper betweene the teeth, but in the hearing of all to pronounce that which they had to ſay roundly, and to their vnderſtandings; yea freely and plainly to open the meaning of whatſoeuer meſſage they had receiued. Is any man called to the office of teaching then? Let him alwaies thinke and remember that he muſt vſe an inuincible freedome of ſpeech againſt all difficulties that are oppoſed to his miniſtery, as the Prophets and Apoſtles haue done, without ſhrinking their neckes out of the coller. Woe bee

What ſuch are to doe as are called to the office of teaching.

to meet, saith the Apostle, If I preach not, for necessitie is laid vpon mee: 1. Corinth. 9.16.

All flesh is grasse. First it is to be noted, that he speakes not here of the fragilitie of mans life onely, for the words haue a larger sense; that is, to bring to nothing all the excellencie which men may seeme to haue in them. *Dauid* indeede compares this life to grasse, Psal. 103.15. because it is corruptible and transitorie: but the scope of the text shewes, that *Isaiah* speakes *not of the outward man onely*, but also comprehends *the gifts of the minde*, wherewith men are vsually puffed vp; as *wisdome, valour, industrie, iudgement, dexteritie*, in dispatching businesses, by meanes whereof they thinke themselues more excellent then all the rest of the creatures.

How farre this phrase, All flesh is grasse, extends it selfe.

This is better expressed by the word *Chasdo*, which is by and by added; which some translate Glory: others, Well doing: but I had rather expound it *grace*: by which word I vnderstand, *whatsoeuer gift it is whereby men purchase praise and honour vnto them from others.* Notwithstanding, the passiue signification may haue place: as if the Prophet should say; Whatsoeuer is excellent and worthy commendation among men, proceedes from the meere liberalitie of God. And in this sense, *Dauid* calles the Lord, the God of his sauour: Psal. 59.10. by whose grace hee had receiued so many benefits as he inioied. It is also very certaine that all that which is praise worthie in men, is heere called by this word *grace*: and is by the Prophet condemned euery whit of vanitie: for there is a close opposition betweene the *common gifts of nature, and the grace of regeneration.*

The meaning of this word, Grace.

Many expound this of the Assyrians, and refer it to them, as if *Isaiah* meant to discharge the hearts of the Iewes from all feare, by lessening, or indeed by taking cleane away the power, riches, wit, and subtile plots of their aduersaries. Thus they expound it then; If the force of your enemies feare you, remember they are but *flesh*, which by its own debilitie consumes it selfe away. But these mens errors shall be sufficetly cõuinced anon by the very scope of the text, where the Prophet applies his speech directly to the Iewes. Wee are diligently to obserue then, that whole man with all his faculties wherein he pleaseth himselfe, is heere compared to a *flower*.

Men are easilie brought to confesse they are mortall, but the difficultie is to make thẽ disclaime their owne carnall reason: 1. Cor. 2. 14.

All men are easilie perswaded of their mortalitie touching this life; and the prophane writers haue disputed that question at large: but there is much more difficultie to plucke vp that confidence which men conceiue through a false opinion of their owne wisdome: for they thinke they haue more sharpnesse of wit & industrie in them then others, and therefore also thinke they haue good occasiõ to glory in themselues aboue others. But our Prophet shewes, that the rarest gift in man, fades and perisheth forthwith. Notwithstanding, he seemes to adde a kinde of correction by way of mockage, in speaking of the *flowers of the field*: for there is more beautie in a *flower*, then in *grasse*, & is therefore a yeelding or granting: as if he should say; Though men haue some outward appearance of beautie, such as is in the *flowers of the field*, yet, *all is but a flower*: for the beautie and grace thereof wholly vanisheth away; so as their glorying and flattering of themselues in this vaine and deceitfull glittering shew, is to no purpose at all.

Vers. 7. *The grasse withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the Lord bloweth vpon it: surely the people is grasse.*

THis may well be vnderstood of the beautie of the fields, which the violence of one gale of wind spoiles; as it is said in the hundred and third Psalme: for we know that the wind is called the *spirit* of God in other places. But I rather thinke the similitude is applied to the present purpose, because otherwise the application would be obscure. The Prophet then expounds his owne meaning when hee said, that men with all their glory were nothing but grasse, because *the spirit of God* will consume them in the top of their pride *vvith one blast.* Therefore this speech must be thus resolued; *How soeuer it be true that men bring indeed vvith excellent parts of nature, may florish; yet they shall know that all is but vanitie, vvhen the Spirit of God shall but blow vpon them.* For in that they grow so beesotted in their own ouerweenings, it is because they neuer set themselues in Gods presence, but digge themselues hiding places, that they may flatter themselues without checke or controle. To the end then that they might no more receiue themselues with the sweete deceits of lying vanities, the Prophet summons them before Gods iudgement seat, and grants indeed *that they florish in appearance*, so long as they keep themselues a great way off from the presence of Gods Maiestie; but let the Lord beginne once *to blow vpon them*, their all their beautie and strength shall forthwith vanish into smoke. He seemes to attribute an office to the Spirit of God, which is not very fitting vnto it: for it is his propertie to renew the face of the earth: as on the other side, if he withdraw himselfe neuer so little, all things fall to nothing. Psal. 104. And *Isaiah* affirmes here the cleane contrarie. Some may thinke then, that one Prophet contradicts another. But there is no absurditie in it to say; that all things are renued by the vertue of the holy Ghost. And againe, that the same Spirit should consume those things which seemed very glorious before. For we haue no being but in God; and to beginne to be something in him, wee must first of all be conuinced of our vanitie, that we may the better acknowledge it. The Lord therefore *bloweth* vpon vs, to teach vs that in our selues wee are nothing.

Obiect.

Ans.

Now to the end all might know that the Prophet spake not of strangers, but of that people which gloried much in the name of God, he addes, that *the people is grasse*: for the Iewes thought themselues more worthie and excellent

excellent then any other nation, and therefore that they of all others ought to be ſeparated from the common ſort of men. Hee ſpeakes to them then properlie and expreſſlie, to the end they might attribute nothing vnto themſelues aboue others: as if he ſhould ſay, You ſhall ſhew your ſelues very diſcreet and wiſe, if in conſidering your owne pouertie and baſenes, you ſhall reiect all vaine confidence. In a word, the Prophet hauing ſpoken of comfort in the firſt verſe, hee now ſhewes how men ought to be prepared to receiue it: but they are no way fit to receiue it, vnleſſe they be firſt brought to nothing. Our hardnes of heart then muſt be ſoftned, our high and prowd conceits muſt be brought low, our *glorie* turned into ſhame of face, and our hearts tamed and humbled, if with fruit we will receiue the *conſolations* which the Prophets ſhall bring vs by the commandement of the Lord.

In the firſt verſe the Prophet mentioned ſome conſolation: now he ſhewes them the meanes how to be prepared to receiue it.

Verſ. 8. *The graſſe withereth, the floure fadeth, but the word of our God ſhall ſtand for euer.*

THis repetition is added once againe to bring all the glorie of prowd fleſh vnto nothing: it alſo therewithall conteines an excellent conſolation; to wit, that the Lord hauing humbled his ſeruants, forthwith giues them matter of ioy and gladnes. This is the order of the text then, *The graſſe withers, but the word of the Lord indures for euer.* This only conſolation is ſufficient, namely, that the *word of God* is made the ground of our comfort: as if God himſelfe ſhould reach out his hand to lift vs vp, after he hath manifeſted to vs how emptie and deſtitute wee are of all good things, and how periſhable and tranſitorie our fleſh is. We then are fraile, and fading as the flower, but the word of the Lord is firme and eternall. To be ſhort, that life which is wanting in vs is offred vs elſewhere.

With matter of humiliation, the Prophet mingleth matter of conſolation.

Gods word, the ground of our comfort.

The whole ſumme of the Goſpell is heere comprehended in few words, for it conſiſts in the knowledge of our miſerie, pouertie, and vanitie, that being humbled in good earneſt, we might haue our recourſe vnto God, by whoſe only grace we ſhall be whollie reſtored. Let not ſuch then as are acquainted with their wofull condition by nature be therefore out of heart, for the word of the Lord is ſet before them, which is able to build them vp, and to giue them ſtrong conſolation.

The ſumme of the Goſpel.

Our baſe eſtate muſt not put vs vtterlie out of heart.

Moreouer, wee are here taught to ſeeke conſolation no where elſe but in *eternitie*, which is only to be found in God, and in none other: for there is no ſtabilitie in earth or earthlie things. What madnes is it then to place our happines in preſent things, which wee ſee conſume like ſmoke? He therefore much deceiues himſelfe which thinks he can meete with true felicitie till he be come vnto God, who is therfore called *the eternall*, in holy Scriptures, becauſe we might know that life flowes from him into vs: yea, he hath adopted vs for his children on this condition, that we may partake with him in his immortalitie.

No ſtabilitie in earth, or earthly things.

But all this ſhall profit vs very little, vnleſſe we be ſhewed the way how to attaine it: the *word* therefore comes betweene, from which we muſt not turne an haires breadth. For if we wander and ſtray from it, we ſhall be intangled in ſuch wonderfull laborynths, that we ſhall neuer know how to get out.

The way how to attaine true felicitie.

Now he ſaith, the word *endures for euer*, not only in it ſelfe, but in vs alſo: which we ought diligentlie to obſerue, becauſe without this addition we ſhould neuer be able to attaine any ſound conſolation. And S. *Peter*, a faithfull expoſitor of this place applies it vnto vs, in ſaying, that we are regenerated by this *incorruptible ſeed*: yea, by this *word*, which, ſaith he, is preached amõg you, 1. Pet. 1. 23. whence we gather, as I touched a little before, that life is prepared for the dead, which ſhall earneſtlie draw neere to this fountaine ſet open vnto them: for that power which is hidden in God, is manifeſted vnto vs by this *word*.

Verſ. 9. *O Zion that bringeſt good tidings, get thee vp into the hie mountaine: O Ieruſalem, that bringeſt good tidings, lift vp thy voice with ſtrength: lift it vp, be not afraid: ſay vnto the Cities of Iudah, Behold your God.*

HE goes on ſtill with the ſame argument. The Lord promiſed before that he would ſend Prophets which ſhould publiſh the promiſes to comfort this deſolate and ſorrowfull people: now he commands that this conſolation be ſpread further, becauſe he meanes that his grace ſhall be ſhed forth vpon the whole land of Iudeah. He gaue hope of theſe ioyfull tidings to Ieruſalem and Zion before: now his purpoſe is, *that this voice ſhould ſound forth, and ring throughout all the reſt of the Cities*, for which purpoſe he commands them to *lift vp the voice*, and to publiſh it in the *high mountaine*.

Now howſoeuer it be true that by the names of *Zion* and *Ieruſalem*, one and the ſame is to be vnderſtood, yet the repetition is diligentlie to be marked. For the meaning is, that this Citie was no way more excellent then the reſt, but in regard that God had choſen it aboue the reſt to be the ſeate of his Sanctuarie. In the next place he ſaith that they publiſh *good tidings*, becauſe the Prieſts and Leuites were there ordeined and inſtructed according to the rules conteined in the Law, that they might be fitted to be leaders of the people, and to publiſh the doctrine of ſaluation. In the meane while this title wherwith God adornes his Church is well to be obſerued, to the end ſhe may be knowne by ſome ſure and infallible marke. For that aſſemblie is not to be held for the Church where the heauenlie doctrine of *glad tidings* is not ſounded forth and preached: and in this ſenſe the Apoſtle ſaith, that ſhe is the pillar and ground of truth, 1. Tim. 3. 15. For albeit God might gouerne vs well enough without the miniſtrie of man, yet he hath impoſed this charge vpon his Church, into whoſe hands he hath committed the ineſtimable treaſure of his word, & for this cauſe ſhe is called

That aſſemblie is not to be reputed the Church, where the doctrine of ſaluation ſounds.

The true Church the mother of the faithfull. Dumbe idols in the papacie, boast in vaine of the title of the Church.

led hereafter, The mother of all the faithfull, Chap. 66. 10. 11. 12. Hence it followes, that nothing is more absurd and vniust, then to see dumb Idols to boast of the name of the Church, as they doe in the Papacie. We are also aduertised, that the Church is not taught of God that she should keepe her knowledge to her selfe, but that she should *proclaime* that to others which she hath learned. Moreouer, she is inioined to *publish* this grace freely without any feare, that the Prophets might know they were not to speake timerously, as of a thing doubtfull, but as those that were well assured of that truth which they set forth, being fully perswaded that God which was the author of it could not lie; but his will was, that the witnesses of his grace should come out of *Zion*, to repleniſh the whole land of Iudeah with gladnes.

When he addes, *Behold your God*; In this sentence he comprehends the summe of our happines, which consists in enioying *the only presence of our God*, which brings with it the fulnes of all good things; but if we be depriued of it, no greater miserie can befall vs. For if we be estranged from God, all things must of necessitie turne to our ruine, though wee should inioy all the pleasures in the world. From this circumstance it is also to be noted, that nothing is more contrarie vnto faith, then to tie the doctrine which the Prophets publish, to the sight of our eies: for themselues must needes haue been mute, if they had not lifted their mindes farre aboue the world; neither durst they otherwise haue bin so bold and constant to draw on others with them, to hope for better things in the midst of despaire. Surely when the wicked haue their swindge, and that iniquitie hath gotten the vpper hand; when the poore Church trembles, and seemes of all other the most miserable, then is the time to lift vp our heads, and so much the more to fasten our eies vpon the promises, and to preach and publish his comfortable *presence* to such as will *behold* it by faith.

When it is the fittest time to proclaime comfort to the Church.

Vers. 10. *Behold, the Lord God will come with power, and his arme shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his worke is before him.*

HEe inricheth this short and latter sentence with many words, because it needed some exposition: and he vseth the word *behold* againe, for the greater certentie, that hee might so much the more incourage the faithfull. He shewes more fully then, of how great vse the presence of God is vnto vs: and first he saith, *he will come with power*, which shall not be idle, but such as we shall feele to be effectuall. Some translate the word *Lo*, Of himselfe, which also word for word may bee turned, He is mightie, or, reigning of himselfe. Now his meaning is, that God is strong enough, and needes no man to helpe him. The same is repeated vnder the words *reward* and *worke*: for it is vsuall among the Hebrewes to repeate one and the same thing two waies. By *reward*, we must not vnderstand a recompence due by merit; but the righteousnesse of God, by which he protests he will *recompence* those which call vpon him in truth, and with vpright hearts: for those that are but meanely read in the Prophets language, know that the word *Secar* imports so much.

The summe is, that God will not come to make shewes onely, but will manifest his *power*, and make vs to feele it indeed.

And thus it would not bee amisse, if the word Effect, were put in stead of *worke*. Many expound this more wittily, and descant like children vpon *worke* and *reward*, as if *worke* were the *merit* to which *reward* must bee giuen: but the Prophet had no such meaning. In both words he repeates the same thing, as I haue said, and sets forth the fruit of the Lords *cumming*, which the faithfull shall receiue to their exceeding benefit.

Vers. 11. *Hee shall feede his flocke like a Shepheard: hee shall gather the lambs with his arme, and carrie them in his bosome; and shall guide them with young.*

BY this verse he shewes what this *worke* of the Lord is: for in as much as he workes diuersly, and infinite waies, the hearer might haue doubted with himselfe what God meant to doe. And thus the generall doctrine could not of it selfe haue been sufficient to haue raised vp their hope. Now howsoeuer hee stands not to reckon vp all the parts of Gods office, yet in these few words he signifies, that his determination was to vphold and keepe his Church. And therefore he compares him to a *shepheard*: by which word hee sets forth Gods infinite *loue* towards vs, in that hee vouchsafeth to stoope so low as to bee our shepheard. The Prophet hath in other places, yea and in the former verse also, armed him with a terrible and inuincible power for the defence of his Church; which he will also repeat againe afterwards: but here he attributes to him a more gracious title, to the end the faithful might sweetly repose themselues vnder his protection.

Gods loue in this vers. Gods power in vers. 10. to be ioined together.

Moreouer, although by the word *flocke*, he meanes the elect people whom he had taken into his custodie, we are notwithstanding admonished, that hee will be no shepheard, but to such as with the modestie and weakenesse of *sheepe* and *lambs*, are content to follow him. The condition of a *flocke* therefore must bee considered: for he will not feede wild beasts, but *lambs*. Let vs therefore cast off all stubbornnesse, and let vs suffer our selues to bee meekened, if wee meane *to be gathered into this fold*, whereof God promiseth to bee the *shepheard*.

God will be no sheepheard to wolues, but to such as shew the tractable and meeke nature of lambs.

He will beare them.] These words expresse the singular goodnesse of God, who ouer and besides the vehement loue which he beares to his flocke, hath respect *to the weake* and feeble sheepe; for then he shewes the *care* he hath in dealing gently with them, his *humanitie*

nitie in approching neere vnto them, and his *patience* in bearing them in his *armes*. Wherein we ſee, he omits no office that appertaines to a good ſheepheard, whoſe dutie is to haue his eie vpon all his ſheepe, that he may gouerne them according to their condition: and to comfort them; but eſpeciallie thoſe that are ſick and infirme. The ſumme is, That God will be gentle, louing, milde, & mercifull in gouerning his ſeruants; ſo as he will not require more of the weake then they are able to beare.

led in our hearts, would keepe vs frō being ſhake of any temptation.

Verſ. 12. *Who hath meaſured the waters in his fiſt? and counted the heauen with a ſpanne, and comprehended the duſt of the earth in a meaſure? and weighed the mountaines in a weight, and the hils in a ballance?*

Hauing ſet forth Gods fatherly loue towards his little flock, now he ſets forth his power the ſecond time.

HAuing finiſhed his ſpeech touching the fatherlie care that God hath for the defence of his people: now he comes to ſet forth his power; and magnifies it as farre forth as poſſiblie he can, which yet ſhal moue vs very little, vnleſſe we looke narrowlie into the Prophets meaning. An ignorant perſon at the firſt bluſh would ſay that the Prophet hath heaped vp a many of broken ſentences without grace or arte: but if we haue regard to his ſcope and end, by an elegant ſpeech he adornes the power of God ſeaſonably, becauſe his *power* is the true and beſt ſtay for our faith to leane vpon, that thereby we may be aſſured he will performe his promiſe. It is not for nought the Apoſtle ſaith that *Abraham* doubted not, knowing that he which had promiſed, *vvas alſo able to do it*, Rom.4.20. And in the ſame ſenſe he ſaith, 2.Tim.1.12. I know whom I haue believed; *God is able* to keepe that which I haue committed vnto him. To this belongs the ſaying of Chriſt, My father which gaue them me is *greater then all*, Ioh.10. 29. Seeing then that we haue continuallie to wreſtle againſt diſtruſt, and that Satan is readie to circumuent vs by many fetches, wee muſt attribute to the power of God the praiſe that it deſerueth, to the end his promiſes may be receiued of vs with that aſſurance which is requiſit.

Gods power, the true ſtay and prop of our faith.

Now becauſe the reſtauration of the people was a thing incredible to fleſh and blood, it was needfull that the minds of the faithfull ſhould be raiſed vp farre aboue the world, leſt they ſhould tie the grace of God to humane helps. Wee ſee the Prophet not only teacheth that God is the Creator of heauen and earth: but whatſoeuer he recites touching his infinite power, it is applied to the matter in hand; which we alſo are to doe at this day. When any aduerſitie preſſeth vs, our ſaluation ſeemes to be hidden, Gods power is ouerſhadowed, as if a cloude were come betweene vs and it: we ſtand amazed, euen as if we were vtterlie reiected and contemned of the Lord. Let vs not thinke then that this deſcription is ſome light matter: for if the perſwaſion of *Gods power* were wellſetled in our hearts, we ſhould neuer be ſo toſſed vp and downe; neither ſhould any calamitie be able to trouble vs.

The Prophet playes not the orator only in ſetting forth Gods power, but applies it to the preſent occaſion.

The firme perſwaſion of Gods power well ſet.

Abraham reſted vpon this *power*, as we haue ſaid, that he might with aſſurance imbrace that which otherwiſe was incredible: and therefore S. *Paul* affirmes that he *hoped, aboue hope*, being reſolued that *God vvas able* to performe that which he had ſpoken, ſo as he *neither ſtaggered, neither was he weake in the faith*, Rom.4.18.19. This teacheth vs to lift vp our eies aboue the hils, Pſal.121.1. and that wee iudge not of things according to the outward appearance; but that we may indeed aſſure our ſelues, that that which God hath ſaid ſhall ſurely come to paſſe, becauſe he hath all things in his owne power.

We muſt not iudge of things according to outward appearances.

All of vs are to reſt in this; but (as I told you) the Iewes had exceeding neede to be fullie reſolued of it, for they were oppreſſed vnder very mightie tyrants: all paſſages were ſhut vp againſt them: all hope of libertie was taken from them: in a word, they ſaw themſelues euery way compaſſed about, as in a great and hidious wildernes. This conſolation therefore had bin ſet before them in vaine, if by the Prophets admonition their minds had not bin raiſed vp to heauen, that ſo they might whollie reſt their hearts vpon the abſolute power of God, without looking to inferior things.

When he ſpeakes of *meaſures* which men vſe in ſmall things, it is to applie himſelfe to our weaknes: for the Lord liſps with vs thus ordinarily, taking ſimilitudes from things vſuall amongſt vs, when he is to ſpeake of his owne Maieſtie, that ſo thoſe of ſhallow and feeble capacities might the better comprehend his greatnes and excellencie. Wee are therefore to reiect all carnall imaginations of God, becauſe his greatnes ſurpaſſeth all creatures: for the heauen, the earth, the ſea, and all that in them is with their vnmeaſurablenes, are yet all of them nothing in compariſon of him.

God is ſaine to liſp as it were vnto vs, otherwiſe we were not able to comprehend his incomprehenſible greatnes.

Verſ. 13. *Who hath inſtructed the Spirit of the Lord? or vvas his Counſellor, or taught him?*

14. *Of vvhome tooke he counſell, and who inſtructed him, and taught him in the way of iudgement? or taught him knowledge, and ſhewed vnto him the way of vnderſtanding?*

The Prophet hauing deſcribed Gods power and goodnes, now he mentions his wiſdome.

THe Prophet now deſcends to ſpeake that of Gods wiſedome, which in the former verſes he taught concerning his power and goodnes. This golden chaine is to be noted: for as carnall reaſon doth peruerſlie reſtraine the power of God to outward helps; ſo doth it without reaſon ſubiect *the incomprehenſible counſell* of God to humane imaginations: and thus many things will preſent themſelues to hinder the courſe of Gods works, till he himſelfe be exalted farre aboue all creatures. If our reaſon may be iudge, then there will be no end of doubtings. For as oft as it conceiues not how the Lord works this

Where reaſon is iudge, there will be no end of doubtings.

or

or that, wee will call into queſtion the truth of his promiſes; becauſe whatſoeuer ſurmounts our reaſon, will forthwith ſeeme an impoſſible thing vnto vs. Thus then, as we are to oppoſe *Gods power to our vveakneſſe*, ſo are wee to preferre his *incomparable vviſdome, before our preſumption and boldneſſe*.

Wee muſt oppoſe Gods power to our weakneſſe, and his wiſdome to our preſumptiō.

In asking whether any hath *inſtructed* or directed the Spirit of God, it is to ſhew that he needes no teacher to goe before him, or to *counſell* him in vnknowne things. The *Spirit* is heere taken for reaſon, iudgement, or vnderſtanding: for he borrowes the ſimilitude from the nature of men, the better to apply himſelfe to our capacities. For, as I thinke, he ſpeakes not heere of the eſſentiall ſpirit of God. Now the Prophet ſets forth one and the ſame thing diuers waies, to teach vs that man is more beaſtly then the very brute beaſts, when hee dares aſpire to heauen, to ſearch and *vveigh* the workes of God in the vnequall ballance of his reaſon: *Iſaiah* meant then more and more to beat downe the headineſſe and ouerweening of men. S. *Paul* alleadgeth this place to the ſame end, that he might ſtop our mouthes in asking curious queſtions touching the incomprehenſible counſels of God, who wil not haue them ſearched into, further then with ſuch ſobrietie as is meete for ſo high myſteries. Onely there is this difference betweene *Paul* & *Iſaiah*: the Apoſtle ſaith, that the myſterie of the Goſpell cannot bee comprehended by mans naturall vnderſtanding: and the Prophet in generall magnifies the prouidence of God. And yet wee muſt inquire and ſearch into both theſe points with humilitie, and captiuate our whole reaſon vnder a right obedience: for all our wit and vnderſtanding is nothing but darknes, till Chriſt hath inlightened vs by his Spirit.

One thing ſet forth diuers waies.

Rom. 11.34.

That which Iſaiah ſpeaks in generall, the Apoſtle applies to a particular.

Verſ. 15. *Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the duſt of the ballance: behold, hee taketh away the Iles as a little duſt.*

IF wee meane to vnderſtand our Prophets meaning aright, and to reade with profit that which hee hath here written, wee muſt learne to finde out his drift, as I haue touched before. For he extols not Gods greatneſſe thus at random, but ſets it forth with all his skill, according as the circumſtance of the matter which hee now is in hand with requires: to let the Iſraelites know, that this buckler is ſufficient to couer them, and that they were not to feare the indeuors, rage, nor violence of the world, prouided that God ſhew them his fauour: and that thus they were to learne to yeeld themſelues vnder his ſauegard. For if they had not bin well grounded in this point, they ſhould haue met with infinit occaſions which would haue driuen them out of heart euery minute of an houre. The Prophet therefore goes on with the ſame argument ſtill, and telles the Iewes, that if the *nations* and peoples be *compared vvith God*, they are as nothing: for with his onely blaſt he will ſcatter all the inhabitants of the earth, as if they were but a little *picke of duſt*. For in regard we are too much inclined, and fooliſhly wittie in ſeeking pretences to ſtrēgthen our owne infidelitie, wee imagin that whatſoeuer Satan conſpires to hinder our ſaluatiō, ſhuts vp all paſſage againſt God. The Prophet minding to correct this vice ſhewes, that all creatures are nothing before him, and that *all nations* when they ſtand on an heape, are but as the ſmall *droppes of a bucket in his preſence*. Whence we learne, that it is a groſſe ſottiſhneſſe in vs ſo to prefer the creature, that wee abaſe the power of the Creatour, who ought to bee held as ſupreme ouer and aboue all things; as indeed hee is.

How to read this propheſy with fruit.

Verſ. 16. *And Lebanon is not ſufficient for fire, nor the beaſts thereof for a burnt offering.*

LEbanon: that is to ſay; if we ſhould offer a *burnt offering* vnto God, according as hee deſerues; neither *Lebanon* nor *all the beaſts* that feed in it, would ſuffice for the ſacrifice. He repeats & imprints in their minds *this power of God* ſtil after diuers maners, that the people who were to truſt in it, ſhould not reſpect creatures, nor any thing they were able to doe with all their forces. Notwithſtanding it ſeemes the Prophet ſpeakes expreſly of Gods worſhip, that he might bring the readers to haue it in the greater reuerence: as if hee ſhould ſay; *Dareſt thou meaſure the power of God vvithin the narrow ſcantling of thy reaſon? Why thou canſt not ſerue him as thou oughteſt, though thou ſhouldſt lay all the vvood and beaſts of Lebanon at once vpon his altar*. Some gather hence that none can procure Gods fauour by offering ſacrifices: which is very true; but we muſt haue an eye to the Prophets meaning, as I haue alreadie ſaid; who to hearten on the Iewes, to the greater confidence, ſhewes that all things are nothing, being compared with God.

Verſ. 17. *All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him leſſe then nothing.*

THis is a repetition of that which he hath ſaid before; to wit, that God can *deſtroy all nations* as ſoone as it pleaſeth him: and that they are *counted as nothing* before him euen in their beſt eſtate. But it may ſeeme ſtrange that he ſaith, *All nations are nothing*. Were they not all created of God, that they might be eſteemed ſomething? I anſwere, this is ſpoken by compariſon. For ſuch is the peruerſitie of our vnderſtanding, that it darkens Gods glorie and Maieſtie, and ſets thoſe things aboue it which ſhould be ſet farre beneath. When we are to enter into this combat then, whether God or the creature ſhould haue the preeminence, let vs boldly pronounce, *That that vvhich is compared vvith God, is nothing*. The Prophet ſpeakes not ſimply of the nature

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ture of man as it is created of God: but his purpoſe is to beate downe and to bring to nothing all their preſumption and pride, when they dare ſet themſelues aboue him. Wee know it is vnpoſſible to ſubſiſt, or be without God, for in him only we liue, moue, and haue our being, as it is ſaid, Act. 17. 28. notwithſtanding that which *Dauid* ſaith is alſo as true, to wit, *that nothing is ſo vaine a thing as man*: who if he be weighed in a ballance, wil be found lighter then *vanitie* it ſelf, Pſal. 62. And in this ſort our Prophet ſhewes that *all nations* are as *nothing*, yea, *leſſe then nothing*: that he might the better note out both their *vanitie*, and imbecillitie.

Verſ. 18. *To whom then will ye liken God? Or what ſimilitude will ye ſet vp vnto him?*

THe Iewes were in great danger of falling from God in regard of another temptation: for it is certaine that the Aſſyrians and Caldeans obteined not ſo many victories without ỹ aſſiſtance of other nations: thence the Iewes might conclude; What auailes it vs to haue a ſeruice of God apart from other nations, ſeeing our enemies in fighting haue victorie from heauen; and our God in the meane while ſuccors not vs at all? Neither is it to be doubted but the infidels alſo mocked theſe poore captiues, as it appeares by other places.

That this calamitie then might not cauſe the Iewes to forget the true religion, God riſeth vp and ſaith, that a greater wrong can not be done vnto him, then if the faithfull being wrung by afflictions, ſhould therefore conforme themſelues to the idolatries and ſuperſtitions of the Gentiles. Thus then he confirmes them in the truth of his promiſes, leſt they ſhould faint vnder the burthens which they were to ſuſteine.

But the Prophet ſpeakes not to the men of his time only, as we haue ſaid, but to all their
1 ſucceſſors who were to vndergoe ſharp aſ-
2 ſaults againſt the Idols of prophane nations, vnder whom they were held captiues. And in the ſecond place they had enough to doe to ſhunne the cuill examples and cuſtomes of thoſe nations: for it was exceeding difficult for them to continue conſtant being mingled among Idolaters, and dayly beholding their corrupt maners. To the end therefore that they might not be tainted with any vain conceit, to wit, that the affaires of the Idolaters proſpered well, in regard of the honour which they did to their Idols and falſe gods: the Prophet, I ſay, preuents ſuch an offence, and ſaith, *that they were in no wiſe to compare the gods of the Gentiles with the God whom they and their fathers worſhipped*: for thoſe gods were made with mens hands; the matter of them being but gold, ſiluer, wood, ſtone, or ſuch like: but their God was the Creator of heauen and earth. Great muſt the outrage be therefore againſt his Maieſtie, when the ſame ſhall be compared with things of nothing: yea, it is a diſhonor in the higheſt degree if he be not exalted farre aboue the Angels, or whatſoeuer is called God.

When S. Paul vſeth this teſtimonie againſt Idolaters, he peruerts not the true ſenſe of the Prophets words; but from thence hee rightlie gathers, that it is a wicked thing to repreſent God by any ſimilitude at all. And our Prophet not only diſſwades the Iewes here from diſtruſt, but alſo therewithall condemnes the ſuperſtitions of the Gentiles; ſhewing it to be a thing quite repugnant to the nature of God to be repreſented by any grauen Image. And thus we ſee the Apoſtles doctrine ſutes well with this place: for the Prophet hauing prooued that Gods power is infinite, ſeeing he is able to comprehend all things *in his fiſt*, verſ. 12. at laſt he concludes, *To whom will ye liken me?* Make what Image you will, it ſhall be nothing like me. This is a very profitable doctrine, and well worthie our obſeruation: for were there but this one text, it were enough to refute all the inuentions wherewith the Papiſts are miſled, who permit it as lawfull to repreſent God by outward ſhapes and figures. The Prophet holds it as a reſolued truth, that it is vnpoſſible to make an Image of corruptible matter, that ſhould any way be able to match with the glorie of God: he vtterlie reiects the Idols themſelues: ſo farre is he off then from ſpeaking of adoring them, that he counts it euen an execrable and horrible ſacrilege ſo much as to frame or carue them, and to ſet them vp before God. *Act.* 17. 29.

But the holy Scripture is full of ſuch ſentences. *Moſes* aduertiſeth the people who were inclined to this vice, You ſaw no ſimilitude nor ſhape (ſaith he) in the mountaine, only you heard a voice, take heed therefore leſt being corrupted, you ſhould make you any grauen Image, Deut. 4. 12. 15. Wil we haue a right knowledge of God then? Let vs not frame him after our fantaſies, but ſeeke him out in his word, where we ſhall find his Image repreſented vnto vs in moſt liuely colours. Let vs content our ſelues with this knowledge, and neuer enterpriſe any thing of our owne heads, for other meanes, as Idols, and Images, will neuer teach vs the truth, but vanitie & lies, as *Ieremiah* very well ſaith, Chap. 10. 8. The ſtock is *but a doctrine of vanitie*: And *Abacuck*, Chap. 2. 18. The grauen Image is a thing *teaching lies*. Now whereas the Lord ſometimes compares himſelfe to a Lyon, to a Beare, a man, or the like, this is nothing to prooue the lawfull vſe of Images as the Papiſts dreame: but ſuch ſimilitudes ſerue to ſet forth the goodnes, lenitie, anger, or ſeueritie of God, with other affections attributed vnto him; which can not be manifeſted vnto vs but vnder ſimilitudes of things familiarly knowne. To conclude, if it were lawfull to repreſent God by an Image, we ſhould then put no differéce between him and the dunghill gods of the Gentiles, and ſo the Prophets doctrine could not ſtand firme.

Gods image is moſt liuely repreſented vnto vs in his word.

Images and Idols, teachers of lies.

A dreame of the Papiſts refuted.

Verſ. 19. *The workeman melteth an image, or the goldſmith beateth it out in gold, or the goldſmith* maketh *ſiluer plates.*

20. *Doth not the poore chuſe out a tree that will not rot for an oblation? Hee ſeeketh alſo vnto him a cunning workman, to prepare an image that ſhall not be moued.*

BEcauſe publike conſent in things is of great force, and that it is by and by receiued for a law, if a thing once pleaſe the multitude, the Prophet heere fortifies the 1 faithfull againſt ſuch an error. Here is therefore an occupation or preuention, as they call it; to wit, the Iewes were to take heede how they ſtood amazed, in ſeeing idolaters ſo carefull in their ſtrife, who ſhould haue the gaudieſt gods; for if they did ſo, they were in 2 danger to bee ſeduced by them. But therewithall he riſeth vp in an holy indignation againſt the deſperate follie of men, who ſo boile in their ſuperſtitious imaginations, that euery one will haue an idoll fit to pleaſe his owne humor. He alſo ſhewes that no ſtate or 3 condition of men are free from this impietie, but that the *poore* are as well guiltie thereof as the rich: for the rich, they make them gods of *gold* and *ſilver*: the *poore*, of ſuch a *tree* as likes him beſt. And thus he ſhewes that all ſorts are carried away with an intollerable furie in deſiring and *ſeeking* out ſome excellent thing for the ſeruice of their gods, though the meanes to doe it withall faile them. Men will haue gods forſooth that they may looke vpon, and handle. Loe here the originall and fountain from whence idolatrie hath ſprung. For God is not neere vs in a puppet, but by his word, and by the power of his holy Spirit. And howſoeuer in his Sacraments, he repreſents vnto vs liuely images of his grace and ſpirituall benefits, yet his onely drift therein is, to lift vp our mindes by them to himſelfe. But our Prophet in the meane while derides the follie of theſe blinde idolaters, who care not what coſt or paines they beſtow or take, ſo they may furniſh out trim and goodly idols.

All are gone out of the way, all are corrupt: Pſal. 14. 3.

The beginning of idolatry.

Verſ. 21. *Know yee nothing? Haue yee not heard it? Hath it not beene told you from the beginning? Haue yee not vnderſtood it by the foundations of the earth?*

HAuing ſcorned the beaſtly ſottiſhneſſe of the Gentiles, hee now turnes againe to the Iewes: for being all of vs by nature inclined too much to ſuperſtitious vanities; ſo we alſo eaſilie fall, if any example be ſet before vs. The Iewes being captiues and mingled amongſt the Babylonians, were conſtrained to looke vpon horrible & damnable idolatries, which might ſoone draw them to a wicked imitation: *Iſaiah* therefore as a good Prophet of God, ſpeedilie preuents them, and warnes them that they bee no whit moued with ſuch ſpectacles. *He askes* if they haue not bin *taught* and *inſtructed* concerning the true God. Manie expoſitors thinke that this is but one repetition; to wit, it appeares by the creation of the world, that there is not ſo much as anie appearance of ſeeking God in wood, ſtone, gold, or ſiluer: but wee may gather from the ſcope of the text, that theſe are two diſtinct members. For if he continued ſtill to reproue the Gentiles, hee would then bring no other teſtimonies but heauen and earth againſt them: but ſpeaking to the Iewes, who were familiarly acquainted with the *law of God*; for their reproofe hee vſeth teſtimonies taken both from the order of nature, and from the word.

The Iewes had a double meanes of reproofe.

Firſt, he askes in generall, if they *knew nothing*. Secondly, he propounds the *meanes* by which they ought to diſcerne the true God from the falſe. The firſt is from hearing the word; and therefore he ſaith expreſly, Haue ye not heard? *Hath it not been told you from the beginning?* The laſt is from this *faire theater of the world*, where Gods glory ſhines round about and beneath vs. He would haue contented himſelfe with this ſecond demonſtration, if he had had to deale with the profane Gentiles; as Saint *Paul* alſo doth Act. 14. 17. For ſpeaking to them of Iconia, who had neuer heard word of the heauenly doctrine, he vſeth arguments taken from the order of nature. How? *That God left not himſelfe vvithout vvitneſſe, by giuing raine and fruitfull ſeaſons.* But our Prophet, who ſpeakes of that true religion which was among the Iewes, could not omit *the mentioning of the law*, which was to make them double inexcuſable, if they ſhould forſake or deſpiſe it, to prophane themſelues among infidels. For they were conuinced not onely by the *ſight of their eies*, but alſo by *the hearing of their eares*: which were continually beaten vpon by God, in the preaching of his law amongſt them. Seeing then that from their *mothers breaſts* they had (with their mothers milke) been nurced vp with the milke of the true knowledge of God, and were *inſtructed* by their fathers, by continuall ſucceſſion, the Prophet telles them that they ſhall ſhew themſelues too peruerſe and vnthankfull, if ſuch an helpe ſhall nothing profit them.

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For that which he ſaith of the *beginning*, or long agoe, is to the ſame purpoſe; namely, that *from their cradle* they had been nurced vp in Gods true worſhip: and beſides, in ages ſucceeding they had ſuch continuall teaching, as would not ſuffer thē to erre; only, if they did but *remember vvhat they had heard*. As if he ſhould haue ſaid; You haue no new God, but the very ſame who manifeſted himſelfe from the beginning to *Abraham*, *Moſes*, and the reſt of the Patriarks.

And here we haue an excellent confirmation touching the antiquitie of that doctrine which hath continued ſo many ages among the faithfull: not that antiquitie is ſufficient of it ſelfe to giue faith & aſſurance (for ſo the Gentiles might reply that their ſuperſtitions were no leſſe ancient) but in reſpect that frō the beginning, the authoritie of the law hath been abundantly confirmed, and that God hath teſtified that himſelfe is the author of it: for this cauſe, I ſay, it gets great confirmation vnto it by long vſe, in that the ſucceſſors

Antiquitie of true doctrine.

Antiquitie not ſufficient in it ſelfe.

Antiquitie a good confirmation of the truth.

knew

knew that their anceſtors gaue them ſuch a forme of religion, which they could not reiect without a manifeſt brand of apoſtaſie. By ſuch an order and progreſſe then, all difficultie is taken away. Now we at this day haue the ſame faith with theſe good fathers, becauſe with vs they acknowledged one God, the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: for the faithfull haue all one word and promiſe, tending all to one and the ſame end.

Our faith one and the ſame with that that theſe good fathers profeſſed.

Where he addes, *from the foundations of the earth*; it is ſpoken by a figure, where a part is taken for the whole: for a part of the world is here taken for the whole. God hath ſet this world before men as a looking-glaſſe, that by viewing of it, they might come to the knowledge of his Maieſtie, and that it might be an image of things inuiſible, as Saint *Paul* ſaith more fully, Rom. 1. 20. Their ignorance then is inexcuſable; for they neede not complaine touching the want of meanes, whereby they may come to the knowledge of God, ſeeing he is ready ſo many waies to manifeſt himſelfe vnto them. And to ſay the truth, men ſinne more of obſtinacie and pride, then of ignorance: for they willingly deſpiſe God, ſpeaking thus diſtinctly, that they might ſtay themſelues in creatures, and in vaine things. Can ſuch a contempt deſerue to be excuſed? No, for thoſe who worſhip their owne inuentions in ſtead of God, (of which all almoſt are guilty) are they not welworthy to be blinded? Truly ſuch, and ſo iuſt a puniſhment is worthily to be inflicted, where there is ſo great headſtrongneſſe. But if the doctrine of Gods word be ioined to this knowledge which we haue by the creatures, we ſhall be much leſſe excuſable. Thus then *Iſaiah* mentions both knowledges, to ſhew that the Iewes ſhall be worthy of double condemnation, if they ſtand not faſt in the faith, being thus informed and aſſured of the *power and goodneſſe* of God.

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Men ſinne more of pride and obſtinacie, then of ignorane.

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Thoſe that haue a double meanes of knowledge, are doubly inexcuſable if they ſinne againſt it.

Verſ. 22. *Hee ſitteth vpon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as graſſoppers: hee ſtretcheth out the heauens as a curtaine, and ſpreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.*

Which he began in verſ. 10, 11, 12.

HEe continues on his former argument, but after another manner; and ſets out the magnificence and power of God. Wee haue told you heretofore why hee ſpeakes thus; to wit, becauſe we are too much inclined to diſtruſt: ſo as the leaſt occaſion in the world will make vs ſtumble and be offended. For which reſpect, the Prophet is conſtrained to repeat one thing often, that he might keepe in firme and weake hearts in the confidence of Gods promiſes. Before, he handled the doctrine of the creation of the world, but now he comes to the perpetuall gouernment of it: for God contented not himſelfe to manifeſt his power once onely in the creation of the world, but continues ſtill to ſhew it with as great efficacie in the vpholding and conſeruation of his worke. This is well to be obſerued of vs; for otherwiſe it were but a bare ſpeculation to know that God did once create the world, vnleſſe wee alſo knew that his hand were alwaies ſtretched out to maintaine and gouerne the ſame in the firſt eſtate. Which the Prophet expreſſeth in this word *ſitteth*: as if he ſhould ſay, *The earth* continues not ſtable and firme in her place, but as it is ſtaied & vpheld by the power of God: for *ſitting*, by a figure, ſignifies as much as rule or gouernment.

The reaſon why the Prophet vſeth ſo manie repetitions to one purpoſe. From the doctrine of the creation of the world, the Prophet deſcends to the perpetual gouernment of it.

In that he compares *the inhabitants* of the earth to *graſſhoppers*; it is to ſhew that God is not incloſed within theſe narrow roomes, ſeeing neither heauen, nor the heauen of heauens are able to containe him; that ſo we might learne (whē God is ſpoken of in the Scriptures) not to imagin any earthly or carnall thing of him touching his incomprehenſible glory. Moreouer, by this ſimilitude we are taught how blind & ſottiſh thoſe are, which attribute any thing to themſelues; for they ſhall get as much by their brags, as if ſome little vermin, ſuch as the *graſſhoppers* be, would riſe vp againſt the cloudes in fetching their friſks: but you know they are forced to fall downe by and by to the earth.

Graſſhoppers.

Simile.

He ſpreads out the heauen as a curtaine.] *Dauid* vſeth the ſame kind of ſpeech, Pſal. 104. 2. *Iſaiah* and *Dauid* ſpeake both touching the aſpect and ſpreading out of the heauens, in regard of our ſight: for it is not their meaning that God ſpreads them out for himſelfe to inhabit there, but rather that wee might haue roome enough to dwell vnderneath. For as the earth beares vs vp, ſo the heauens do couer vs: and thus wee haue a manſion or dwelling houſe made vs in this world cloſe and couered. But theſe ſimilitudes may ſeeme much to leſſen the dignitie of the matter whereof the Prophet intreateth, albeit his meaning is cleerly to ſet it forth in the liueliеſt colours hee can deuiſe: for what is a *curtaine*? What is a *tent*? What great matters are theſe? I anſwere; theſe ſimilitudes are exceeding fit to amplifie the matter: for it is as much as if he had ſaid; God ſpreads out the *heauens* with as much eaſe as a man drawes a *curtaine*. He alſo leaues it to euery mans conſideration, how much difference there is betweene the *heauens and a curtaine*, and what their greatneſſe is; which all may perceiue. Laſtly, there is an oppoſition betweene the houſes that men build with much toile and continuall coſt, (and yet it is much if they can raiſe a frame of an hundred foote high:) and this infinit height of the heauens, ſo ſpread by the onely word of God. Which ſhewes cleerly, how excellent and skilfull a workman he is.

God hath ordained the earth to beare vs, and the heauens to couer vs. Obiect.

Anſ.

Verſ. 23. *He bringeth the Princes to nothing, and maketh the Iudges of the earth as vanitie.*

Now hee comes to ſpeake of Gods prouidence in particular.

STill hee continues to extoll Gods prouidence, by which hee gouernes the whole world, but eſpecially *mans*. In the former verſe he begun to touch this doctrine; to wit, that God hath not created the world to

leaue it at ſixe and ſeuen, as we ſay, but hold his ſoueraignte and dominion ouer it; meaning ſtill to retaine the *keeping* and *ſuſteining* of it in his owne hands. But becauſe it pleaſeth him to ſhew himſelfe more familiarly to men, the Prophet hath choſen this particular, that he might therein ſet forth and praiſe his prouidence. The ſumme is, that Gods dominion extends it ſelfe farre and wide, ſo as he gouernes all things in heauen and earth according to his good pleaſure: but therewithall he teacheth (which was a point worthie of note) that in his gouernment of *mankind* one may manifeſtlie perceiue notable marks of his power and prouidence. Now he contents not himſelfe to note it in generall termes, but picks out one particular inſtance which might the better awaken our drouzie minds. All things that befall the *common multitude* are ſoone forgotten, and is quickly out of minde as matters vnworthie the talking of: but whē *Kingdomes* and *Monarchies* wherein men are aduanced to great dignities come once to fall, then it ſeemes the very earth is ſhaken with it. The Prophet therefore ſtirres vp our attention very fitly by ſuch documēts. Surely a man would thinke that *Princes* and *Magiſtrates* are ſeparated from the common condition of men, and exempt from the ordinarie calamities which befall others, becauſe by their glorie they ſeeme to dazell the eies and minds of euery one that beholds them: but they themſelues for the moſt part' are vtterlie blind, and therefore our Prophet eſpeciallie aimes at them, ſaying, That the Lord brings *them* to *nothing*. Hath the Lord ſo great force againſt the mightie Princes of the earth? What ſhall become of the baſer ſort? Can he not, trow ye, deale well enough with them, and handle them as he liſt? Can he not giue, and take away ſtrength, and the greatnes of mens ſpirits when he will?

Verſ. 24. *As though they were not planted, as though they were not ſowne, as though their ſtock tooke no roote in the earth: for he did euen blow vpon them and they withered, and the whirlewinde will take them away as ſtubble.*

THough the particle *Ak* ſignifies Alſo, yet I haue tranſlated, *As though*, becauſe it agrees beſt to this preſent verſe, and ſo the plaine meaning will be, They ſhall confeſſe themſelues to be in as poore a condition, as if they had neuer bin *planted nor ſowne*. This is an amplification of the former doctrine: for in this verſe he ſhewes, that euen *Princes* ſhal be ſo whollie plucked vp and rooted out, that not one glimps of their glorie ſhall euer be diſcerned; euen as if it had neuer bin at all. Whileſt they are in honor, Pſal.49. a man would thinke them to be ſo faſt rooted that the blaſts of aduerſitie were neuer able to remoue them: but ſudden changes fall out in a moment which blot out their name and renoume, ſo as men ſhal ſay, Were there euer any ſuch? And this comes to paſſe not in mens perſons only, but alſo to floriſhing and ſtately kingdomes.

Seeing then ſuch great alterations are ſignes of Gods terrible power, let vs beware how wee chuſe our ſelues ſuch tickling leaning ſtocks, which haue only a vaine appearance of help in them, but let vs ſolely and only reſt vpon the power of the Almightie, what ſtrength, honor, or riches ſoeuer wee enioy. For the Lord playes not at tenis with the world, in banding of ſuch great ones, as one taking delight therein, as ſome prophane dogs blaſpheme: but the higher any man is aduanced, commonlie the bigger he ſwels in pride, and neuer leaues ſwelling till he burſt himſelfe in pieces, that ſo the iuſt iudgements of God may be alwaies manifeſt to all. By this we are alſo admoniſhed, that it is ill done to attribute the euents of things to fortune, or to ſecond cauſes: for God became not the Creator of the world, forthwith to leaue his worke, as a carpenter doth his ſhip, but his hand continuallie labours, ſo as not an haire of our heads can fall to the ground without his good pleaſure. When ſo many changes fall out therefore in the world, and that we ſee things which in our iudgements would ſtand for euer, to fall & conſume as the ſmoke; let vs turne our eies towards this ſoueraigne prouidence and power of God.

As ſoone as he blew vpon it.] In theſe words the Prophet ſhewes of what ſhort and momentanie continuance thoſe things be which are wont to dazle our eies, and make vs at a ſtand. For wee no ſooner thinke of a great King, but our hearts quake within vs, and we are moued at it: but he ſhewes, that Princes and kings are but as *ſtubble* before God, whoſe only *blaſt* will carrie them away like a *whirlewinde*, whither ſoeuer it pleaſeth him. What is our leſſon then? We muſt not ſtand gazing vpon the creature, be he what he will, that the ſame ſhould hinder vs from giuing that glorie and honour vnto God which to him appertaines. This the Iewes were diligentlie to note: for it is like enough they would haue thought this great Monarchie of the Caldeans, vnder whom they were held captiues, ſhould neuer haue bin diſſolued, nor that themſelues ſhould euer haue been deliuered, vnleſſe this doctrine had come between: to wit, That there is nothing ſo firme and ſtable in the world, which God can not ſcatter and bring to nothing with his only *blaſt*: that they might hold faſt the hope of their deliuerance therefore, the Prophet aduertiſeth them that as ſoone as God ſhall but thunder from heauen, he will breake and cruſh in pieces all the terrible forces and power of their enemies.

Verſ. 25. *To whom now will you liken me, that I ſhould be like* him, *ſaith the holy one?*

THis is a repetition of the former ſentēce, where it was ſaid, that God would not indure to be matcht with Idols, verſ.18.19.20. leſt the Iewes ſhould diminiſh any thing of his

his power; notwithſtanding they were ſo long retained captiues in the hands of Infidels. For they were to beware how they attributed any power to Idols, becauſe the idolaters (who kept them in bondage) proſpered: for by ſuch diſputings, comparing the power of the true God with idols, they were in danger to haue mingled them together. This is the cauſe why in indignation he repeates the ſame thing againe; *To whom will yee liken me?* As if hee ſhould ſay; Dare you venture to take my glory from mee by your compariſons? For howſoeuer men frame diuers imaginations to themſelues; thinking to transforme God into what ſhape they liſt: yet remaines he one and the ſame ſtill, and his nature is changed neuer the more by their inuentions.

He brings in the clauſe *holy one*, to verie good purpoſe, putting it in ſtead of Gods name. For therein he priuilie taxeth the Iews of ſhamefull ingratitude, if they *ſanctifie him not* in their hearts: Chap. 8.13. ſeeing he hath ſeparated them from others. For there is no *holineſſe* to be found in the idols of the Gentiles, being but the workes of mens hands. God then is too much wronged and abaſed, when idols are oppoſed to him, and that men beginne to call it into queſtion, whether of them hath the greater power.

Verſ. 26. *Lift vp your eies on high, and behold who hath created theſe things, and bringeth out their armies by number, and calleth them all by their names: by the greatnes of his power and mighty ſtrength* [a] *nothing faileth.*

[a] Or, none ſhall faile.

IT ſeemes the Prophet ſtands too long vpon this point, ſeeing there is none will denie it. For he repeats one thing often, (which none doubts of) but muſt needs be conſtrained to confeſſe the admirable power and wiſdome of God in the comely order of nature. But wee muſt obſerue what hath been ſaid heretofore. Wee in our ſelues are ſo vntoward, and doe value Gods power at ſo low a rate, that we ſometimes afford him not the honour which we will giue to a mortall man: yea, the appearance of a ſillie worme of the earth, puts vs ſometimes into ſo great mammering and feare, that all the promiſes of the Almightie in the holy Bible, can ſcarſely comfort vs. For this cauſe the Prophet hath iuſt cauſe to repeate it ſo often, that God is defrauded of his honour, if his power rauiſh vs not ſo as to admire it. Thus he makes no idle repetitions you ſee, becauſe wee are ſo dull and ſlow of hearing, that we haue need to bee awakened and pricked at euery turning with the ſpur. Men daily *behold* the heauens and the ſtarres, but where is hee that thinks ſeriouſly of the author of theſe things? Wee ſee the ſhape of man ſo artificially formed by God, that he was put into this world to behold the heauens, that hee might acknowledge the Lord of them: for God hath bowed downe the faces of beaſts towards the earth, and hath made man to goe vpright; to ſtirre him vp to view the place of his abode. And this was well deſcribed by a prophane Poet, who ſaith:

Although euery creeping thing bends his face chiefly towards the earth, yet to man God hath giuen a face to looke vpwards, and hath created him to behold the excellencie of the heauens, and to lift vp his eyes to the ſtarres.

For the moſt part we afford not God the honour which we will giue to a mortall man.

Thus then the Prophet ſets forth mans malignitie, who will acknowledge nothing of God, though it be painted out before his eies, but had rather haue their ſnout grubling in the earth like Moles: for the maieſtie of God muſt needes touch vs neere, if wee looke wiſely vpon the heauens. In naming of the *ſtarres*, he expreſſeth more plainly, that the wonderfull order which ſhines in the heauens, doth as it were preach with a lowd voice, that there is but one God and Creator of the world; which all ſuch muſt be conſtreined to acknowledge, as, amidſt ſo great numbers and diuerſities of ſtarres, ſhall obſerue their diſtinct order and comely marchings. For the *ſtarres* were not thus ſet euery one in his place at haphazard; neither is it at random that they march ſo ſwiftly in ſuch proportion, fetching ſo great compaſſes, and yet walking as by a direct line; ſo as they turne not an haires breadth from that path which God hath limited out vnto them. Thus their wonderfull diſpoſition ſhewes, that God is the author and framer of them. Can a man then open his eies, but he ſhall be forced to *behold* the maieſtie of God, in the works which his hands haue wrought?

He bringeth out their armies by number.] Vnder the word *armie*, he comprehends two things. Firſt, a number in a maner infinit: ſecondly, the exceſſent diſpoſing of them. For a ſmall number of men will not make an armie, vnleſſe there be many bands. Moreouer, we call not a troope of men gathered diſorderly together, an *armie*; but that where there are Lieuetenants, Sergants of the band, Captaines, Colonels, and ohter leaders, who are to bring their ſouldiers in a right aray. Thus then the infinite numbers, order, and certaine courſes and marchings of the ſtarres, doe very well deſerue this name of an *armie*.

By the word *number*, hee ſignifies that God hath this armie alwaies at a becke. Souldiers you know loue to be wandring this way and that way, and the Captaine cannot eaſilie get them by and by together, though hee cauſe the trumpet to be ſounded; neither can hee forthwith put them in aray being aſſembled. But it is far otherwiſe with God, hee hath alwaies his ſouldiers at a becke, yea by *number*: that is to ſay, he knowes the tale of them, ſo as none abſents himſelfe.

He calles them all by their names.] This ſentence is in ſo many wordes contained in Pſal. 147. Some expound it as if God knowes the number of the ſtarres, which to vs is vnknowne: but *Dauid* and *Iſaiah* both meant another thing, to wit, that God makes the ſtars to ſerue his turne at his pleaſure, as if one

should call his seruant by his name to set him about some businesse: and in the same sense it will be said hereafter, Chap.45.1. that the Lord *called Cirus by name*, because he vsed him as his seruant to set his people at libertie. In a word, by this hee notes a great readinesse and obedience, when he which is *called by his name*, answers to it by and by.

Those who expound the member before going; to wit, that God knowes the number of the stars, faile also in this, that they thinke by the word *greatnesse*, hee hath giuen them names signifying their power & office. Others expound it; that there is no starre which hath not his propertie and efficacie; because the Lord hath giuen it them for euer. Others ioine these words with the verbe *shall call*: as if the Prophet should say; The Lord is so *mightie*, that all the starres vnderstand what he commands them. But as I take it, this sense agrees best; to wit, that God *is so powerfull and mighty*, that hee no sooner commands anie thing, but all the *armies* of heauen are prest to obey him: wherein we haue a singular testimonie of his *greatnesse*, when so excellent creatures doe without difficultie subiect thémselues vnto him; and in receiuing his commandements, witnes that they acknowledge him for their Lord and Creator.

By the greatnesse.

The word *none*, is by the Hebrewes applied not onely to men and women, but to other creatures; yea to those that are without reason: as heretofore in Chap.34.16. speaking of the birds which should inhabit stately houses, he saith, that *none* of these shall faile: and the word *Ieh*, which is there, the Prophet puts heere. This place sets before vs the *power* of God, and teacheth vs that there is no creature in heauen nor in earth, but it depends vpon his will and good pleasure. What is more absurd or vnreasonable therefore, then to compare him with idols, which are vainer then vanitie it selfe?

Vers.27. **Why sayest thou, O Iaakob, and speakest thou O Israel. My way is hid from the Lord, and my iudgement is passed ouer of my God.*

*Or, Why wilt thou say: or, shouldest thou say.

NOw *Isaiah* complaines of the Iewes, who being in a manner brought to the last cast, turned their eies away from Gods promises, which were the meanes of their comfort. Or if you will haue it so, he takes order for the time to come, lest they should quaile vnder so many and so tedious afflictions as should befall them. The words are in the future tence, which may be resolued into the subiunctiue; Wherefore shouldest thou say? From the former sentence he well inferres, that whatsoeuer should happen, the faithfull and elect people were to wait patiently vpon the Lord, till he in due season should relieue them. Now he reasons from the lesse to the greater; that seeing God alwaies holds his soueraigntie ouer all the parts of the world, it is vnpossible that he should euer for sake his Church. Notwithstanding, it is very likely that the people in that time made *many complaints*, and murmured against God, as if hee had been careless of their saluation; or as if he came not soone enough to succour them; or else that he shut his eies, as one that refused to behold them in their aduersities. This vice he now goes about to correct; for they thought the Lord had cast them off: and so in afflictions we are also ready to thinke; for we imagin that he hath reiected and giuen vs vp for a pray, because he lets things in the world goe at six and seuen.

The coherence of his verse with the former.

The Prophet takes his argument from the lesse to the greater.

Iaakob and Israel.] By these names the Prophet puts them in mind of the Lords couenant, confirmed vnto them by so many promises. As if he should say; Thinkest thou, thou are not that people whom God hath chosen to himselfe? Wherefore shouldest thou imagin that hee which cannot deceiue, should contemne thy arguments or reasons? For the word *vvay*, is taken for their estate or reasons; and *hid*, is taken for contemned or vnknowne: because if God withhold his help but a little, wee straight way thinke that his prouidence reacheth not vnto vs. Some expound it otherwise; to wit, that the people are heere reproued, because they thought to sinne without punishment: and so they will haue this sentence, like to that in Psal.14.1. The foole hath said in his heart there is no God. But questionlesse this was the Prophets meaning; *Thinkest thou O Israel that God thinks not of thine affaires?* For hee contests against the peoples infidelitie, and rebukes them sharply, that hee might afterward raise them vp to hope and comfort; shewing that it is vnpossible for the Lord not to regard and helpe those whom hee hath once taken into his tuition and sauegard.

The word *iudgement*, which is by and by added, confirmes this interpretation: for we cry out for iudgement in the time of affliction, when we be oppressed and wronged. And it is said, that God then takes our cause in hand, when in taking knowledge of it, hee defends and keepes vs: as on the contrarie, that he regards vs not, when he suffers vs to be giuen vp for a pray to our enemies. It is as much then as if he should say; O ye Iewes, what meane ye to complaine, as if God had forgotten or despised your conditions! Now by this reprehension, *Isaiah* prepares them to receiue consolation: for all impediments were to bee remoued, to the end the way to come thereunto might bee the more easie.

When God is said to take our cause in hand.

Vers.28. *Knowest thou not? or hast thou not heard, that the euerlasting God, the Lord hath created the ends of the earth? Hee neither fainteth, nor is wearie: there is no searching of his vnderstanding.*

HE repeates the same thing that he said before; to wit, that the people who had been instructed in the schoole of God, were no way excusable, in regard of their dulnesse. Hee rebukes them thus sharply then for not hauing

hauing profited better in the Law, and other good meanes which God had giuen them, ouer and beſides the common vnderſtanding wherewith all of them might haue been indued. In the firſt place he puts the verbe *To know*, which is more generall; becauſe God had cauſed his glory to appeare vnto them, by many miracles and teſtimonies of his power; in the ſecond place hee comes to the *hearing*; as if hee ſhould ſay, If theſe things haue wrought nothing vpon thee, namely, that thou haſt been ſo long taught and inſtructed, both by the word and workes of God, that he vſeth not to ſit idle in heauen; it muſt needs be concluded, that thou art verie vnteachable.

He calles him *the everlaſting God*; thereby diſtinguiſhing him from al corruptible idols, the worke of mens hands. Now if this article were well imprinted in our hearts, diſtruſt would vaniſh away like ſmoke. For if God be *eternall*, then it is impoſſible for him either to be changeable, or weake; for *eternitie* hath this propertie vnto it, that it is no way ſubiect to change, but continues alwaies alike, which the Iewes comprehended not, though they had often heard it before. This is the cauſe why the Prophet is ſo round with them in rouzing them vp by this reprehenſion. For thus he ſhewes how double guiltie they ſhall be before God, if hauing bin taught by his word, and by ſo many of his benefits, they ſhal ſtill refuſe to yeeld him that honour and glorie which to him belongs.

Eternitie hath this proper vnto it, that it is no way ſubiect to change.

[*He is not wearie, &c.*] Heere the Prophet ſhewes two things; the firſt, that God is not wearie of well doing: the ſecond, that there is *no ſearching of his vnderſtanding*. In the firſt member he proues, that nothing can let God to continue his well doing towards them, becauſe he is not like thoſe ỳ waſte their goods by often giuing out: or to ſuch as are euer and anon wearie in doing good turnes: or to ſuch as repent their liberalitie: for his bountie can neuer be drawne drie. If he haue done good to the fathers, he will do no leſſe to the children. And whereas he often works quite contrarie to that which we thinke meete, the Prophet preuents the conceit, by telling vs that his Counſels are *inſcrutable*. Thus he admoniſheth vs not to murmure though he do not by and by applie himſelfe to our deſires: for there is nothing better to nouriſh hope in vs, then this ſobrietie: to wit, that we conſidering how wonderfullie God works for the defence of his choſen, might be brought willinglie to ſubmit our reaſon vnder his ſecret counſels.

Sobrietie a notable meanes to nouriſh hope.

Verſ. 29. *But he giueth ſtrength vnto him that fainteth, and vnto him that hath no ſtrength he increaſeth power.*

The application of the former doctrine.

THe Prophet now applies the former generall ſentences to the matter in hand: for his purpoſe is, as we haue ſaid, to hearten on the people, and to giue them better hope. But becauſe the Iewes were low brought, and *void of ſtrength*, therefore he ſhewes, that it is the proper office of God to ſuccor thoſe which are thus *faint* and wearie. By this circumſtance then he ſets forth Gods power, to the end they might conclude and be ſurely reſolued of their ſaluation, whileſt God ſhall be fauorable vnto them. I grant, that the Prophet had reſpect to the people who were detained priſoners in Babylon: but we ought notwithſtanding to make our profit of this doctrine, that although our *ſtrength* ſhould faile vs, ſo as we ſhould be brought to deaths dore, yet to remember that it is Gods propertie to ſtretch forth his hand to ſuch as *faint* and are ſpent, being left ſuccorleſſe. But it is requiſit we ſhould firſt of all feele our powertie and *wearines*, that that ſentence of S. *Paul* might be fulfilled in vs, The power of God is perfected in our weakenes, 2. Cor. 12. 9. For if our hearts be not thoroughlie touched, ſo as we be indeed conuinced of our imbecilitie, we can not find help of God in due time.

It is neceſſarie we ſhould feele our ſelues weake, before God giue vs of his power.

Verſ. 30. *Euen the yong men ſhall faint, and be wearie, and the yong men ſhall ſtumble and fall.*

BY this compariſon ỳ Prophet further enricheth ỳ which he ſaid before; to wit, ỳ the power which God giues to his elect is inuincible, and euer durable: *for mans ſtrength eaſily vaniſheth; but Gods, neuer.* It is moſt certaine, that all the naturall ſtrength we haue is from God; but for as much as men prowdly attribute that as proper to themſelues which he giues to all, therefore the Prophet diſtinguiſheth betweene the ſtrength which ſeemes to flow from nature, and that, by which God eſpeciallie ſuſteines his children. For in as much as the other is an vniuerſall benefit beſtowed vpon all the world, therefore men take no knowledge of that. Thus then hee calles that the *ſtrength of men*, which is a gift common to all: and that the *ſtrength of God*, by which he aſſiſts vs when all our ſtrength faileth. For he here ſpeakes of that grace of God which is called ſupernaturall; and ſiſth, that it is perpetuall, whereas men can haue nothing of themſelues but that which is tranſitorie & periſhable; that ſo by this marke he may ſeparate the Church of God from the reſt of the world, and *ſpirituall ſtrength* from that which is *earthly proſperitie*.

The Prophet diſtinguiſheth betweene that ſtrength which men ſeeme to haue by nature, and that by which God ſuſtaines his children.

Supernaturall graces.

Whereas in the firſt member he hath put the word *Nearim*, which is as much to ſay as young men; and in the ſecond he addes *Bachurim*, which ſignifies not that only, but men of choiſe: yet becauſe he repeates but one and the ſame thing, it agrees beſt if we referre it vnto the time of age; and yet hee meanes all ſuch as are ſtout, and in their beſt ſtrength. Now by this we may ſee how hee magnifies the excellent prerogatiue wherewith Gods childrē are endued aboue others, to the end they might ſatisfie their hearts with their owne condition, and might nothing enuie the children of this world, who *reioyce in their owne ſtrength*. In a word, he ſhewes how much men erre, in hauing an ouerweening of their own abilities. Why ſo?

Because it often ouerthrowes them, and makes them *fall* quickly.

It seemes he alludes to that which falles out dayly, to wit, that the stronger any man is, the bolder will he be to vndertake difficult masteries, and that is the cause that the strongest natures do soonest decay; for they thinke that nothing is too hard for them. They headily and rashly plunge themselues into all aduentures; but in conclusion, they *faint* and *fall* in the mid way, and receiue the hier of their headinesse. The like befalles them who haue receiued any grace of God, and wax proud of it, thinking too well of themselues: for whatsoeuer they haue receiued, comes all to nothing; nay, it turnes to their ruine and perdition: and such fellowes worthily beare the punishment of their pride.

Those that are strongest by nature, commonly soonest decay in strength.

What hast thou which thou hast not receiued?

Vers. 31. *But they that wait vpon the Lord, shall renue their strength: they shall lift vp the wings as the Eagles: they shall runne and not bee wearie, and they shall walke and not faint.*

THe Hebrewes say; To change their forces, for renuing or gathering newe strength; and to bee thereby restored. The Prophet shewes that strength shall neuer be wanting to the faithfull, which shall hope in the Lord: and so he confirmes that which he said, Chap. 30.7. Your strength is to sit still. For wee ought not to play the bedlems, or wild colts, but with patience to wait for our God. This hee notes out by this word *vvait*. Men that swell and fret, doe often breake, through their owne vnrulines: but the strength of the faithfull, which hath no such florishing shewes, (yea it is commonly so hidden that it cannot be seene) whilest they *wait* for Gods helpe, this strength receiues by the blessing of God *new increases*. Let vs therefore returne to that sentence of *Paul*; That Gods power is perfected in our *weaknesse*: 1. Cor. 12.9. which by consequence we ought throughly to feele, that we may indeede giue place to the *power of God*. The Iewes stood in great need of this doctrine during the time of their tedious seruitude: but it is no lesse necessarie for vs now in the dissipations and scatterings which we see in the Churches.

Strength shall neuer be wanting to them that relie vpon the Lord.

They shall lift vp their wings.] Some thinke the Prophet vtters the same thing which is contained in Psal. 103. Thy youth shall be renued like the Eagles. I grant that the Eagle among other birds liues long: for both *Aristotle* and *Plinie* doe witnesse that shee neuer dies of age, but of hunger; because shee cannot get the meate into her beke, by reason of the crookednesse of it, in which respect she liues by drinking a very long time. A certaine Iew called *Zadius*, (being all of them too audacious in deuising of fables) would make vs beleeue that the Eagle flies vp into the next region to the Sunne, vnto which she approcheth so neere, that her olde fethers burne off, and in stead of them others come forth: but this is wholly ridiculous and fabulous. The Prophets meaning is, that those who trust in the Lord, shall be strong as the Eagles euen to their old age. But because the Eagle flies higher then other birds, in which shee also shewes great agilitie of body; whence the prouerbe came, The Eagle in the cloudes: therefore by this place wee may vnderstand, not onely *length of life, but also strength and nimblenes*. So as the Prophet hauing first set forth the *increasing* of strength, which the faithfull receiue from God, addes in the second place, that they shall grow nimble and apt to sore aloft.

Eagles liue long, as witnesseth Aristotle and Plinie.

Zadius a Iew. The Iewes audacious in inuenting ridiculous fables.

The Eagle in the cloudes.

Thereunto appertaines that which is added; *they shall runne and not be wearie*: as if hee should say; The Lord will so assist his chosen, that they shall finish their course without any incumbrances. It is a figuratiue kinde of speech, by which hee signifies that the faithfull being fortified with Gods strength, shall be alwaies prompt, and able to execute their charges. But will some say, we are euer in affliction; how is it then that he saith, we shall not be wearie? I answere, that the faithfull are so afflicted and wearie, that yet at last they shal ouercome, and feele that they haue been sustained by the power of God: for it befals them according to the Apostles experiment, 2. Cor. 4.8.9. We are pressed, saith he, on euery side, but not in distresse; poore, yet not ouercome of pouertie; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast downe, but we perish not. Let vs learne then to looke vnto the Lord, who at last will conduct vs to the quiet hauen, after we haue passed many streights: for hee which sets vs in the way, and commands vs to goe on, hauing entred vs thereinto, he will not guide vs for a day or two onely, leauing vs to sinke or swimme in the midde race, but will lead and direct vs to the verie goale.

Obiect.

Anſ. The faithfull alwaies wearie, and yet they shall ouercome at length.

THE

THE XLI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Keepe ſilence before mee, O Ilands, and let the people renue their ſtrength: let them come neere, and let them ſpeake: let vs come together into iudgement.*

ALbeit it may ſeeme that the Prophet entersinto a new argument, yet it is certaine that the doctrine of this Chapter hath affinitie with the former. For to ſhame the Iewes, he telles them that hee would make good his cauſe, though he ſhould plead it before the blind infidels. Thus then hee reproues the ignorance, nay the ſottiſhneſſe of this people, to whom God had ſo familiarlie reuealed himſelfe by his law. And yet we are not to wonder that they did thus tremble being wrapped in ſo many troubles, being in a manner vtterly vnfit to apprehend any ſound comfort: for woſull experience teacheth vs how much aduerſities doe amaze vs; becauſe in this peruerſe and corrupt nature, euery of vs is ſubiect to theſe two diſeaſes. In proſperitie there is no ho with vs, we ſhake off all the bands of ſobrietie and modeſtie: in affliction, either we ſtorme, or elſe ſtand amazed, being vnable with anie cheerfulneſſe of Spirit to receiue the leaſt word of conſolation that may bee. It is no maruell then if the Prophet inſiſts long vpon this argument, and purſues it with ſo much varietie of words.

All of vs ſubiect to two diſeaſes: in proſperity to ſhake off all bonds of ſobrietie, in aduerſitie either to ſtorme, or ſtād amazed.

Hee calles the Countries beyond the ſeas *Iles*; for in as much as the Iewes had no traffique with them, they termed them all *Iles* that were on the other ſide of the ſea. Thus then hee directs his ſpeech not onely to the neighbour Countries, but to them alſo that were far remote, and willes them *to keepe ſilence before him*. But what is this ſilence? *Iſaiah* deſcribes one kind of *iudgement*, which the Lord is content to receiue againſt all nations; onely this, that they would but *giue him audience* till hee had pleaded his cauſe, and that nothing ſhould bee done herein confuſedly or tumultuouſly; for that is a thing the moſt contrary to *iudgement* that can be. Hee deſires therefore that proclamation may bee made for *ſilence* among the Gentiles, which being granted, hee will lay forth his plea in plaine termes. The order of *iudgement* requires, that euery one may take his turne: for if they ſhould all ſpeake at once, there muſt needs follow wonderfull confuſion. Hence we are admoniſhed, that the cauſe why we neither eſteeme nor honour the power, goodneſſe, wiſdome, and other attributes of God, is, becauſe wee will not giue him *audience* when he ſpeakes. Men vſually fret and murmure againſt God: one ſwelles with pride in contemning his word; another is ſenſeleſſe, and cares not which end goes forward, who being drowned in worldly delights, takes no pleaſure at all to aſpire to the heauenly kingdome. Who ſees not at this day with what boldneſſe and rebellion many ſlander the waies of the moſt high? Whence is it that the Papiſts are ſo violent and obſtinate in their errors? Is it not becauſe *they will not giue the Lord the hearing?* Surely if wee could but indure to heare him quietly, truth would by and by beare away the victorie.

Let vs come together into iudgement.

The cauſe why we honour not Gods wiſdome, power, &c.

Truth would ſoone beare away the victorie, if men would giue God but a peaceable audiēce.

To be ſhort, the Lord ſhewes here that he will make his partie good, if men giue him but indifferent hearing. He would not haue men to bend their eares in a careleſſe manner; for that euen wicked and corrupt Iudges cannot indure, hauing a fore hand prepared a ſpeech; but hee requires that his reaſons may be ſcanned and weighed, for nothing but truth and equitie ſhall be found in them. Some may demand whether the Prophet here exhorts the nations to hearken? I anſwere, this concernes the Iewes eſpecially; for nations farre off might happily receiue this prophecie ouer late: but this ſpeech hath ſo much the more efficacie to mollifie the hardneſſe of the Iewes hearts, when it is ſaid, that the *prophane nations* would eaſilie acknowledge his power, if they would but vouchſafe him the hearing. Now there is greater weight and vehemencie in it, that he ſpeakes directly to the *Iles*, then if hee had ſpoken thereof in the third perſon.

Obiect. Anſ.

Let the people renue their ſtrength.] The Lord prouokes all nations to come to this challenge, and that by way of contempt: as they that haue the better end of the ſtaffe are wont to doe, who being aſſured of the right, doubt nothing at all of the iſſue. Let them come, ſaith the Lord, and conſpire together; they ſhall preuaile nothing, the victorie will be mine in the end: in a word, I defie them all (as we vſe to ſpeake) for they ſhall haue the worſt, albeit they diſcouer all the abilities they haue either of body or minde: onely I deſire *audience*. Thus he ſignifies that truth is ſo powerfull, that it eaſilie reſiſts falſhood, if men will not wittingly ſtop their eares. Let the whole world then conſpire to aboliſh her, yet ſhall ſhe continue ſtrong ſtill. And therefore if we turne our backes vpon God, it will not bee lawfull for vs to caſt the fault vpon others, but rather accuſe our ſelues of want of attention whileſt he ſpake vnto vs: for if we were prepared to heare him in good earneſt, lies could not preuaile againſt vs, neither ſhould wee bee ſeduced by Satans ſophiſtrie, nor by any temptation whatſoeuer.

Truth eaſilie reſiſts falſhood, if it may haue but equall hearing.

Whereas he takes vpon him the perſon of *one accuſed, to appeare before the ſeat of iuſtice to pleade*; it may be asked, who it is among the ſonnes

Queſt.

sonnes of men, that is able to bee a competent Iudge in so high & difficult a plea? I answer, here is nothing said touching the choice of Iudges: the Lord onely meant to say, that hee will get the day, if his cause should bee heard before any competent Iudges. There is no reason why hee should submit himselfe either to men or Angels, to giue an account before them of his doings: but to take away all excuses, he testifies that the victorie is alreadie in his hands, if hee should be constrained to plead for himselfe. It followes then, that it is a thing most vnreasonable, to stand debating of the matter among our selues: why doe wee not rather forthwith submit vs wholly vnto him? We shew out selues exceeding vnthankfull and peruerse, if we will not afford him the *hearing*, and bethinke vs how equall the conditions are which he requires. Truly, though nothing could be more absurd then to see *mortall man stand to iudge the eternall God*: yet behold a thing more vile and hatefull, to wit, that we dare condemne him, before we haue heard his iust defences.

Ans.

Vers. 2. *Who hath raised vp iustice from the East, and called him to his foote, and gaue the nations before him, and subdued Kings? Hee gaue them as dust to his sword, and as scattered stubble to his bow.*

*Or, Who hath raised vp iustice from the East? Hath he not called him to come after him.

HEnce it appeares what is the Prophets drift; for his meaning is to assure the Iewes that they shall be out of danger of erring, if they will but keepe the way which he chalks out before them. This is the cause why he mentions *Abraham*: for he might haue instanced other works of God, but he rather chose an example fitting his purpose: for the Iewes being descended from the stock of *Abraham*, whom God had (not without many dangers) drawne out of Caldea, they for their parts were to hope that God would no lesse assist and help them, seeing his force was nothing abated, nor his loue cooled. It being a difficult thing for them therefore to hope for any returne, in regard they were held captiues in their enemies countrie far frō home, the Prophet sets the like example before them, to quicken vp their hope and confidence. They were scattered in Caldea, and in the regions adioining: they imagined that the way was hedged vp against them, in regard of the many stumbling blockes that lay betweene them and home: but *Abraham* their father passed from Vr of the Caldeans, into Iudeah. He that had brought a poore man with his father, his nephew, and wife, safe and sound through so many straits, could not he also conduct and leade his people? Since God then had deliuered *Abraham* out of all incumbrances, in drawing him out of his Countrie; this example which so neerely concerned them, ought to touch his children and of-spring to the quicke: so as the safe conduit which their father had from, or of the Caldeans into the land of promise, was to serue them as a pledge or mirror of their deliuerance to come.

When he calles *Abraham Iustice*, it is not to magnifie him, but to shew that God put vpon him that person which appertained to the whole Church: for his calling was not to be esteemed as that of a priuate person, but therein God shewed a testimonie of his eternall *iustice*, which is common to all the faithfull. As if he should say; In the person of this good Patriarke, the Church was once deliuered, that by meanes thereof, she might hold this for a principle; to wit, that her saluation and Gods iustice should neuer bee turned backe to the worlds end. For in this one man, we may behold the vocation of all the faithfull, the forme of a Church, and the beginning and end of our saluation. In a word, *Abraham* is as a mirror of Gods *iustice*, as long as it shall shine in this world. This word *iustice* therefore serues to amplifie the matter; for it was a wonderfull worke of God to *raise vp iustice* frō the *east*, where all things were corrupt and defiled with abominable superstitions. Hath God then shewed so rare an example of his power and goodnesse? why should we not wait for the same still?

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As touching that which followes, *to come after him*: some expound it, as if *Abraham* had called vpon the name of the Lord whithersoeuer he came: for he no sooner set his foote in any region, but he set vp an Alter to offer sacrifice to God: Gen. 12.7. & 13.18. All this is true that they say; but yet I expound it otherwise, to wit, that God led his seruant *Abraham* in the way, *who followed that his leading foote by foote*: for hauing receiued a commandement to *goe forth*, hee knew not the Country whither he should goe; so as he walked, but knew not which way to turne him, and God held him still in suspense, till hee entred the land of Canaan. Now because *Abraham* immediately obeied the voice of God, and albeit his way was vncertaine, yet hee depended still vpon his mouth, contenting himselfe with his conduction: our Prophet fitly saith, that he *came after him*; because hee followed God, as readie and obedient seruants are wont to follow their master at the heeles, though they know not whither he goes.

And subdued.] His meaning is, that howsoeuer this good man might haue beene distracted & put out of heart through many temptations, yet God made him safely passe the pikes, which might any way hurt him. *Moses* recites not al the incumbrances which *Abraham* met withall in the way: but euery one may consider, that first of all his departing out of his native Country, could not be void of many discontentments. For it was vnpossible that forsaking his Country so rashly, but hee should be hated of his countrimen, who would condemne him for a mad man to leaue the place of his nativitie, his friends, and kinsfolks, *to goe he knew not whither*. Then, being come into the land of Canaan, he had to deale with barbarous and froward men, with whom he could no way make his peace, because hee inclined himselfe nothing at all to their superstitions.

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That which *Moſes* recites teſtifies plainely, that *Abraham* had neuer any ſetled peace: and yet the wicked durſt enterpriſe nothing againſt him, but the Hittites offred him a place of burial freely without money, though he offred to pay for it: and they confeſſed that he *was a Prince* and man of God amongſt them, Gen.23.6.

The Prophet further amplifies the grace of God, in that he *ſpared nos Kings*; to ſhew, that he was the faithfull protector of his ſeruant *Abraham*. Now the hiſtorie of the foure Kings which he put to flight and diſcomfited is notorious. We may alſo extend it to *Pharaoh* and *Abimelec*, Gen.12.17. and 20.3. whereof the Prophet expreſſe ſpeaketh in the 105. Pſalme: for the Lord rebuked and chaſtiſed them, in that they durſt aduenture to touch his anointed. But hee ſpeakes properlie of the victorie which he got ouer the foure Kings which led his kinſman *Lot* captiue with all his familie: for it ſufficientlie appeares by the ſcope of the text, that he ſpeakes not of *kings* or *nations* that were peaceable, but of armed enemies, who by force were *ſubdued*.

He afterwards amplifies the eaſines of this victorie, and expreſſeth therein a great contempt, when he compares Kings to *duſt* and *ſtubble*: for *Abraham* ouercame them without hazarding his perſon. And therewithall we are taught to attribute this victorie to God, and not to the power of man: for men can not atchieue a victorie with ſo little adoe.

Verſ. 3. *He purſued them, and paſſed ſafely by the way that he had not gone with his feet.*

AGaine he magnifies the ſingular goodnes of God in amplifying this victorie by other circumſtances: and this is aduiſedlie to be conſidered of vs, that he ſhould obteine ſo great a conqueſt in a countrie vnknowne vnto him. It was a difficult and dangerous matter for him to purſue his enemies into regions *vnfrequented*: for Hiſtories record ſufficientlie what aduantage is gotten by knowledge of places both by ſea and land, which thoſe that frequent the warres haue euer and anon experience of. But this hindred not *Abraham*: whence it appeares yet better, that he was conducted and ſuccored by Gods hand, who leades thoſe that are his forward with boldnes.

Verſ. 4. *Who hath wrought and done it? He that calleth the generations from the beginning. I the Lord* am *the firſt, and with the laſt, I am the ſame.*

THough *Iſaiah* propounds nothing here but the example of *Abraham*: yet no doubt his meaning is to put the people in mind of all thoſe benefits which the fathers in former times had receiued. As if he ſhould ſay, Remember your *beginning*. From whence raiſed I vp *Abraham* your father? Through what waies led I him? And my benefits haue not ended there; for ſince that time, I haue neuer ceaſed to fill you with all manner of bleſſings. When he asks, *Who is it?* He ſpeakes not of one fact, but ads other mercies powred out vpon them many waies, which the people were now to call to minde.

Where he ſaith, that God *called the generations from the beginning*, it ought to be referred to the continuall ſucceſſions of the times: and the word *Dor* among the Hebrues ſignifies not only the time or age of mans life, but thoſe alſo which liue in the ſame age. And thus one age is diſtinguiſhed from another, as the fathers from the children; and the grandfathers from their little ones: for our ſucceſſors will call vs which now liue, the former, or next age: and that of our predeceſſors, the old time. Now becauſe one age would conſume the race of mankind if it were not ſupplied by the children which are borne; the Prophet ſhewes, that God multiplies men by continuall ſucceſſion, that ſo one may ſupplie anothers roome when it is emptie. Whence it followes that his prouidence gouernes all ages, leſt we ſhould thinke the world were ordered by fortune: for wee may euidentlie perceiue that his hand and power is in the ſucceſſion of one age after another. *Gods prouidence gouernes all ages.*

But becauſe diuers changes make vs thinke that the world goes vpon wheeles, as they ſay, therfore the Prophet contrariwiſe ſhews, that theſe ſo many alterations were *foreſeene from the beginning*. The ſumme of all is, That God rules in theſe varieties and changes which time brings forth, and with a ſteadie hand brings that to paſſe which himſelfe from the beginning hath ordeined. *God rules in all the changes which time brings forth.*

I the Lord.] He affirmes in more euident termes that God is the author of theſe benefits, namely, that *Abraham* ouercame his enemies, liued ſo long among the wicked without harme done vnto him: that he diſcomfited foure kings; and that the Lord reuenged the wrongs he receiued, when *Pharaoh* and *Abimelec* tooke his wife from him, Gen.12.9. and 14.15. and 20.18. To be ſhort, he teacheth, that it is to him we ought to referre all the benefits beſtowed vpon the ages following, after ſo diuers and ſundrie waies: for he extended not his liberalitie towards *Abraham* and his ſeed alone, but likewiſe to the whole world. 1 2 3 4

Where he names himſelfe *the firſt*, and ſaith he is *with the laſt*, this appertaines not only to the eternitie of his eſſence, but to his rule and dominion which he exerciſeth ouer the whole world. As if he ſhould ſay, Continuance of time makes me not wax old, for I neuer meane to giue vp my right. He is not idle in the heauens, but from his high throne beholds and orders the leaſt things. Moreouer, although the world forgeth vnto it ſelfe a world of dunghill gods, yet he will loſe nothing by it, becauſe he alwaies continues one and *the ſame*.

Verſ. 5. *The yles ſaw it, and did feare, and the ends of the earth were abaſhed, drew neere, and came.*

6. *Euery*

6. Euery man helped his neighbour, and ſaid to his brother; Be ſtreng.

HE ſhewes now that the world was too vnthankfull, who hauing ſeene the workes of God, did ſtill perſeuere in that blindneſſe wherewith it was poſſeſſed before. In the beginning of the Chapter, hee ſhewed that the victorie was his, if they would but lend their eares to heare his plea: now he addes, *that the Gentiles knew his power well enough, and yet for all that, continued obſtinate and rebellious.* In which reſpect, they were left without excuſe. Why ſo? Becauſe the Lord manifeſted himſelfe ſo apparantly, that they could not chuſe but ſee him, vnleſſe they would wittingly ſhut their eyes, leſt they ſhould behold him.

That he might therefore take from the nations furtheſt off, all pretext of ignorance, he ſaith, they *were abaſhed* at the ſight of his works; and yet they fell to their old bias againe, and forthwith wrapped themſelues in many ſuperſtitious vanities and errors. The ſumme is, that they not onely *beheld*, but were alſo *conuinced*, in that this knowledge *abaſhed them*. But ſome may obiect, that the benefits which God did to *Abraham*, could not bee made knowne to all, in ſuch wiſe that forraigne nations ſhould be fully acquainted with it. I anſwer, that howſoeuer he mentions none but *Abraham* here, yet vnder him hee meant to call to mind other examples of his goodneſſe, which their forefathers had taſted of ſince, that from both, they might conceiue hope of deliuerance. *Abraham* was not onely deliuered out of Caldea, but God drew alſo all his poſteritie out from the bondage of Egypt: Exod. 13. 16. and put them into poſſeſſion of the land of Canaan. He ſaith then that the *Iles felt his power*, when hee deliuered and preſerued his people, that they might know the true God: for his power plainly appeared in ſo many miracles.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Laſtly, he ſignifies, that the *Iles* ſhould bee aſtoniſhed at Gods inuincible power, when he ſhould afterwards deliuer his people. And whileſt the wicked ſhall heare tell of it, they will not ceaſe ſtill to bee perplexed, becauſe they therein feele that God is their enemie.

Drew neere.] By this, ſome vnderſtand, that the vnbeleeuers tooke a narrow view of Gods works. For we vſe to draw neere when we would be more certainly informed of any new thing: others referre it to the King of Sodome, who met *Abraham*: Gen. 14. 17. but theſe things, as I thinke, ſauor not, neither come they neere the marke. The words of the text will be eaſilie vnderſtood, if we ioine this latter member to the verſe following, thus; *They drew neere and came: euery man helped his neighbour:* and ſo the ſenſe will be; Although the Iles *ſaw* and *knew* my *workes*, ſo as they ſtood *abaſhed*, yet they *aſſembled* by heapes to make conſpiracies. But to what end? Euen to *harten on one another* to make new gods, and to confirme themſelues more and more in their blindneſſe.

Verſ. 6.

Hee amplifies the crime then, when hee ſaith, that *euery one helped his neighbour*. Now truly, hee that ſhall looke neere home, and ſhall diligently obſerue mens dealings, hee ſhall perceiue that the ſpring from whence all ſuperſtitions flow, is, that with one conſent they agree to quench the light which ſhines vpon them from heauen.

The fountaine from whence all ſuperſtitions flow.

Now albeit the Lord heere complaines of idolaters, yet he doth it to the end the Iewes might bee farre from corrupting themſelues with ſo foule a ſinne, but might rather keepe themſelues cloſe vnto God, and to a ſincere confidence in his promiſes. He ſets the ingratitude of the Gentiles then before them, that they might learne to ſhun their ſteps, and to continue rooted in the reuerence of Gods Maieſtie. We here ſee now as in a glaſſe, how great the peruerſitie of men is, who profit nothing at all by beholding the workes of God, but become the more dull and ſenſleſſe thereby; for they had rather winke with their eies, and to ſhut them at high noone, then to behold God, who repreſents himſelfe before them. Beſides this blindneſſe, there is a raging furie which prouokes them to riſe vp againſt God himſelfe, and to be ſo mad, as to offer him the combat, rather then not to maintaine their ſuperſtitions: ſo that this vice ſtands not ſo much in the worſhipping of idols, as in going a madding after them. The Prophet ſets forth this phrenſie when he ſaith, *play the men*; be valiant, or *ſtrong*: for he expreſſeth their miſchieuous conſpiracie, in that they *prouoked*, nay, ſet one another on fire to commit idolatry, and to reiect the feare of the true God, which they might conceiue in their mindes, by the ſundry teſtimonies of his power.

God complaines of the Gentiles to admoniſh the Iewes.

Idolaters not onely blind, but furious and frantike.

Verſ. 7. *So the workeman comforted the founder; and hee that ſmote with the hammer, him that ſmote by courſe, ſaying; It is readie for the ſoddering; and hee faſtened it with nailes, that it ſhould not be remoued.*

THis verſe is diuerſly expounded, for it is ſomewhat obſcure: neither doe the Iewes themſelues agree in the expoſition of the words. I know not the reaſon why the word *Charaſh* ſhould here be taken for a Carpenter or Ioiner; for it ſignifies any workeman working vpon ſtonie matter. Some tranſlate the word *Mochalik*, (which ſignifies him that ſmites) in the accuſatiue: but I had rather put it in the nominatiue. They alſo turne the word *Paam*, an anuell; others, a little hammer: but becauſe it ſignifies ſometimes to ſmite by courſe, I haue thought this expoſition moſt fitting to the text. For the Prophets meaning is, that the founders ſmiting one after another, incouraged each other; becauſe they then are earneſt in their buſines, and ſweat at the worke, ſo as one drawes on his fellow, and haſtens him thereunto, to the end that which they haue begunne, may ſoone be finiſhed. In a word, he ſets forth the obſtinacie & headſtrongnes of idolaters, who combine themſelues together in one to reſiſt God.

It appeares as well by this place, as by all hiſtories, that this vice hath not reigned in one age only; yea, would to God we had not too wofull experience of it among our ſelues. Wee ſee how men prouoke one another by mutuall perſwaſions to vphold Idolatrie and ſuperſtitions: the more the truth ſhines forth clearely, the more obſtinatly recoile they back, as if they had plotted with an high hand to make warre vpon God. For ſince pure religion was reſtored, Idols, Pilgrimages, Maſſes, vnlawfull vowes, haue multiplied, and haue bin ſet vp in deſpite of it: and more Maſſe-prieſts, then euer before. There was ſome meaſure kept vnder the firſt ignorance: but the Idolaters runne now like helliſh furies caried away with the fire thereof, and leaue no corner of their wits vnſearched, in deuiſing how to erect ſuperſtitions and Idols, which are now like to breake their necks. To be ſhort, they band and fortifie themſelues to withſtand the Lord of hoſts. If any would lay the fault vpon his companion, he ſhall gaine nothing by it: for the euill is ſpread ſo farre into euery one in particular, that they can no way be excuſed. All are giuen to lies, and wittinglie ſeeke to be deceiued: and then truſting in their multitude, they extoll themſelues and their ſide aboue God himſelfe: one whets on another to ſerue and worſhip Idols, which they loue with ſuch heate, that all the world is now almoſt ſet on fire with it.

Idolsters can prouoke one another to the vpholding of their ſuperſtitions, Pilgrimages, Maſſes, vnlawful vowes, prayers for the dead.

Verſ. 8. *But thou, Iſrael, art my ſeruant, and thou Iacob whom I haue choſen; the ſeed of Abraham my friend.*

NOw the Prophet ſhewes how vnreaſonable a thing it were that *Iſrael* ſhould mingle himſelfe with prophane Nations, though all of them ioined hand in hand, marching in aray vnder the banner of Idolatrie, and giuing themſelues to lewde practiſes. Why ſo? God had called them, and freely ſeparated them to be his peculiar people, and therefore it became not ſuch to throw themſelues headlong into ſo beaſtly a furie. This place is notable therefore, and teacheth vs to ſtick faſt to the calling of God, that we defile not our ſelues with the filth of the world: if corruptions breake forth, and that Idolaters let looſe the bridle to all villanie; yet muſt we be held ſhort by another bridle; to wit, we are the *choſen of God*, and therefore it is not lawfull for vs to flie out, as the wicked and vnbeleeuers do. Such were ſome of you, ſaith the Apoſtle, but you are waſhed, but you are ſanctified in the name of the Lord Ieſus, and by the ſpirit of our God, 1.Cor.6.11. For what is more abſurd then to wander in the darke, after the ſunne of righteouſnes hath ſhined vpon vs.

Let vs in any wiſe therefore bethinke vs of our vocation, that we may follow it effectuallie and diligentlie: and walking in it as children of the light, let vs abhorre all the darknes of our life paſt. This is the cauſe why he calles *Iſrael* his *ſeruant*: not that the Iſraelites had merited ought by their *ſeruices*, but becauſe it had pleaſed the Lord to *chooſe* them for his owne. And therefore to the ſame purpoſe he addes, *Thou Iakob whom I haue choſen*: wherein he ſets before them a ſpeciall commendation of his free bountie. As if he ſhould ſay, *You are my ſeruants, not by merit, but of my free mercie, ſeeing I haue prepared you thereunto by mine election, and by putting you apart to be my peculiar people.* To be ſhort, he admoniſheth them, that they obteined not this title of being the *ſeruants* of God by their owne induſtrie; for there was nothing to be found in them that ſhould make them more holy then others, but only becauſe *the good pleaſure of their maſter was ſuch*, who chooſeth this or that man according to the counſell of his owne will. Therewithall alſo he ſhewes what is the end of our *election*, to wit, that we ſhould be the *ſeruants* of God. For he hath choſen vs, as the Apoſtle ſaith, that we ſhould be holy and without blame before him in loue, Epheſ.1.4. The end alſo of our election is, that ſuch as were the bondſlaues of Satan before, ſhould now ſubmit and giue themſelues to God in abſolute obedience.

God chooſeth and refuſeth whom it pleaſeth him.

The end of our election is, to be Gods ſeruants.

In the third place he addes, *the ſeed of Abraham*, to teach vs, that election depends vpon the free promiſe of God: not that the promiſe goes before election (which is from euerlaſting) but becauſe ſ Lord makes known his fauor in reſpect of his promiſe: for to *Abraham* he ſaid, I am thy God, and the God of thy *ſeed*, Gen.17.7. This fauor then was continued to his ſucceſſors, and in reſpect of the promiſe, God had a ſpeciall care ouer the welfare of this people, as alſo S. *Paul* ſaith Rom.9.4. That to them were giuen the couenants, the promiſes, and the law. For which cauſe this ſeed was called an holy nation, a royall Prieſthood, &c. Exod.19.6. 1.Pet.2.9.

Election depends vpon the free promiſe.

But the Lord ſhewes the ſingular loue he bare to *Abraham* in calling him his *friend*. It is no ſmall fauor to be called *Gods ſeruant*: for if it be worthily eſteemed an high dignitie to be brought into the ſeruice of a King or Prince, how much more highly ought we to thinke our ſelues aduanced when we are accounted the houſhold ſeruants of the Almightie? And yet he contents not himſelfe herewith, but as if that were too little, he honours him yet further, and adornes him with the title of *Friend*. Now that which is here ſaid of *Abraham* belongs to all the faithfull, which Chriſt declares at large, Ioh.15.15. I call you not *ſeruants*, ſaith he, but *friends*: for the ſeruant knowes not what his Maſter doth, but I haue acquainted you with all my heauenly myſteries and ſecrets: by reaſon whereof, you may eaſily diſcerne how great the loue and affection is which I beare towards you. Seeing then that God hath done vs ſo great honour, ought we not to bethinke vs of our duties? Hath he ſhewed ſo vnutterable a fauour to vs, and ſhall it not ſtirre vs vp to ſerue and honour him with the greater care and reuerence? But let it (I pray you) be alwaies remembred, that *Abraham* is not called the *friend of God*, but in regard of adoption: as *Moſes* alſo ſaith of the Iewes, Deut.4.37. He *loued* thy fathers, and therefore he *choſe* their *ſeed* after them.

Abraham Gods friend.

Simile.

Note, that Abraham is not called Gods friend, but by the right of adoption.

Verſ. 9. *For I haue taken thee from the ends of the earth, *and called thee before the chiefe thereof, and ſaid vnto thee; Thou art my ſeruant, I haue choſen thee, and not caſt thee away.*

*Or, haue called thee before the excellencies.

ISaiah goes on with the ſame matter ſtill; for who is it that feeles not by common experience, what need he hath euer and anon to be quickened vp, by the often reperition of this and ſuch like conſolations, when aduerſities doe preſſe vs? It is no wonder then that the Prophet inſiſts ſo long vpon this argument. Now from the onely perſon of *Abraham*, he aſcends to *all his poſteritie*, and mentions the benefits which he had done for them. I take the relatiue *Iſh*, for the particle *For*; becauſe hee yeeldes a reaſon wherefore the people were to be of good comfort in their aduerſities; to wit, they had felt and taſted before how good and gracious God was vnto them: what cauſe had they then that they ſhould not truſt in him ſtill for the time to come?

The ends of the earth may bee taken two waies; either that the people had bin brought from a far Countrie, euen from the place of *Abrahams* natiuitie: or in reſpect that God, who hath the vtmoſt bounds of the earth at his becke, yet vouchſafed to reach forth his hand but to one onely people. He addes the *farre exceeding*, or, *excellencies*; for I haue ſo tranſlated the word *Atſilim*, which others expound in the maſculin, Princes, or, excellent: but there is no great difference betweene the one or the other: for the Prophet magnifies Gods grace, who paſſed by other mightie nations, and tooke vnto himſelfe a nation abiect and obſcure. Some refer this *taking* to Egypt, whence the people were brought. For it is not vnknowne how glorious this kingdome was, and what good opinion the Egyptians had of their learning, antiquitie, nobleneſſe of blood, and other prerogatiues. But I expound it otherwiſe, and refer it to the election of the people, who were taken from the middeſt of other nations, much more *excellent* then they: ſo as there is a compariſon here betweene the Iewes and other nations. Which *Moſes* alſo ſhewes when he ſaith; *That they were not choſen becauſe they were more in number then any other people; for they were the feweſt*, Deut.7.7. *but becauſe the Lord loued them, and becauſe he would keepe the oth which he had ſworne vnto their fathers*: Deut.7.8. Againe, *Thou entreſt not into thine enemies land for thine vprightneſſe of heart, nor for thy righteouſneſſe; for thou art a ſtiffenecked people*: Deut.9.5.6. Albeit then they were *much leſſe in quantitie* then all other nations, yet they were *choſen*, wherein they had a teſtimonie of Gods *ſingular loue*: had they any cauſe then to miſtruſt ſo bountifull and liberall a father for the time to come, hauing already receiued ſo many benefits from his hands?

Egypt well conceited of her learning, antiquitie, nobilitie, &c.

Hee further addes, that the people had a pledge of this grace in the law, ſtanding as it were vpon record: as if he ſhould ſay; It is not hid from thee, but it is writen faire in plaine tables: for hauing choſen thee, I afterwards gaue thee my law, that thou ſhouldeſt not wander hither and thither, but mighteſt keepe thy ſelfe loiall vnto mee, that ſo I might performe my promiſe concerning thy ſaluation.

As touching that which followes, *and not caſt thee away*: it ſeemes both ſuperfluous, and that it comes in out of place, were it not that it is an vſuall thing ſo to doe with the Hebrewes, which alſo hath great weight in it. For thereby hee expreſſeth the ſtedfaſtneſſe of their election: as if he ſhould ſay; *I haue not left or forſaken thee*, though thou haſt giuen me many occaſions: for the ingratitude of the Iewes was ſo great, that hee had iuſt cauſe *to haue caſt them off*, but that hee meant to ſhew himſelfe to bee that God who changeth not. Now that which is ſaid of them, belongs alſo to vs: for this ſentence of the Apoſtle is perpetuall, Rom.11.29. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Howſoeuer then hee caſts off the greater part of the world, in regard of their incredulitie, yet he alwaies reſerues to himſelfe ſome ſeede of adoption, that ſo the calling may remaine in ſome ſprigs: neither indeed can Gods election be altered by the peruerſitie of men. And therefore let vs remember that God hath choſen vs on this condition, that wee ſhould ſtill remaine in his houſe and familie, albeit by good right we deſerue to bee driuen out of it.

God hath choſen vs, but vpon condition that we continue in his familie.

Verſ. 10. *Feare thou not, for I am with thee: bee not afraid, for I am thy God: *I will ſtrengthen thee, and helpe thee, and I will ſuſtaine thee with the right hand of my iuſtice.*

*Or, yet, or, certainly I will, &c.

BEcauſe the former doctrine was to ſettle the peoples hearts touching their quiet reſting vpon Gods prouidence, the Prophet thence concludes, that they ought not to *feare*, hauing ſo many benefits ſet before their eies; in which they might euidently diſcerne the loue which God bare vnto them. The reaſon which he addes, *for I am with the*, is diligently to be obſerued. For this is the ſure foundation of our confidence; to wit, which being once fixed in our hearts, we ſhall ſtand faſt and inuincible againſt all manner of temptations: as on the contrarie, when wee thinke God is *abſent*, or doubt whether he wil aſſiſt vs or not, *feare* ſurprizeth vs, and carries vs floting vp and down through many waues of diſtruſt. But if wee reſt vnmoueable vpon this foundation, there is no calamities nor tempeſts whatſoeuer that can ouerwhelme vs.

And yet the Prophets meaning is not that the faithfull can be ſo confident, that *feare* ſhould no more aſſaile thē; but notwithſtanding they haue wauerings in their hearts, and be often ſolicited to diſtruſt vpon diuers occaſions; yet they reſiſt the ſame with ſuch conſtancie, that faith at the laſt gets the victorie. For it is incident to vs by nature *to feare*

Faith is neuer ſo firme, that it ſhould not be aſſailed with wauerings, yet at laſt it gets the victory.

ſtand, and to be full of doubtings: but ſuch a vice is to bee corrected by this meditation; *God is vnto me, to helpe*, and takes care for my ſaluation.

Some reade it in the preterperfect tence; I haue helped thee: but I reade it in the future; *I will helpe thee*. I alſo expound the Hebrew particle *Ak*, Yet, it being often vſed in this ſenſe in other places. It may alſo be taken for Certainly: but I leaue the choice to the readers diſcretion. If wee take it in the preterperfect, this particle will be as much as Yea, or, Likewiſe.

Vnder the word *iuſtice*, the Scripture not onely comprehends equitie, but alſo the Lords fidelitie in preſeruing his Church. For he ſhewes his *iuſtice*, when hee defends his children againſt the conſpiracies and ſundry plots of their aduerſaries. He calles *the right hand of his iuſtice* then, that whereby he *manifeſts* his fidelitie and iuſtice. Whence we are to gather a ſingular conſolation, to wit, that we ought not to *feare*, ſeeing the Lord is determined to protect and defend his ſeruants, for it is not poſſible he ſhould either put off, or renounce his iuſtice.

Verſ. 11. *Behold all that prouoke thee, ſhall bee aſhamed and confounded: they ſhall bee as nothing, and they that ſtriue with thee ſhall periſh.*

THe Prophet promiſeth the Iewes aſſured helpe againſt their aduerſaries; for if hee had giuen them hope of their deliuerance, and had made no mention of their *enemies*, their minds might haue been foreſtalled with many ſuch perplexed thoughts as theſe: It is true indeed that God promiſeth much touching our deliuerance out of all perils, but yet we ſee our aduerſaries the ſtronger, who deale cruelly and vnciuilly with vs. Where is then that ſaluation ſo oft and ſo largely promiſed? See heere therefore a circumſtance added to the generall promiſe. As if he ſhould reply, *I grant your enemies floriſh, and yet at the laſt they ſhall be aſhamed and confounded*. Deliuerance is promiſed, but it is vpon condition that you abide the brunt of your enemies, and buckle hand to hand diuers waies with them. For we muſt not promiſe to our ſelues any worldly reſt or tranquillitie heere, becauſe wee muſt alwaies bee ready armed to fight.

Verſ. 12. *Thou ſhalt ſeeke them, and ſhalt not finde them: to wit, the men* *of thy ſtrife; for they ſhall be as nothing, and the men that war againſt thee as a thing of nought.*

*Or, that plead with thee.

THou ſhalt ſeeke.] That is to ſay; if thou *ſeeke* them. For we vſe not to *ſeeke* out enemies after they are put to flight. Therefore I thinke it ſhould be conſtrued thus; *if thou ſeekeſt them, thou ſhalt not find them*; becauſe they ſhall be cut off, and brought to *nothing*. Wee muſt note here y there are two ſorts of enemies: the firſt ſort aſſailes vs by open violence: the ſecond by words: that is to ſay, they rent vs with ſlanders, curſings, and reuilings. Not onely ſo, but they ſummon vs to their courts, as if their cauſe were iuſt and good: nay, they bring vs before the iudgement ſeates, and often accuſe vs of thoſe crimes whereof themſelues are the authors. But ſuch are the crafts of Satan, whoſe ſeruants ſeeing theſe are, what maruell is it if they tread in the ſteps of their lord and maſter? Firſt then the Prophet ſpeakes of *pleaders*; and next, of the *armed* enemies which dealt roughly with the Church. What wonder is it then, if we be exerciſed with falſe accuſations? Nay, wee muſt not thinke it ſtrange, if many companions ſell themſelues to Antichriſt as his vaſſals to reuile and ſlander *vs*, ſeeing the ſame hath befallen the Prophets and other ſeruants of God.

1 2

Satans policies.

Antichriſts hirelings.

Verſ. 13. *For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, ſaying vnto thee, Feare not, I will helpe thee.*

THe Prophet ſhewed vs erewhile whereupon we ſhould build the confidence of our ſaluation, that we might continue ſafe againſt all aſſaults; to wit, when we were certainly perſwaded that God is our God. Now hee teacheth the ſame thing, but in other words; neither is the repetition ſuperfluous: for we know how eaſilie the remembrance of this doctrine vaniſheth away, albeit we haue it often repeated vnto vs. This promiſe therefore cannot be too much praiſed nor inſiſted vpon, ſeeing it doth ſo hardly take roote in our hearts. Let vs bee well aſſured then that wee ſhall find an vndoubted iſſue in all our perplexities, *becauſe the Lord will aſſiſt vs*: as oft therefore as we ſhall be preſſed vnder anie dangerous aſſault, let vs learne to fix our eies vpon him.

Now when hee calles himſelfe *the Lord our God*, it is not ſo much to ſet forth his power, as his *goodneſſe*, which he will make vs feele. For what benefit ſhould redound vnto vs from the knowledge of his power, if therewithall we were not well perſwaded of his loue? At the onely hearing of his power we are aſtoniſhed; but when his goodneſſe is preached with it, the very remembrance thereof ſufficeth to appeaſe vs.

He ſpeakes of *taking by the hand*, and of the *voice* againe; for it ſerues much to the comforting of our weake faith, to know what ſignes of loue God ſhewes vs, eſpecially when the doctrine of faith is ioined thereunto, which aſſures vs of his perpetuall fauour. This clauſe therefore, *ſaying vnto thee*, hath great weight in it; for we muſt needs remaine alwaies in ſuſpence, till we heare the *voice* of the Lord in his word. It is that alone which ſufficeth to aboliſh all our feare, and to ſet vs at reſt. Are we deſirous then to haue our harts quieted, and to ouercome the many troubles which daily befall vs? Let vs hearken directly to the good word of God, and euer hold faſt the comfort thereof in our hearts. For it is

Two ſorts of enemies.

God voice.

Note. impossible for them who either will not heare this word at all, or hearing it, doe it negligentlie, to attaine this peace: nay, let them be sure that an accusing conscience and a trembling heart shall alwaies pursue them.

Vers. 14. *Feare not, thou worme Iakob,* and *yee* * *men of Israel: I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer the holy one of Israel.*

* Or, dead.

What course God takes in ministring comfort to his afflicted Church.

HE seemes to speake somewhat too meanely of this people in that he calles them a *worme*, and then *dead men*: but this comparison agrees well with the calamitie which the people were in: and he takes a better course this way to minister comfort vnto them, then if he had called them, The elect nation, a royall priesthoode: an holy tree springing forth of an holy roote, or if he had adorned them with the like titles. For to say the truth, it had bin absurd to haue imposed such glorious titles vpon them, being pressed as they were vnder so base and vile a slauerie. By the name of *worme* therefore, he laments the ignominie and shame into which they were brought; and puts them in good hope of a better estate. For thus he shewes, that the Lord cares for them, notwithstanding they be abiect and vile in the eies of men. As if he should say, Though now thou beest nothing, *yet will I succor thee*, and by restoring thee to thy first estate, will cause thee to come forth of this rottennes and abiect condition of thine.

Worme Iacob.

Some translate the word *Meshim*, Men, which agrees not with the text, but must necessarily be translated *dead*, for it is an exposition of the other epithete *worme*, according to the Hebrue phrase. I agree with S. *Ierome* who hath so translated it, neither doe I passe much that the word is otherwise written here then elsewhere, in regard of the changing of the pricks: for this might easily fall out by reason of the likenes which these pricks haue one with another. The thing should be weyed, for there is nothing more absurd, then to reade men, in stead of wormes, vnlesse they reade it dead, or mortall. But God meant no doubt that this voice should be heard among the people who were now at last cast, to the end it might pierce euen into their graues: for on the contrary he promiseth to be the *redeemer* of these which are *dead*.

S. Ierome.

The Prophet had respect to the succeeding ages, as to his owne times.

Now the Prophet had not such respect vnto his owne time, but that he meant his doctrine should extend it selfe to all ages of the world. As oft then as we shall see the Church oppressed vnder cruell tyrants, let vs call this sentence to minde, that albeit Gods children be trodden vnder foote by the proude, that they be despised, and that they haue not so much leisure as to take their breath, being persecuted and afflicted aboue measure: yet let vs know that euen such are in great account with God, so as they shall be able ere long to lift vp their heads. Let this be applied to euery one of vs in particular, that we may not be discoraged for the scoffes of the wicked, nor for the miseries and calamities which we indure, no nor for *death* it selfe. Do we resemble *dead men*, and is all hope of deliuerance taken away? yet wil our *Redeemer* come at last, and will raise vp his Church out of her very graue.

A Consolation.

When the Prophet addes the *holy one of Israel*, he brings back the people as he hath done before to the remembrance of that *Couenant* by which Israel was separated from other nations to be Gods peculiar people: thus he incourageth them, that their miserable condition should not too much deiect nor cast them downe, though they seemed as *wormes* of the earth, and as *dead men*.

Vers. 15. *Behold, I will make thee a roller, and a new threshing instrument hauing teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountaines and bring them to pouder, and shalt make the hills as chaffe.*

HE speakes still of the restauration of the Church, promising that she shall be so exalted aboue her enemies, that she shall bruise and grind them to *pouder*. And this he expresseth vnder a very fit similitude. For the Iewes to whom he speakes were almost crushed in pieces: but now on the contrarie he tels them that they being deliuered shall crush their enemies, and so render them like for like. Now it was very needfull that this consolation should be added, for had they not recouered new strength, it is like enough they had bin subiect to the tyranny of their enemies for euer: God meant to arme them then, that they might be able to repulse the outrages done vnto them: so as they were now become the executioners of Gods vengeance as our Prophet shewes.

But by these words it might seeme he meant to inflame the Iewes with a desire to *reuenge*, which is directlie contrarie to the nature of Gods spirit: to which vice we being too much inclined, the Lord often commands vs to represse these desires of reuenge; so farre off is he from allowing them in vs: nay, doth he not on the contrarie exhort vs to pray for our enemies? Math. 5. 44. Wee ought much lesse then to reioice in their miseries and calamities. I answere, that the Prophet shewes here what shall come to passe; but he neither commands, nor counsels them to desire the ruin of their enemies. If any replie, that we must not only expect, but also desire that which the Lord hath promised, seeing it turnes to his glorie, and our saluation: I confesse indeed, that this consolation greatlie affwageth our sorrowes, in that he promiseth to punish our enemies one day who haue cruelly vexed vs, in rendring them the same measure which they haue measured. Yet this hinders not the law of loue, which enioines vs rather to sorrow for the euils which they voluntarily pull downe vpon their owne heads, and to bewaile their condition, then to wish their ouerthrow. If we imbrace this promise with such faith as is meet, that is, in casting downe all the impaciencie of the flesh at her feet, then

Obiect.

Ans.

Obiect.

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Note.

then ſhall we firſt of all be diſpoſed to patience; and in the next place we will with a moderat zeale wait for the accompliſhment of Gods iudgements. We muſt therefore labour to quench all thoſe inordinate paſſions of the fleſh, and with an humble and meeke ſpirit to wait for the fit time when this iudgement ſhall be executed: not ſo much in regard of our owne particular profits, as to ſee Gods iuſtice exalted, according as it deſerues. *Dauid* hath written to this effect, Pſal. 58. The righteous ſhall reioyce *when he ſeeth the vengeance*, he ſhall waſh his feete in ỹ blood of the wicked: not that they take pleaſure in their miſeries, but as it is ſaid afterwards in that Pſalme, Men ſhall ſay, Verily there is fruit for the righteous, doubtleſſe there is a God that iudgeth the earth. For God manifeſts his iuſt iudgements to the world, when the wicked are puniſhed for their miſdoings. The Iewes (being cruell and blood-thirſtie) ſnatch vp theſe promiſes like ſauage and wilde beaſts, who rauenouſlie deuoure the pray that is offred, and keepe a howling if they doe but apprehend the very ſent of it. But the Lord would not haue his children to forget that mildnes which he aboue al things likes of: for we can make no claime to be the children of ſuch a father, vnleſſe we be led with the ſpirit of meekenes and gentlenes. To be ſhort, by the *harrow with ſharp teeth*, he meanes nothing elſe but the feareſull and terrible end of the wicked, whom the Lord will ouerthrow by the hands of the faithfull, yet not ſo inflame their hearts with a deſire of ſhedding blood, as to comfort and cheere vp their ſpirits.

We cannot approoue our ſelues to bee Gods children, vnleſſe we be led by the ſpirit of meekeneſſe.

Verſ. 16. *Thou ſhalt fanne them, and the winde ſhall carrie them away, and the whirlewind ſhall ſcatter them: and thou ſhalt reioyce in the Lord, and ſhalt glorie in the holy one of Iſrael.*

1 Three things to be noted, in that the Church is compared to a Fanne.

HIs meaning is to ſhew that which he vttered in the former verſe, but by another ſimilitude. For he compares the Church to a *fanne*, and the wicked to chaffe, which the winde ſcatters to and fro. As if he ſhould ſay, Though the wicked *threſh* and *fanne* you now, yet they ſhall be chaſtiſed more ſeuerely, for they ſhall be cruſhed in pieces by their deſtruction, and ſcattered as ſtraw. But yet note the difference; for the faithfull are *fanned* in this world for their great good, becauſe they ſuffer themſelues to be brought vnder the obedience of God: but the other obſtinately reſiſting and abiding no yoke, the Prophet teacheth, that they ſhall be *ſcattered* as *chaffe*, that is, *carried away by the winde*. Thus then, God had threſhed ỹ Iewes with great ſtrokes of the flaile; he had ſmitten them downe with laying them on; and ſcattered them with his fanne: that ſo becomming cleane and pure wheate, he might gather them into his Garner; but appointed out the prophane nations to be as ſtubble for the fire.

The faithfull are fanned in this world for their great good.

2 The Church ſometimes fannes the wicked, to make them fit for Gods glorie.

There is one thing more to be conſidered, to wit, that the victorious Church fannes ſome vnbeleeuers, to the end they might be purged, and finde place in Gods flore: and thus this propheſie was fulfilled, as oft as any of the Gentiles were woon to the faith by meanes of the godly, thereby bringing them vnder the dominion of Chriſt. Neither had the faithfull euer any earthly power to rule ouer their enemies: nay contrariwiſe, they are alwaies faine to poſſeſſe their ſoules in patience: but the Lord cauſeth them vnder ſuch heauie burthens to floriſh like the Palme trees, ſo as they eſcape ſafe from danger. And which more is, they haue euen amiddeſt theſe ſtreites troden the enemies of the truth vnder their feete with inuincible courage.

3

Moreouer, it is to be noted, that the Scripture is wont often to attribute that to the Church, which appertaines to none but God only. In regard then that God puniſheth the wicked for the fauor he beares to his Church, it is ſaid that he giues them to the faithfull to tread vnder their feete, becauſe the fruite of ſuch a benefit belongs vnto them.

Beſides, as oft as we reade theſe propheſies, we muſt lift vp our minds to Chriſts kingdome, that putting off all peruerſe affections, we may keepe ſuch a meaſure as is fitting, and neuer with this *ſcattering* before the time. For it ought to ſuffice vs that our head will at the laſt tread downe all our enemies vnder our feete, and make them his very footſtoole, that we may participate with him in his victorie. Where he addes, that the Iewes ſhould haue cauſe to *reioyce in the Lord*: though he meant hereby to aſſwage their ſorrowes, yet therewithall he alſo exhorts the faithfull to modeſtie, that they ſhould not breake forth into furie, if it fell out that the Lord ſhould thus ſubdue their enemies. For men are inclined to nothing more then to ſwell in pride, when things fall out as they would haue them: they forget then that they are men, and as for God whom they ought to acknowledge the author of all benefits, him they vtterlie neglect. Thus then, that the Prophet might bridle this inordinate ioy of the fleſh, which often caries vs beyond our bounds, he addes, *in the Lord*, becauſe, as all our glory and gladnes comes only from him, ſo it ſhould be aſcribed only to him. Laſtly, he exhorts vs to acknowledge Gods benefits, that the higher he hath aduanced vs, the more carefull ſhould we be to cut off all pride and preſumption, that we may giue our ſelues to *reioycing in him*, and to the ſetting forth of his praiſe and glory only.

Wherefore it is added, that the Church muſt reioyce in the Lord.

Let him that reioyceth, reioyce in the Lord.

Verſ. 17. *When the poore and needie ſeeke water, and there is none (their toong faileth for thirſt, I the Lord will heare them: I the God of Iſrael will not forſake them.)*

HE goes on with the argument begun frō the beginning of the former Chapter: for he ſets out the miſerable and poore eſtate into which the Iewes ſhould be brought being in Babylon, till God hauing compaſſion vpon them, ſhould at the laſt aſſiſt and help them. Thus he aduertiſeth them to prepare

themselues for the induring of extreame pouertie, when he telles them of *thirst*: for wee know there is nothing more tedious to bee borne, then the *vvant of vvater* when one is thirstie. This therefore was a very apt kind of speech to expresse the greatnesse of their calamitie.

But the Prophet affirmes *that God vvill aid them*, euen at the very pinch: and thus we may see to whom this promise belongs, namely, to such as being in extremitie, parch away, and faint with thirst. Hence also we may note, that the Church flowes not alwaies in abundance of outward things, but is sometimes brought to penurie and want, that by such goades in her sides, she might be stirred vp to call vpon God; for wee are wont to wax idle when things fall out as we would haue them. It is good therefore to bee exercised with *hunger* and *thirst*, that wee may learne to seeke the Lord with our whole hearts. In a word, it is very needfull we should be pressed with pouertie, that so wee may the better taste the Lords bountie.

The Church flowes not alwaies with abundance.

Questionlesse the Prophet meant by this circumstance to set forth the greatnesse of Gods grace; as also admonisheth the people hereby, not to faint nor quaile in the time of need and want. Now we are to obserue what titles he giues them: for in calling them *poore and needie*, he speakes not to strangers, but of such as the Lord had chosen and adopted for his heritage. Wee ought not to wonder then if God now and then suffer vs to languish vnder hunger and thirst, seeing hee hath exercised our fore-fathers no lesse seuerely.

When he saith, the *waters appeare not*: let vs learne that the Lord for the triall of our faith and patience, takes away all means from vs, that we might rest vpon him alone. By the word I *will heare*, he signifies that God helpes not all, but such as call vpon him: are wee so careless then as to contemne this helpe? It is good reason we should be left destitute stil, without feeling any succor, in regard we are vnworthy of it.

God helpes not all, but such as call vpon him.

Vers. 18. *I will open riuers in the tops of the hils, and fountaines in the middest of the *vallies: I will make the wilderness as a poole of water, and the waste land as springs of water.*

*Or, plains.

19. *I will set in the wilderness the Cedar, the shittath tree, and the myrre tree, and the pine tree; and I will set in the wilderness the firre tree, the elme and the box tree together.*

THe Prophet amplifies the former doctrine by another circumstance; to wit, that the Lord needes no naturall, nor externall remedies to succour his Church withall, but hath secret and admirable meanes ready, by which he can supply the necessitie thereof aboue all that mans reason can conceiue or imagin. When wee see no helpe, despaire easilie creepes vpon vs; we dare hope no longer then we see worldly meanes present before our eies: if they faile vs, then all hope in God is gone. But our Prophet telles vs that this is the very houre in which we should gather greatest assurance; because the Lord hath then most libertie to manifest his power, when men are brought to extremities, and seeme vtterly confounded. It is his propertie then to assist those that are his, against the expectation and thought of man, that thus wee might not suffer our selues to bee transported hither and thither by any difficulties or idle discourses.

The time in which wee should gather greatest assurance.

Now the better to confirme this, hee promiseth to worke *miracles* contrarie to the order of nature: teaching vs thereby not to speake or iudge of these his doings according to humane sense, neither to tie his power nor promises to secondary causes: for the Lord is strong enough of himselfe, and needs no helpe from others; he is not so bound to the ordinary course of nature, but hee can change it as oft as it pleaseth him. Now we know the things he heere promiseth to doe, are contrary to nature: as to make *riuers* spring forth in the *tops* of mountaines; and fountaines in the middest of the *plaine*; and *pooles* in the desert. But why promiseth hee these things? Lest the Iewes might thinke the way to be stopped vp against them, in regard of their returning home; because that great and spacious *wildernesse* was betweene them and it, wherein passengers were wont to bee parched with the heat of the Sunne, and left destitute of all necessaries. Thus then the Lord promiseth *plentie of vvaters*, and all other prouision needfull for their iournie.

The Lord is strong enough of himselfe to helpe his chosen, without, or against meanes.

These things were accomplished when the Lord turned the captiuitie of Zion; but much more perfectly when he conuerted the whole world vnto him by the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ, from whom flowed waters in great abundance, which were shed abroad throughout the earth, to quench the thirst of poore forlorne sinners. Then there was such a change, as men could by no meanes conceiue the reason of it in their vnderstandings.

Ioh. 4. 14. & 7. 37, 38, 39.

Vers. 20. *Therefore let them see and know, and let them consider and vnderstand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the holy one of Israel hath created it.*

HOwsoeuer God shewes himselfe wonderfull in all his works, yet when the matter concernes the restoring of his Church, it is then that he manifests his admirable power principally, so as he makes euery one astonied at it. We haue seene heretofore, and it will be repeated againe hereafter, that by bringing the people home from captiuitie, the Lord left such a testimony of his power therein, as shall be memorable to the worlds end; and the Prophet in effect saith as much here. Now because we are either dull or careless in considering the workes of God, or heede them

God shewes his admirable power in nothing more then in the redemption of his Church.

The cauſe why the Prophet repeats one thing often.

them not as we ſhould; therefore they eaſily ſlip out of our mindes: and this is the cauſe why he repeates one thing ſo often. For wee ſtill ſtand muzing rather vpon things of nothing, then to take to heart the workes of God: and if it fall out that they draw vs to a nie admiration of them, yet it is but as a wonder that laſts for nine daies, becauſe our mindes preſently runne after other fancies, in which there is no fruit at all. The Prophet awakens vs then once againe, that he might chaſe away all ſluggiſhneſſe and ſottiſhneſſe of mind from vs, that ſo all our ſenſes might bee brought to comprehend the power of God.

Firſt of all then hee willes them to *ſee* or behold, which gets a certaine *knowledge*: then he addes *conſideration*, which better confirmes *vnderſtanding*, and more certainly. It is not certaine whether the Prophet ſpeakes to the Iewes; that is to ſay, to thoſe of the houſhold of God, or to ſtrangers: as I thinke, we may generally affirme, that when the Church ſhould be reſtored, the power of God ſhould then be perceiued of all narions neere and far off; ſo as all ſhould bee compelled to admire ſo rare and excellent a worke. It is alſo certaine that the Medes and Perſians hauing gotten dominion ouer the Iewes, were wonderfully abaſhed in hearing theſe teſtimonies of the Prophets, but chiefly when they ſaw the accompliſhment and effect thereof performed before their eies: for they might well know that men could neuer bring ſuch things to paſſe; and yet they were not conuerted to God themſelues for all that.

Verſ. 21. *Stand to your cauſe, ſaith the Lord: bring forth your ſtrong reaſons, ſaith the King of Iaakob.*

IT was very needfull that this ſhould bee added to the former doctrine: for whileſt we conuerſe with the wicked, they ſcorne our hope, and thinke vs fooles, and too ſimple and light of beliefe. You ſee with what ſcoffes our weake faith is aſſailed and ſhaken; Oh theſe fellowes build caſtels in the aire, and perſwade themſelues of the accompliſhment of things impoſſible and vnreaſonable. For as much as the Iewes then lay open to ſuch taunts in their baniſhment, it was neceſſarie they ſhould be fortified by ſuch admonitions. And that this ſentence might get the greater weight touching the aſſurance of it, hee ſets all prophane people at nought, commanding them to *ſtand to their cauſe*: as men are wont to doe in iudgments. But in calling him the *King of Iaakob*, he bids defiance to all the idols, and ſhewes that he will take his peoples quarrell in hand, to the end they may know at length that he is the protector and defender of his owne glory, in deliuering ſuch as are iniuſtly oppreſſed. And yet it was needfull that the faithfull ſhould be fortified with an exceeding meaſure of faith: for in what eaſe was the eſtate of the Kingdome, whileſt they were detained priſoners in a ſtrange land, and in a manner ouerwhelmed with calamities? That is the cauſe why the Prophet called them *dead men*, and worme *Iaakob*, verſe 14. But their hearts were ſuſteined by this promiſe, in which it was affirmed, Chap. 11. 1. that their root was hidden in the earth, when the people was compared to a tree hewen downe by the rootes: onely there ſhould come forth a *rod* out of the dry ſtocke of *Iſhai*, &c. Thus by the eies of faith, they beheld the kingdome that was hid: for it was impoſſible to ſee it by the outward ſenſes, no, nor to comprehend it by the light of naturall reaſon.

The cauſe why the Iewes were fortified againſt the ſcoffes of the Gentiles by theſe admonitions.

Verſ. 22. *Let them bring forth, and let them tell vs what ſhall come: let them ſhew the former things what they be, that wee may *conſider them, and know the latter end of them: either declare vs things for to come.*

*Or, put the in our hearts.

23. *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know ye are gods: yea, doe good or euill, that wee may declare it, and behold it together.*

NOw hee directs his ſpeech not onely to the idolaters, but permits them alſo to *bring in their idols*: as if he ſhould ſay; I know you thinke your idols *very wiſe*, yet they will bee able to ſpeake very little in the defence of ſo bad a cauſe. We ſee here that God takes vnto him the perſon of an aduocate, & ſpeaks in the name of all the people; for he will not be ſeparated from his Church, but is carefull, as you ſee, to furniſh and fortifie her againſt all the opprobries of the wicked, and againſt all their plots, whereby they indeuor to aſſaile our faith. We muſt be of good courage then, ſeeing God is pleaſed to bee the pleader of our cauſe, and ſtands betweene vs and the idolaters; and as one armed with his owne inuincible truth, *bids defiance* to the idols themſelues, being ready in perſon to refute their vanitie.

Beſides, he ſhewes that his elect are ſufficiently furniſhed with his word to get the victorie; ſo as they need not be afraid to vndertake the combate againſt all vnbeleeuers whatſoeuer. And truly he that hath profited in the heauenly doctrine as hee ought, ſhall eaſilie confound all the impoſtures of Satan, by a conſtant and victorious faith. I grant our faith begins at obedience, but the teachableneſſe by which wee ſubmit all our ſenſes to Gods worſhip, goes ſo before the vnderſtanding, that from thence our minds are illuminated with ſound knowledge.

How to diſcerne ſuperſtition from true religion.

By this marke wee may diſcerne ſuperſtition from that true religion, which is directed by a rule that is neither doubtfull nor deceiueable. The idolaters vaunt themſelues but too much in their errors, yet all their pride proceeds from folly, ſottiſhneſſe, and frenſie. For if they would conſider of the heauenly doctrine, with calme and quiet minds, all this ouerweening by which they darken the light of truth, would forthwith fall to

the ground. But the faithfull haue another reſpect, whoſe faith albeit it be founded vpon humilitie, yet it is not caried away with a fooliſh or inconſiderate zeale, becauſe it hath the ſpirit of God for the conductor and leader thereof, that ſo ſhe may neuer turne aſide from the certaine light of Gods word. Therefore where the right rule of diſcerning things is abſent, there can be nothing but ſuperſtitions, as *Iſaiah* ſaith. Now becauſe things are not to be done raſhly, therefore the faithfull wils them to *bring forth, and put them in their hearts*: not that they meant to halt betweene two opinions, being before inſtructed of God, but becauſe the ſuperſtitious could alledge nothing for themſelues, but that which was worthy to be laughed at of all. See here againe then the difference between blockiſh obſtinacie, and true faith, which hath her foundation vpon Gods word, ſo as ſhee can neuer be moued.

Where the right rule of diſcerning things is abſent, there can be nothing but ſuperſtition.

The difference betweene ſottiſh obſtinacie and true faith.

But now let vs ſee with what argument our Prophet defends the Maieſtie of God; for he ſo attributes vnto himſelfe an infinite *power* and *foreknowledge* of all things, that none can take them vnto himſelfe without manifeſt blaſphemie. Whence we gather, that theſe things are ſo proper to the Diuinitie, that he indeed rightly deſerues to be called God, who *knowes* and *can doe all things*. Thus the Prophet reaſons then, If the Idols whom you adore be Gods, they muſt be able to *know and doe all things*: but they haue no *power to doe any thing* at all, neither in proſperitie nor aduerſitie: neither do they *know* that which *is paſt, preſent, or to come*: therefore they be no Gods.

Who it is that rightly deſerues to bee called God.

How Iſaiah frames his argument againſt Idols.

Queſt. But here ariſeth a difficult queſtion, for in prophane hiſtories there are many predictions which the Idolaters receiued from their gods: for which cauſe it might ſeeme that *Apollo, Iupiter*, and others, knew of *things to come*: and therefore they were Gods.

Anſ. Firſt I anſwere, that if we conſider what the oracles were which theſe Idols gaue forth, wee ſhall finde there was either obſcuritie, or, great ambiguitie in them all. As, that which was giuen to *Pyrrhus*, Thy men ouercome ſhall the Romans. And, to *Creſſus*, after he hath paſſed Halys, *Creſus* ſhal ouerthrow many kingdoms. How the euent will ſhew that touching the firſt we muſt vnderſtand it thus, The Romans ſhall ouercome thy men. And for the ſecond, After *Creſus* hath paſſed Halys, he ſhall ouerthrow many kingdomes: not other mens, but his owne. Thus Satan at that time vexed the minds of men by theſe intangled ambiguities, that he might alwaies leaue them hanging in ſuſpence, that gaue themſelues to be directed by ſuch impoſtures.

Oracles giuen forth of Idols, ambiguous. Pyrrhus. Creſus.

1 2

But beſides this, that is to be noted which *Paul* ſaith 2. Theſſ. 2. 9, That the efficacie of error is giuen vnto Satan, that he might blind the vnbelecuers who delight in his deluſions. When they aske counſell then of this father of lies, it is no maruell though they be deceiued vnder a colour of truth: but in the meane while, it is a iuſt puniſhment of God vpon them for their ingratitude.

We reade that a lying ſpirit was let looſe by meanes of the falſe Prophets, the better to blind *Ahab*, who pleaſed himſelfe in ſuch beguilings: 1. King. 22. 21. It was good reaſon alſo that the prophane nations who had forſaken the true God, ſhould bee intangled in the ſnares of error, and ſo drawne headlong into perdition. Thus then it is a fond diſpute whereabout Saint *Auguſtine* labors ſo much; to wit, how the diuels may bee partakers of this preſcience which the good Angels haue: for the cauſe hereof muſt not be ſought out in nature. So in times paſt, when God gaue the bridle to falſe Prophets, he by their fallacies auenged himſelfe vpon the peoples wickedneſſe: not that ſuch impoſters had any great gift of knowledge, but being fitted for this purpoſe, they did according to the licence giuen vnto them. S. Auſten.

As touching God himſelfe, albeit his foreknowledge be hid, and that it bee a bottomleſſe depth, yet is it manifeſt enough to thoſe whom he hath choſen: ſo as they may diſcern him from the troope of falſe gods. Not that hee foretold all things by his Prophets, for mens curioſitie in that behalfe is inſatiable: neither is it expedient they ſhould know all things; but he hath concealed nothing from them that is fit to bee knowne, for by many excellent prophecies hee hath foreſhewen that he hath a ſpeciall care of his Church: as *Amos* ſaith; Is there any ſecret thing which the Lord will not reueale to his ſeruants the Prophets? Amos 3. 7.

The Iewes haue wickedly and vnworthily abuſed this prerogatiue, in that they haue ſet their fond predictions to ſale among ſtrange nations. But the truth of God hath alwaies ſo ſhined in the prophecies, that all men to whom God hath giuen wiſdome, may cleerly perceiue that the God of Iſrael was and is the onely God. Verily it was no more poſſible for the idols to beguile the faithful which were inſtructed in the ſchoole of God, then at high noone to perſwade one of a perfect ſight, that blacke were white: ſo farre was it off for them then to get any credit by their *foreknowledge*; and yet leaſt of al by their *power*: neither of which it was any way lawfull to aſcribe vnto them, ſeeing it appeared by continuall prophecies, that one God onely ruled and gouerned all things, both aduerſe and proſperous. The Aſſyrian thāked his idols for his victories which he obtained: but God had long before inſtructed the Iews of that which ſhould happen; yea and had made it euident in all mens ſight, that hee armed this wretch to execute his own iudgements. Read Chap. 10. The God of Iſrael the only God.

Now *to doe euill*, is not taken heere to commit any outrage, which is a thing far from the nature of God, but it ſignifies to correct and ſend aduerſities, which indeed ought to bee attributed to Gods prouidence, and neither to fortune nor idols. And this is often met withall in the Scriptures: as in Amos 3. 6. Is there *euill* in the Citie, and the Lord hath not done it? *Ieremiah* alſo accuſeth the people, in that they knew not that God was the author both of *euill* and *good*: Lament. 3. 38. The Lord then puniſheth the ſinnes of the people by warres, plague, famin, pouertie, ſickneſſes, and Euill, taken for corrections.

and other the like euils, and will be knowne to be the efficient from whom all of them proceed. Now *Iſaiah* alleageth not all the examples and arguments, by which he was able to haue diſtinguiſhed the true God frō idols; for that would haue taken vp much time: but he now contents himſelfe to proue it briefly, and yet plainly: for he hath not yet ended his argument.

Verſ. 24. *Behold, yee are of no value, and your making is of nought: man hath choſen an abomination by them.*

NOw he ſcornes the idols, that he might confirme the faithfull in the confidence and obedience of God, ſeeing by this compariſon, that idolaters are miſerably blinded and beguiled. The word *making*, ought heere to be taken in the paſſiue ſignification: as if he ſhould ſay; It is a vaine imagination or inuention of nought. But it ſeemes he ſpeakes improperly, in calling the idols things of *nothing*: for are they not made of *gold, ſiluer, braſſe, wood, ſtone*, or ſuch like matter? The ſolution is eaſie, for *Iſaiah* conſidered not the matter, but the qualitie; that is to ſay, the opinion of diuinitie which men gaue vnto them. For the ſuperſtitious doe not ſimplie worſhip the wood, braſſe, or mettall, but the maieſtie of God, which they fondly and blaſphemouſly tie to the corruptible idol: ſo as in effect heere is nothing but a vaine imagination. To which purpoſe *Paul* ſaith, that *an idol is nothing*: 1. Cor. 8. 4. For what can that be, or what name ſhall be giuen to a *worke* of vanitie?

Obiect.

Anſ.

Idolaters tie a diuine maieſtie to their ſtocks and ſtones.

An *abomination*.] Others reade it, The abomination; in the nominatiue, and vnderſtand it that ſuch are abominable as erect and ſet vp idols: but I thinke it is otherwiſe to be vnderſtood. I take ŷ verbe *choſen*, indefinitiuely, as the Grammarians ſpeake, & it is often ſo taken in the Scriptures. For when the Prophet ſpeakes of the common people, and recounts ſome ordinarie and vſuall thing, they expreſſe not the noune ſubſtantiue. Thus I vnderſtand it then; *Men cannot forge idols, but therewithall they alſo forge an abomination.* And ſurely this is a worthy text, teaching vs both to abhor idols, and the boldnes of thoſe that ſet them vp: for this cannot be done without offering great violence to the Lord himſelfe. Many eſteeme it but a ſport, but the Prophet not onely thinkes otherwiſe, but he calles it ſuch *an abomination*, as God neither can nor will ſuffer vnpuniſhed.

This place teacheth vs to abhor the idol and the idol maker.

The word *To chuſe*, points out as with the finger, from what fountaine idolatry ſprings. For true religion ſhould neuer be polluted with ſo many corruptions, if men had not preſumed to make them idols of their *owne deuiſing*. Whence wee may note, that all deuiſed and inuented worſhips of God are heere oppoſed to true pietie.

The originall of idols.

Verſ. 25. *I haue raiſed vp from the north, and hee ſhall come: from the eaſt Sunne ſhall hee call vpon my name, and ſhall come vpon Princes, as vpon clay, and as the potter treadeth mire vnder foote.*

NOw hee turnes againe to the argument which hee touched before concerning Gods preſcience and power, and ſhewes that the name of diuinitie appertaines to him onely, in whom theſe things are to be found. Touching *his raiſing from the north*, ſome expound it of *Cyrus*; others, of Chriſt: but I think the Prophet notes our two things here; ſo as by *north*, we are to vnderſtand the Caldeans, and by the *eaſt*, the Medes and Perſians: as if hee ſhould ſay; *There will come two changes worthy of memorie, for I will raiſe vp the Caldeans, and exalt their kingdome: afterward, the Perſians ſhall come, which ſhall bee their Lords and Maſters.*

1
2
Caldeans.
Perſians.

Now although theſe things were to fall out long time after, yet the Lord ſhewes that they were already manifeſt in his ſight; yea, that hee ordained them in his ſecret counſell, to the end the euent thereof might be a certaine token of his diuinitie. Yet in the firſt member of the verſe, he denounceth *iudgement*, to feare the Iewes: in the ſecond, he ſets forth *mercy*, in teſtifying that the captiuitie and deliuerance of the people was his worke, that all might perceiue that the preſcience and power of God were things which did indeed belong vnto him.

The prophane nations diuide certaine offices amongſt their gods: Apollo, he foretels things to come: Iupiter, he puts them in execution: another, hee diſpatches a buſineſſe contrarie to that: but Gods office is not only to foretell and ſignifie things to come, but to diſpoſe of things alſo according to his good pleaſure. For in whatſoeuer thing it be that any diuinitie ſhines, it ought to bee aſcribed to God onely, and not to any other. This is the cauſe why hee appropriates to himſelfe both *preſcience*, and *the execution of the ſame inſeparably*.

Apollos.
Iupiter.
Gods office.
1
2
Preſcience and the execution thereof, ought to be appropriated to God inſeparably.

In that hee ſaith, he will *raiſe vp from the north*, hee propheceth (as I touched before) of the captiuitie to come: of which there was no feare at that time, becauſe the Iewes and Caldeans were in league together: in the next place hee propheceth of the reſtauration of the people, who had leaue of *Cyrus* to returne into to their Country. Now who would haue imagined that things being in ſo good plight, (as then they were) that ſuch a change had been poſſible, eſpecially in regard the euent was to fall out long time after, namely, about 200. yeeres after the prophecies of *Iſaiah*? And yet the Lord teſtifies that he is the author thereof; that ſo all might know that the Caldeans came not by chance, but were raiſed vp of God, who vſed them as his rods to correct the Iewes withall.

About ſome two hundred yeeres betweene the time of Iſaiahs prophecies, and the accompliſhmēt thereof.

The Medes and Perſians alſo ſubdued not the Caldeans by their owne power, further forth then as they were led and directed by the ſame hand of the Lord. In this place therfore hee ſets forth the greatneſſe of Gods power,

power, and that so plainly, that hee proues Kings and Princes to be but *dung and dirt* in comparison of him.

And thus we may yet better perceiue, that the Prophet not onely respected those of his owne time, but those also which should come after him: for they which then liued, could hardly discerne what this meant; but their successors which saw it, and had experience of it, vnderstood it much better. The end was, that all might know how there was but one God, before whose eies all things are naked and manifest, and who gouernes all things according to his good pleasure. You may perceiue then what an excellent text this is, in that it shewes the perfection and certentie of Gods oracles. For the Iewes forged not these prophecies whilest they were prisoners in Babylon; but their fathers hauing heard and receiued thē long time before, their successors at last acknowledged Gods iust iudgement, whereof they had been forewarned before: and in the second place, they also imbraced the mercy offered, in that they saw God would in due time send thē deliuerance: who as he is the preseruer of his Church, so they felt him faithfull in his promises, by good triall and experience. From this place therefore we may safely conclude, that *Isaiah* spake not by his owne motion, but that God vsed his tongue as the organ of the holie Ghost, who put these wordes into his mouth.

The perfection and certentie of Gods oracles, 1 2

Isaiah spake as hee was moued by the holie Ghost.

In that he saith, *he shall come*, it signifies that whatsoeuer was foretold by Gods commandement, should without all peraduenture come to passe. For hee speakes of a thing to come, which sets out as in liuely tables the prescience of God. Secondly, in adding that *he is the author* of these things, that is to bee applied to his power. *To call vpon the name of God*, signifies nothing else in this place, but to perform somewhat at Gods commandement. It is true that *Cyrus* little thought he was imploied in the seruice of the God of Israel, neither meant he to obey him: but the euent shewed that the Lord marched before him by his secret power and prouidence, to bring him to Babylon by continuall and incredible victories.

The certaintie of prophecies.

Gods prescience and power.

In comparing him to a *Potter* which treads his *clay*, it is added because euery one thoght the strength and power of the Caldeans was so great, that none was able to vanquish thē: for they seemed inuincible then indeed. But euen at that time when the Babylonians trusted in their wealth, despised their enemies, and proudly aduanced themselues, the Prophet telles vs that they, and infinit others besides, should be troden vnder foote *as the Potter doth his clay*. In a word, his meaning is, that the prosperous estate of the Caldeans could no way hinder the change that was to come; neither should they be able to let the Medes and Persians from inioying their Monarchy. And truly the issue did well verifie and confirme the truth of this similitude, when *Cyrus* hauing vanquished so many nations, and got many godlie victories, did in a little space of time conquer all the *East*.

Vers. 26. *Who hath declared from the beginning, that wee may know? or before time, that we may say, he is righteous? Surely there is none that sheweth, surely there is none that declareth, surely there is none that heareth your words.*

THe Lord hauing made proofe of his Diuinitie, returnes againe to shew the difference betweene him and idols. For he asks whether the idolaters were able for the confirmation of their false worship to say the like for themselues: that is, to alleadge any example of such a prescience or power. Now because hee might without controuersie, rightly attribute these things to himselfe, *In derision of them* he answers for them; *Surely we acknowledge, that hee which is able to doe such things, must needs be the true God.*

Word for word it is, *we will say he is iust*: but the word Iust, hath many significations: for it is taken sometimes for True & Approued: in which sense it is said, Luke 7.35. That wisdome is iustified of her children: that is to say, *approued*. Wee haue seene testimonies enow then of Gods diuine maiestie, which hath put downe all the vanities of idols, in regard that all things in heauen and earth are gouerned and ruled at the disposition of one onely God; who in an instant is able to bring the mightiest Monarks to nought.

Now the Lord speakes heere in the plurall number, *vve*, to shew that he defends not his own cause alone, but his peoples also. I grant his owne eternitie is sufficient for him; but we being still infirme, it is behouefull for vs to know certainly that hee is the true God, that so our mindes may not wander after creatures, but may rest wholly and onely in him. Experimentall knowledge therefore is added with the word, the better to sustaine our weake faith, if it be yet ready to wauer. In the next member he saith, that the idols are all *mute*, and leaue those that follow and serue them in suspence. Whilst God on the contrary, makes the candle of his word to burne so cleerly, that it is able to giue light to his elect people, and to giue them both what to speake and thinke.

Experimētall knowledge must be ioined with the word.

Vers. 27. I am *the first* that saith *to Zion*; *Behold, behold them: and I will giue Ierusalem one that shall bring good tidings.*

NOw God expresseth that more cleerly, which he had told the Iewes touching the things to come, that hee might fortifie them in the faith: for it should little auaile them barely to know what was to insue, vnlesse the Prophets had also shewed them the end and vse thereof. The Lord testifieth then, that his predictions tend to the edification of his Church: and it was great reason this should be added to the former doctrine, that the

the people might know theſe examples were propounded not only to ſet forth Gods power, but alſo that the faithfull for their parts might feele the fruit thereof. For thus wee ought to apply all the examples of the preſcience and power of God vnto our own vſe; that ſo we may be aſſured of the care he hath ouer vs, and that he turnes all things to our ſaluation.

How to apply the examples of Gods preſcience and power to our owne vſe.

Zion is commanded then to acknowledge the true and onely God. Firſt in reſpect that he had iuſtly inflicted this puniſhment vpon his people for their offences: ſecondly, being redeemed out of this captiuitie, they might eſpecially take knowledge of his mercy and goodneſſe. 1 2

Behold.] We haue to conſider of mount *Zion* here, as of a place not inhabited; and of *Ieruſalem*, as a Citie laid waſte: for which cauſe *Ieremiah* brings her in ſpeaking as widowes and deſolate women are wont to doe; *Behold, O Lord, how I am troubled:* Lament. 1.20. The Lord heere ſets her out as a widow left alone. Afterwards, *Iſaiah* will incite her to reioice, as ſhe who hauing been barren before, ſhould now bee made fruitfull by the Lord, and ſhould haue many children. In this ſenſe the Lord now ſhewes that hee will *comfort Ieruſalem*, euen at that time wherein ſhee ſhall ſeeme nothing elſe but a wofull ſpectacle of horrible ruines. Now the meſſage is, that a widow and one that was forſaken before, ſhould bring forth many children: or, that thoſe who were ſcattered and diſperſed by baniſhment a far off, ſhould come towards Ieruſalem in great troopes.

This waſte therefore muſt bee oppoſed to the reſtauration performed by *Cyrus*, where it is ſaid, *Behold, they come.* And by the word *firſt*, is vnderſtood, not onely the eternitie of God, but alſo the antiquitie of the propheeie. Afterwards, *Iſaiah* addes how God teacheth the faithfull touching things to come; to wit, by the *labours and miniſtrie of his Prophets.*

Saint Ierom.

Saint *Ierom* hath tranſlated the word *Menaſſer*, Euangeliſt; but it properly ſignifies a meſſenger. And yet there is no great difference in the ſenſe, for his purpoſe is to ſpeake of the Prophets which ſhould bring the ioyfull and *deſireable tidings* of this deliuerance; which God by *Moſes* had alſo promiſed long before; to wit, that he would raiſe vp faithfull Miniſters from time to time, which ſhould far excell all ſoothſaiers, magicians, and prognoſticators. For this cauſe alſo hee gaue the Church this goodly title, Chap. 40.9. ſaying, that ſhee brought *good tidings*, becauſe the word of God ſhould ſound forth in her.

The praiſe of preaching the word.

Now this ſerues much for the praiſe and commendation of preaching. For the Lord comes not downe from heauen to teach vs, but vſeth the miniſterie of his ſeruants, and ſhewes that he ſpeakes by their mouth; which is ſo admirable a benefit, as ſhould cauſe vs to imbrace it with both our hands. Hee promiſed vnder the law (as I was ſaying) that hee would raiſe vp a Prophet in the middeſt of his people: Deut. 18.15. Now he confirmes that promiſe, in ſaying, that *meſſengers* ſhall not be wanting *to comfort* them in their dolours and extreme diſtreſſes. Hence we may alſo conclude, that there is no forme of a Church where propheeies ceaſe: that is to ſay, when there is none to bring vs *good tidings* of comfort in our miſeries out of Gods word.

No forme of a Church where viſion failes.

Verſ. 28. *But when I beheld, there was none; and when I inquired of them, there was no counſeller; and when I demanded of them, they anſwered not a word.*

THe Lord hauing ſpoken of himſelfe, turns againe to the idols: for in theſe Chapters you ſhall meete with theſe antitheſes euerie where; by which he oppoſeth himſelfe againſt idols. As if he ſhould ſay; I doe theſe things whereof I haue ſpoken; but the idols can doe none of them, becauſe they are void of *counſell*, wiſdome, and vnderſtanding. They can neither *anſwer* them that aske things of them, nor mitigate their griefes. Now in this compariſon, he ſhewes that hee can eaſily proue himſelfe to be God. Firſt, by the doctrine of the Prophet: ſecondly, by his works: which are not to be found among idols. Therefore it followes that they are no Gods, and that we muſt reſt our ſelues wholly vpon him that is the true God. 1 2

Beſides, mens eies are ſo dazeled with careleſneſſe, becauſe they neither aske, marke, nor conſider any thing: they bewitch their owne hearts then by beholding idols, and wittingly deceiue themſelues; for doubtleſſe they ſhould quickly perceiue the vanitie that is in them, if they did warily obſerue all circumſtances. Whence it is euident, that Idolaters ſhall neuer bee able to excuſe themſelues by pretext of ignorance, becauſe they loued rather to bee blinded, and to erre in darkneſſe, then to ſee the light, and imbrace the truth.

Verſ. 29. *Behold, they are all vanitie; their worke is of nothing: their images are wind and confuſion.*

HAuing condemned the Idols, now hee ſaith as much of thoſe that honour them. As it is in Pſal. 115. They that make them are like vnto them; and ſo are all they that put their truſt in them. He ſhewes then that the whole rabble of the ſuperſtitious ſort are full of vanitie, and haue neither wit nor diſcretion. I grant it is hard to perſwade them to it; for pride which poſſeſſeth them, ſo puffes them vp, that they thinke themſelues the onlie wiſe men of the world; and thoſe that follow not their traine, the onely fooles and dizards that are, in compariſon of them. How proudly doe the Papiſts and their ſubtile Doctors deride and ſcorne vs? With what furie haue the Romans contemned the Iewes in times paſt? What then? Let not vs care for ſuch a pride, ſeeing God condemnes them *all* here of *vanitie.*

The Prophet proceedes from the confuting of Idols, to tax ſuch as honor them.

Papiſts deride the Proteſtants.

The Romans contemned the Iewes.

Their worke is of nothing.] He calles *worke*, both

both the images which the superstitious forge to themselues, as also al the new found seruice, wherein there is neither end nor measure; when some one will bee the master and author of his owne religion. These works hee calles things of *nothing*.

In the next place he proues it more plainly, in calling them *vvinde*, and *Chaos*: that is to say, *confusion*: for so I expound the word *Tohu*, it being so taken in Gen. 1. 2. where *Moses* shewes that the earth was at the first without forme, and a confused lumpe. This place ought diligently to bee obserued against Idolaters; for they thinke images were ordained to preserue and vphold religion, and that mens mindes are stirred vp to deuotion by the sight of them; as if God were there present: they call them lay mens books, fit for such as are not capable of the doctrine of the Scriptures. But the holy Ghost heere pronounceth, that they are formeless and confused things, because they trouble and detaine mens mindes in superstition; yea, in such sort, that all their light of wisdome and knowledge, is choked and quenched by performing seruice to them. To conclude, hee teacheth that all images and the honor done vnto them; & not so only, but those that make and follow them, are nothing but meere vanitie, and that wee may boldly so iudge of them.

Images lay mens books.

The Image and Image maker meere vanitie.

THE XLII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Behold, my seruant; I will stay vpon him: mine elect*, in whom *my soule delighteth; he shal bring forth iudgement to the Gentiles.*

When the Prophets prophecie of any thing hard to be beleeued, they forthwith mentiō Christ.

IT seemes the Prophet breakes off his speech to speake of Iesus Christ: but wee must call to mind what we haue said elsewhere: to wit, that it is vsuall with the Prophets in promising any thing, hard to be beleeued, forthwith to make mention of Christ: because all the promises are confirmed in him, which otherwise would be doubtfull and vncertaine. All the promises are in Christ, yea, and Amen, saith *Paul* 2. Cor. 2. 20. For what acquaintance haue we with God, vnlesse this Mediator come betweene? we are so far separated from his Maiestie, that we can neither be partakers of saluation, nor of any other benefit without Christ. Now when the Lord promised any deliuerance to the Iewes, his purpose therein was to lift vp their mindes far aboue the thing it selfe, that so they might conceiue of better and greater things then their bodily libertie, and returne into Iudeah. For these things were onely as preparatiues to that great redemption which they at last obtained, and which we now obtaine by Christ Iesus. Yea, that grace of God that shined in the returne of the people, had been imperfect, vnlesse he had euen then bin knowne to be the perpetuall gouernor of his Church. We haue also told you before that the deliuerance out of Babylon, comprehended in it the absolute and full restauration thereof. It is no wonder then if the Prophets ioine this beginning of grace with Christs kingdome, for they vse so to doe almost in all their sermons. We must come to Christ then, without whom there is no (hearing) nor helpe in God: that is to say, we can lay no claime to the right of being in the number of Gods children, vnlesse we be graft-

What acquaintance haue we with God, vnlesse Christ come betweene?

These promises were but preparatiues to that great redemption accōplished by Christ.

No helpe in God without Christ.

ted into that body, of which hee is the head. The very scope of the text therefore shewes, that hee is spoken of in this place, as of the head and first borne. Why so? Because the things heere mentioned, cannot be attributed to any other then himselfe: but if this reason will not suffice, the Euangelists shall end the controuersie for vs. See Matth. 12. 18, 19, 20, 21.

He calles Christ Gods *seruant*, by way of excellencie: for although this name belongs to all the faithfull, because they are adopted for his children, on condition that they sacrifice and consecrate themselues and their whole liues to his seruice and obedience: yea albeit the faithfull teachers, and all those who haue any publike charge in the Church, be particularly called *Gods seruants*, yet there is a speciall cause why this title agrees more properly vnto *Christ*, then vnto any of them. For he is called *seruant*, in respect that God the Father hath not onely giuen him the charge of teaching, or to doe some other thing; but also in regard that hee hath called him to performe an excellent and peereleſse worke, which is common to none but him. Furthermore, although this name be attributed to the person of Christ, yet it ought to be referred *to his humane nature*: for his Godhead being eternall, and that in respect thereof he hath euer obtained equall glory with his Father, it was necessary he should take our nature vpon him, that he might submit himselfe *to the obedience of a seruant*. And therefore Saint *Paul* saith; that he being in the forme of God, thought it no robberie to be equall with him; and yet notwithstanding emptied himselfe, and tooke vpon him the forme of a *seruant*, &c. Phil. 2. 6. Christ then is a *seruant*, but voluntarily, lest wee should imagin his dignity might be somewhat impaired therby. Which the ancient Doctors signified vnder this word Dispensation: whereby it came to passe, as they say, that Christ subiected himselfe to all our infirmities. The affection by which he became subiect vnto God, was voluntarie: in the meane while it was to the end he might become *our seruant* also: notwithstanding

In what sense Christ is called Gods seruāt. 1

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Christ Gods seruant in respect of his humanitie.

Christ being Gods seruāt, no way impaires his dignitie. Dispensatiō.

Christs subiection voluntarie.

ſtanding this his ſo abiect a condition, hinders him nothing at all from inioying his ſoueraigne maieſtie; for which cauſe the Apoſtle ſaith, God hath giuen him a name aboue euery name: Phil. 2. 9.

He vſeth the particle demonſtratiue, *Behold*, to bring the Iewes as it were to the ſight of the thing done: for that which they ſaw in Babylon, was able to haue put them cleane out of heart. He wils them therefore to turne their eies from beholding things preſent, and to fix them onely vpon Chriſt. Some expound the verbe *Tamach*, which ſignifies *To ſtay*, paſſiuely; others, actiuely. If we take it in the paſſiue, the ſenſe will bee, that God ſo *ſtaies* himſelfe vpon his Chriſt, that hee will giue him charge of all things, *euen as maſters doe to their truſtie ſeruants*. Now it is a ſigne of great truſt which the Father repoſeth in him, that hee giues him charge of all things, and commits into his hands his owne rule, authoritie, and power. Yet I reiect not the actiue ſignification; to wit, I will erect or ſet him vp; or, I will eſtabliſh him in his eſtate: for that which followes immediately after, *I will put my ſpirit vpon him*, is but a repetition of the ſame thing. He ſaith in the firſt place then, *I will ſtay vpon him*: then he ſhewes the maner of this *ſtay*, in ſaying, that he will gouerne him by his *Spirit*: and thus hee ſhewes that he will ſuſtaine and helpe Chriſt in all things, and will not ſuffer him to fall vnder any difficulties. Now it was needfull that Chriſt ſhould be indued with the *holy Spirit* from aboue, in regard hee was to take vpon him that diuine office of being mediator betweene God and men: for according to his humane nature, he was vnable to beare the waight of ſo great a burthen.

Why Chriſt was to bee indued with the holy Spirit.

Elect is here taken for excellent: as in other places young men which are in the flower of their youth, are called men of choice. Hee is called *a ſeruant elect* then, becauſe hee ſhall beare the meſſage of reconciliation, and all his actions ſhall bee diſpoſed of by the Lord. Yet, behold heere a teſtimonie of that loue which God hath ſhewed vs in his onely Son; for in him the head, wee may ſee our *election* ſhine, by which wee are adopted to the hope of a better life. Seeing then that there is an heauenly power dwelling in the humane nature of Chriſt; when we heare him ſpeake, let vs not ſo much looke vpon fleſh & blood, as lift vp our mindes higher, that ſo we may ſee his diuinitie ſhine in all his actions.

Chriſt a ſeruant elect.

Wee muſt looke vpon Chriſt in both his natures.

In vvhom my ſoule delights.] By this teſtimonie we may conceiue that Ieſus Chriſt is not onely well pleaſing vnto God his Father, but is alſo that his *onely beloued Sonne*: ſo as there is no obtaining of any grace, but by the meanes of his interceſſion. In this ſenſe it is alleadged by the Euangeliſts, Mat. 3. 17. Luke 9. 35. Saint *Paul* alſo teacheth, that wee were reconciled with God through this his *vvelbeloued one*, for whoſe ſake God loues vs: Epheſ. 1. 6. According to which, our Prophet ſhewes that Chriſt ſhall not be adorned with the vertue and power of the holy Ghoſt for his owne particular onely, but to ſhed it abroad alſo far and wide vpon others.

By the word *iudgement*, hee vnderſtands a well ordered gouernment, and not the ſentence which the Iudge pronounceth vpon the iudgement ſeat: for the verbe, *To iudge*, among the Hebrewes ſignifies to rule, gouerne, and direct things. He addes, that this *iudgement* ſhall extend thorowout all the earth, as well to the *Gentiles* as to the Iewes: which promiſe was then new and ſtrange: for God was onely knowne in Iurie, Pſal. 76. 1. ſo as forraine nations were excluded from any hope of grace. We therefore that are *Gentiles*, ſtād in exceeding need of theſe ſo cleare and euident teſtimonies, that we may grow daily in the aſſurance of our vocation and calling: for without theſe promiſes, what aſſurance is left vs? They nothing at all pertaine vnto vs. Chriſt was ſent then to bring the whole world vnder the rule and obedience of God his Father. Whence it appeares, that al things without him, are but a confuſed chaos. Before hee comes therefore, it is impoſſible to ſee any right order or *gouernment* among men. Let vs then learne in all things to ſubmit our neckes vnto his ſweet yoke, if we deſire to be iuſtly and rightly gouerned.

All things out of order without Chriſt.

Now we muſt iudge of this *gouernment* according to the nature of his kingdome that we liue in, which, as you know, is not of this world, but conſiſts in the inward man: for it conſiſts in a good conſcience and integritie of life, approued not of men only, but of God chiefly and principally. The ſumme then comes to this, that our whole life being peruerted ſince the time wee were altogether corrupted by the fall of *Adam*, Chriſt is now towards the end of the world come *vvith an heauenly power of the ſpirit*, to change our hearts, and to reforme vs into newneſſe of life.

Iohn 18. 36.

Wherein Chriſts kingdome principally conſiſts.

The end of Chriſts comming in the fleſh.

Verſ. 2. *Hee ſhall not cry, nor lift vp, nor cauſe his voice to be heard in the ſtreetes.*

THe Prophet ſhewes after what manner Chriſt ſhall come; to wit, without ſuch pompe and preparations as earthly Kings haue. For when they come in, trumpets are ſounded on euery ſide, & the Heralds make a great noiſe and *crying*; ſo as a man would thinke heauen and earth would goe together. But *Iſaiah* ſaith, that at Chriſts comming, none of this din ſhall be heard: not ſo much to manifeſt his modeſtie, as to teach vs that wee ſhould looke for no outward pompe in him. Secondly, that by the beholding of his meekneſſe, by which he ſeekes to draw vs to him, wee might run with all our might to meete him. Thirdly, that our faith might not languiſh, in reſpect of his baſe and abiect condition.

Chriſts kingdome not carnall.

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He ſhall not lift vp his voice.] That is to ſay, he ſhall make no ſtirres, but ſhall bee quiet and ſtill. And ſurely hee was ſo far off from popularitie, that hee forbad the publiſhing of his owne miracles; to the end we might thereby know that his gouernment and authoritie differed much from that which Kings and

Mat. 9. 30. 31.

Princes ſeeke after, when they cauſe themſelues to be proclaimed that they may get the fauour of the multitude.

Verſ. 3. *A bruiſed reede ſhall he not breake, and the ſmoking flax ſhall he not quench: he ſhall bring forth iudgement in truth.*

HAuing affirmed in generall that Chriſt ſhall not reſemble the Princes of the earth, he comes now to ſet forth his meekenes, in regard he will *ſuſteine the infirme and vveake.* By the Similie of a *bruiſed reede*, he ſhewes, that he will not vtterlie breake and bruiſe ſuch as are halfe broken alreadie, but will rather vphold and ſuſtaine them, that he may augment that good which they haue in them. Then he ſets it forth by another Similie, of *ſmoking flaxe*: which is taken from the weekes of lampes: men will not quench them though they *burne but dimly, and caſt a ſmoke*, but will rather clenſe and keepe them in. Such tender affection the Prophet attributes to Chriſt, for thereby he ſupports our imbecilitie: And haue not all of vs good experience hereof? For looke whereſoeuer any ſparkle of grace ſhines, he conſerues and augments it. Alas! if he ſhould deale rigorouſlie with vs, we ſhould forthwith be brought to nought. Albeit then that we halt on the one ſide, and be much ſhiuered and broken, yet will not he by and by reiect vs as altogether vnprofitable, but will ſupport vs for a long time, till he haue made vs more conſtant, and more ſtrong.

Chriſtes tender affection deſcribed by theſe two ſimiles.

The Doue, a bird of a louing nature.

God gaue vs a ſigne of this compaſſion in Chriſt, when hee was conſecrated for this worke: for the Holy Ghoſt came downe vpon him in the ſhape of a Doue, which we know is a bird of a ſweete and quiet nature, Mat. 3. 16. Now ſurely the ſigne doth full and whole agree vnto Chriſt, for he made no noiſe: he ſhewed not himſelfe terrible like to the Kings of the earth: neither will he require more of his ſubiects then they are able to beare, but will rather relieue and ſuſteine them. Did he not manifeſt this at his appearing; and doth hee not cauſe vs dayly to feele it by his Goſpell?

The ſigne and the thing ſignified concurred fully in Chriſt.

The Miniſters of the Goſpell muſt learne meeknes from Chriſtes example.

According to whoſe example, let the Miniſters of ỹ Goſpel, which are his Lieutenants, learne to carrie themſelues meekely: let them alſo be readie to ſupport the weake, and with compaſſion to bring them home into the right way, leſt by ouer-much rigor and auſterenes, they quench the ſparks of godlines which ſhine in them: let them rather hearten, incourage, and ſtrengthen them with all their power. But leſt any man ſhould imagin that his ſo great lenitie ſhould cauſe him to nouriſh vices in vs, he addes, that he ſhall *bring forth iudgement in truth.* Albeit then that Chriſt vpholds and ſuſteines the weake, yet he is farre off from ſuch flatteries as may nouriſh any vices in vs. Sinne muſt be corrected therefore without flatterie, becauſe it is directlie contrarie to that mildnes whereof the Prophet here ſpeakes. We are to take heed that we fall not into extremities then, for the weake-hearted muſt not bee too ſeuerely handled, neither muſt the wicked be foſtered by our diſſimulations.

Chriſtes lenitie muſt not nouriſh our vices in vs.

But that we may the better know who they be towards whom this lenitie muſt be ſhewed according to the example of Chriſt: we muſt carefullie conſider of the Prophets words, for he ſpeakes *of a bruiſed reede, and of ſmoking flaxe.* Theſe ſimilitudes ſute nothing at all to the rebellious and ſtrong, nor to the rebellious and vntamed ones: for ſuch are vnworthie ſo great bountie: they rather deſerue to be bruſed and broken with hard ſtrokes of a beetle by the ſeueritie of the word. *Iſaiah* then you ſee ſo commends gentlenes, that yet therewithall he ſhewes to whom it belongs; and how, and when, it is to be vſed: for it appertaines not to the obſtinate and hard hearted, or to ſuch as vomit out their rage, but to thoſe that ſhew themſelues teachable, and do with willingnes put their necks vnder Chriſtes yoke. The word *ſmoke* alſo admoniſheth vs that he neither lightens nor ſuſtaines them that wilfullie ſit in darknes, but the ſparkles, how obſcure and ſmall ſoeuer they bee. Therefore where obſtinacie and impietie reignes, there is neede of extreame rigor, ſuch muſt at no hand be ſpared. Nay though vice be not growne altogether intollerable, yet it muſt not be nouriſhed by this ſoftnes, but rather corrected and amended, that it ſpread no further. For care muſt alwaies be had that the truth may remaine in her perfection, that ſinnes lye not couered, nor, that ſecret corruptions be not thereby increaſed, but that the weake may by little and little be formed to an vpright courſe of life. He ſpeakes of ſuch them as haue ſincere hearts, and loue the puritie of religion, though many things be yet wanting in them: for there is to be ſeene in them good affections, and good deſires at the leaſt. It appeares by many examples how ſeuere Chriſt ſhewed himſelfe to ſcorners, for he is conſtreined to vſe his iron rod to breake ſuch in pieces as will not indure to be guided by his ſhepheards crooke. He truly pronounceth indeede that his yoke is ſweet, and his burthen light to thoſe that follow him voluntarilie, Matth. 11. 30. but it is as true that he is armed with a ſcepter of iron to cruſh his enemies in pieces Pſal. 2. 9. and to fill all places with their dead bodies, Pſal. 110. 6.

To whom Chriſtes lenitie appertaines.

Note.

Note.

Some muſt haue the iron rod, others the ſhepheards crooke.

Verſ. 4. *He ſhall not faile nor be diſcouraged till he haue ſet iudgement in the earth, and the Iles ſhall wait for his law.*

THe Prophet alludes to the former verſe, and confirmes that which he ſaid before, to wit, that Chriſt ſhould be milde and calme towards the faithfull, and yet that he ſhould not be ſoft nor effeminate, becauſe he will manfullie execute the charge impoſed vpon him by his father. That is his meaning when he ſaith, He ſhall not *faile*: in which verb there is an alluſion to the former verſe, where he ſpake of the *ſmoking flaxe.* Here he ſhewes there-

therefore how lenitie ought to be tempered; to wit, that it incline not to ouer much indulgencie: for it muſt be vſed, yet ſo, as it muſt not hinder the faithfull diſcharge of our duties. Many win loue by their ſoftneſſe, to the end they may entertaine friendſhip with the world: but in the meane while, they wickedly and looſly betray the truth. I remember I once ſaw in a renowned citie two Preachers: one of them reproued ſinne ſharply and with a ſhrill voice: the other ſtudied altogether how to inſinuate himſelfe into the good grace of his auditors by flatteries. Hee that was ſo plauſible, expounded the propheeie of *Ieremiah*, and was then in hand with a very ſweete place that was full of conſolation. Now hauing found a text (as hee thought) fit for his turne, he began ſharply to inueigh againſt theſe rigorous and ſeuere reprouers, who are wont to terrifie men by thundering out the iudgements of God againſt them. But on the next day, becauſe the Prophet changed his ſtile, and agreeable to his vehemencie, roughly rebuked the vngodly, this vile flatterer was (to his ſhame) conſtrained to recant (as it were) that which all had yet freſh in memory. And thus the fauour of the people, at which he ſo much aimed, ſoone vaniſhed away; for himſelfe had diſcouered his owne heart: by meanes whereof, he was lothed both of good and bad. We muſt diſtinguiſh then, as you ſee, betweene the teachable and obſtinate, that we proſtitute not this our ſoftneſſe to all purpoſes.

Two Preachers: the one a ſharpe reprouer of ſinne, the other a flatterer.

In the meane while *Iſaiah* ſaith, that Chriſt ſhall bee of ſuch an inuincible force, as will cauſe him to paſſe thorow all impediments: for by theſe words, *till he haue ſet iudgement in the earth*, hee meanes that Chriſts miniſtry ſhall bee ſo effectuall, that his doctrine ſhall fructifie. For he ſaith not onely, Till he hath preached the will of his father; but, Till hee hath eſtabliſhed *iudgement*: that is to ſay, gouernment: as we noted before. Hee teſtifies then that Chriſts preaching ſhall not bee fruitleſſe, but ſo powerfull, that men ſhall be reformed by it; which ought not to bee reſtrained to his perſon onely, but to the whole courſe of the Goſpell: for he performed not his office, as if he ſhould ceaſe at three yeeres end, but he continues it till his laſt cõming, by the miniſtrie of his ſeruants. And we are taught here by the way, that it is not poſſible for vs to diſcharge this dutie faithfully, without ſuffering many troubles, nor without ſuſtaining many hard and dangerous combats; yea, ſo far, as to be ouerwhelmed by them, and in a manner driuen to giue ouer our calling. But we muſt not ceaſe for all that: wee muſt conſtantly goe on, and cheerfully hold out vnto the end. The Prophet therefore ſaith here, that Chriſt ſhall be ſo valiant, that he ſhall neuer forſake his ſtanding, but ſhall fight it out to the laſt ſtroke. Now we ought to ſet this example before vs, that wee may perſeuere with an inuincible courage, to the very end of our courſe.

Conſtancie required in the Miniſters.

He takes *law* heere for doctrine; for the word is deriued from another which ſignifies *to teach*. Now the Prophets are wont thus to ſpeake of the Goſpell, and the doctrine thereof, thereby to note, that it was not to bee eſteemed new, but conſonant and agreeable to that which *Moſes* himſelfe had taught.

By the word *Iles*, the Hebrewes vnderſtand (as wee haue told you before) the regions which were beyond the ſeas. And heere the Prophet againe confirmes that which was ſaid in the former verſe, to wit, that Chriſt was appointed the gouernour not ouer the Iews only, but ouer the Gentiles alſo, though they were exempt from hauing any thing to doe with the Iewiſh policie. To be ſhort, this promiſe appertaines to all nations, that ſo all the world might feele the fruit of this reſtitution and reformation.

Where hee ſaith, the Iles ſhall *waite*; his meaning is, that the elect ſhall imbrace the Goſpell with a great and an ardent affection, when it ſhall be offered vnto them: for therein the Lord manifeſts the force of his election, when thoſe which before erred in darkneſſe, ſhould with all their hearts imbrace the doctrine of ſaluation, being preached vnto them. And albeit they ran in times paſt hither and thither as ſtraied & loſt ſheep, yet they ſhould diſcerne the voice of the ſhepheard, as ſoone as they heard him, and ſhould willingly follow him, as Chriſt himſelfe ſaith, Iohn 10.16. Thus we may ſee the ſaying of *Auguſtine* to bee moſt true, to wit, that there are many theep oftentimes out of the fold, when there are wolues remaining in it. Now this *waiting* is a worke of God, when men who thought themſelues wiſe, ſhall ſuddenly renounce their wiſdome, and ſhall haſten to learne the Goſpell of Chriſt, that they may wholly depend vpon the mouth of ſuch a teacher.

Auguſtine.

Many ſheep without the fold, and often many wolues are within it.

Verſ. 5. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, (he that created the heauens and ſpread them abroad, he that ſtretched forth the buds thereof, he that gineth breath vnto the people vpon it, and ſpirit to them that walke therein:)*

THis is a confirmation of that hee ſaid in the beginning of this Chapter, touching Chriſts Kingdome; to wit, that he will reeſtabliſh and reſtore all things. Now becauſe this might ſeeme incredible, he addes a glorious deſcription of *Gods almightie power*, by which our faith might be confirmed, but then chiefly, when the eſtate of things in the world ſhould be directly oppoſite vnto it. He brings therefore pregnant proofes in of *Gods power*, that all might bee moued to hearken after ſuch newes, and to be aſſured that hee which hath *created* all things of nothing, who hath *ſpread out the heauens*, and makes *the earth* fruitfull, *inſpires life* into the creatures, *and ſuſtaines* and keepes all things by his outſtretched arme, can eaſilie accompliſh the promiſes hee hath made touching Chriſts Kingdome. 1 2 3 4 5

By theſe manners of ſpeech we are admoniſhed to fix our eies euermore vpon the

power of God, that ſo we may credit that which he hath ſpoké accordinglie: for *Iſaiah* ſpeakes not theſe things at randō, but thereby meant to diſpatch our minds of all ſcruples, becauſe nothing is impoſſible to God, who holds the *whole world* vnder his ſubiection: but in the Chapters following we ſhall meete with the like phraſes of ſpeech. Some tranſlate the word *El*, Mightie, others, *God*: but the matter is not great, becauſe the ſenſe comes all to one reckning: for he deſcribes his power and Maieſtie, and adornes him diuerſlie with ſuch titles, to teach vs, that he can eaſily raiſe vp and reſtore that which was falne to the earth.

Verſ. 6. *I the Lord haue called thee in righteouſnes, and will hold thine hand, and will keepe thee, and will giue thee for a couenant of the people, and for a light of the Gentiles.*

HE repeates the name of *God* againe, in which we muſt ſupplie that which was ſaid in the former verſe touching Gods power. All almoſt doe thinke that he ſpeakes here of the end of Chriſtes calling, becauſe he was ſent of the Father to eſtabliſh *righteouſnes* among men, of which before they were deſtitute, whileſt he is abſent from them, and being giuen to all ſorts of vice and vnrighteouſnes, were detained priſoners vnder Satans tyranny. But becauſe the word Iuſtice, or *righteouſnes*, extends it ſelfe further, I leaue this ſubtletie: neither is it ſaid that Chriſt ſhould be called to righteouſnes, but this phraſe of ſpeech muſt be reſolued into the aduerb Iuſtly, or Holily. I rather thinke that Chriſt *is called in righteouſnes*, becauſe *his calling is lawfull, and therefore ſhall be firme and ſtable*: for we know that things diſorderedly done can not long continue, vnleſſe any had rather expound it, that God in ordeining of Chriſt the reſtorer of the Church, ſeekes no other cauſe of it then in himſelfe, and in his owne *righteouſnes*: notwithſtanding it is certaine that this word notes out vnto vs ſtabilitie, and is as much to ſay as faithfullie.

1 2 Things that are not done according to a good and lawfull order can not long laſt.

By the *holding of the hand*, he meanes *the Lords preſent help*: as if he ſhould ſay, *I will gouerne and vphold thee in the vocation vnto which I haue called thee*. In a word, as thy calling is *iuſt*, ſo alſo will I *ſuſteine* and *maintaine* it, euen as if I *led thee by the hand*. And the verb *will keepe*, which is forthwith added, ſhewes ſufficientlie what the *holding by the hand* ſignifies, to wit, that Chriſt ſhall be ſo gouerned of his Father, that he will be his teacher and protector in ſuch wiſe that he will ſuccor and aſſiſt him in all things.

I will giue thee for a couenant.] Now he expreſſeth the cauſe why God promiſeth to be the *protector* of Chriſt. Moreouer, he diſtinguiſheth betweene the Iewes and the Gentiles; not that they differ ought in nature, or, as if the one were more excellent then the other (for all haue neede of Gods grace, and Chriſt brings ſaluation indifferentlie to both) but in regard the Lord had attributed the firſt degree to the Iewes, therefore it was good reaſon they ſhould be diſtinguiſhed from others. Before the partition wall then was broken downe they were the more excellent, not by way of merit, but by the free grace of God, becauſe the *couenant* thereof was firſt made with them.

All haue need of Gods grace.

The Iewes more excellent then the Gentiles, not by merit, but by Gods free grace.

But ſome may aske why *Chriſt* is named in the *couenant*, which was ratified long before: for there were two thouſand yeres and more paſt from the time that God adopted *Abraham*: the originall of this ſeparation then was long before the comming of Ieſus Chriſt. Obiect.

I anſwere, that the couenant made with *Abraham* and his poſteritie was founded on Chriſt: for thus runne the words of the couenant, *In thy ſeed ſhal all the nations of the earth be bleſſed*, Gen. 22. 18. The *couenant* was confirmed then only *in Abrahams ſeed*, that is to ſay *in Chriſt: at whoſe comming it was confirmed, and eſtabliſhed by effect, though it was done before in regard of the promiſe*. Therefore it is that *Paul* ſaith, *All the promiſes of God are Yea, and Amen in Chriſt*, 2. Cor. 1. 20. who in another place is called *the miniſter of circumciſion, to fulfill the promiſes made to the fathers*, Rom. 15. 8. And in another place he ſhewes yet more plainely *that Chriſt is our peace, ſo as thoſe who were furtheſt off, are made neere by his blood, and that both are by this meanes reconciled to God, and made members one of another*, Epheſ. 2. 17. By theſe places it appeares that Chriſt was promiſed *not to the Iewes only, but to the whole world*. Anſ.

And here we haue againe another teſtimonie touching the *vocation of the Gentiles*, ſeeing our Prophet expreſſie affirmes that he is giuen *for a light* to them. Now he mentions the *light*, becauſe the vnbeleeuers were plunged in moſt palpable and profound *darknes*, during the time that the Lord enlightened the Iewes only. What is our leſſon then? Surely we are worthy to beare the blame for euer if we remaine in darknes, and haue this light of life in the meane while ſhining before vs. For the Lord calles all vnto him, none excepted, and *gines Chriſt* vnto all, that he may be our *light*. It remaines then that we only open our eyes, then will he alone chaſe away all darknes, and will illuminate our minds by the word of truth.

Another teſtimonie, touching the vocation of the Gentiles.

Verſ. 7. *That thou maiſt open the eyes of the blind, and bring out the priſoners from the priſon, and them that ſit in darknes out of the priſon houſe.*

ISaiah recites heere more at large to what end Chriſt ſhall be ſent of the Father, that we may the better perceiue what fruit we ſhal reape by the ſame, and how neceſſarie his help is. Now he taxeth all men of *blindnes*, to the end wee ſhould acknowledge it, if wee meane to be illuminate by Ieſus Chriſt. To be ſhort, he ſhewes vnder theſe borrowed ſpeeches what our condition is, till Chriſt appeares for our redemption: to wit, that wee are all miſerable, poore, and deſtitute of all good things; inuironed, and ouerwhelmed with infinite miſeries, till Chriſt hath ſet vs free

Why Chriſt was ſent of his Father.

All are blind.

What our condition is without Chriſt.

free from them. But howſoeuer the words be here directed vnto Chriſt, yet the intent of the Prophet is thereby to inſtruct the faithfull, and to teach them that it is in Chriſt, and in none but him, vpon whom they muſt depend, and to aſſure them that the remedie of all their euils is ready at hand, if ſo bee they ſeeke vnto him for ſuccour. For the Prophet ſets not Chriſt to ſchoole heere, as if he ſtood in neede either of inſtruction, or of a commandement: but hee ſpeakes to him for our ſakes, that wee might know wherefore hee is ſent of the Father: as it is in the ſecõd Pſalme, I will preach the decree: aske of me, and I will giue thee the heathen for thy poſſeſſion. For Chriſts dignitie and authoritie is there magnified, to aſſure vs *that the Father* hath giuen him ſoueraigne dominion ouer all, that ſo we might haue good hope, and might boldly put our truſt and confidence in him.

The remedy of all our euils is in Chriſt, if we ſeeke vnto him for ſuccour.

That which is here ſpokẽ to Chriſt, is rather to inſtruct vs then him.

Verſ. 8. *I am the Lord, this is my name; and my glory will I not giue to another, neither my praiſe to grauen Images.*

HEnce wee may gather how great the diſeaſe of incredulitie is, ſeeing the Lord vſeth ſo many repetitions to heale it, as if he could hardly ſatisfie himſelfe therewith: for we are by nature ſo inclined to diſtruſt, that it is vnpoſſible we ſhould beleeue any thing the Lord ſpeakes, vnleſſe he firſt of all mollifies the hardneſſe of our hearts. Beſides that, we fall euer and anon into the ſame euill by our owne heedleſneſſe, if we be not withheld by many perſwaſions. This is the cauſe then why he returnes to confirme that whereof he ſpake before, to wit, that his promiſes might not want their credit and authoritie.

The greatnes of our incredulity noted.

All of vs too much inclined to diſtruſt.

The word *Hu*, is ſometimes a ſubſtantiue, and ſo it is a proper name of God: but I willingly expound it, *This is my name*: that is to ſay, this name, *The Lord, is proper to me in ſuch wiſe, that they ſinne grieuouſly who attribute the ſame to any other.* To be ſhort, by this manner of ſpeech he confirmes all whatſoeuer he hath ſpoken touching the office of Chriſt, and now addes (as you would ſay) a ſeale to the promiſe. As if he ſhould ſay; He that pronounceth theſe things, teſtifies that he is the onely God, and that this name belongs to him, and to none other.

I will not giue.] That is to ſay, I will not ſuffer my glory to be diminiſhed; which muſt needes be, if I ſhould be found either *a lier*, or *inconſtant* in my promiſes. Thus you ſee that hee will performe his promiſes, becauſe he will thereby prouide for the maintaining of his owne glory, leſt the ſame ſhould anie way be impeached. Truly this is a ſingular text; for it teacheth vs that Gods glory ſhines eſpecially in the accompliſhment and fulfilling of his promiſes: whence we alſo gather a wonderfull confirmation of our faith; to wit, that the Lord will neuer faile nor be wanting in his promiſe; neither can any thing hinder or ſtay the courſe of that which he hath once determined. But becauſe Satan labours by all meanes to *obſcure and darken this glory of God, and to giue it either to falſe gods, or to men*, therefore he proteſts *that he cannot indure* to be taken for a falſifier of his promiſes.

Gods glory ſhines principally in the performance of his promiſes.

The oppoſition which is between the onely God, and idols, is to be referred to the circumſtance of the time: for if God had not deliuered his people, the infidels might haue boaſted, as if the true religion had been built vpon a ſandie foundation. His meaning is therefore, that he will not ſuffer the wicked to make their triumphs ouer the Churches ruin. And wherefore is it, I pray you, that God hath hitherunto ſpared vs, and hath to this day dealt ſo fauourably with vs? Euen becauſe his Goſpell ſhould not bee expoſed to the horrible blaſphemies of the Papiſts. Hence let vs gather a generall doctrine then, to wit, that the Lord will haue his *glory* wholly reſerued vnto himſelfe; for he will maintaine and defend it euery way to the vtmoſt: ſhewing that hee is exceeeding iealous of it, when he cannot abide *that the leaſt iot thereof* ſhould bee taken from him to bee giuen to creatures.

The reaſon why God hath ſpared vs that profeſſe the true religion.

Verſ. 9. *Behold, the former things are come to paſſe, and new things I doe declare: before they come forth, I tell you of them.*

NOw he calles to mind the *former propheeies*, by the accompliſhment wereof, he ſhewes he ought to be beleeued for the time to come: for our former knowledge and experience of Gods goodneſſe, is of great vſe to confirme vs for heereafter. It is as much then as if he ſhould haue ſaid; I haue ſpoken often to your fathers, and you know that nothing hath failed of that which I haue promiſed, but all *is come to paſſe*: and yet when I tell you of things to come, you will not credit me. The experience you haue had touching things paſt, cannot moue you; neither can it prouoke you to forſake your infidelitie. This is the vſe then which we ſhould make in remembring Gods former benefits, that our ſaluation being for a time hid vnder hope, wee may ſticke to his word and promiſe, and may be the better confirmed in it all the daies of our life.

Our experience of Gods former mercies ought to confirme vs for the time to come.

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Note.

By the pronoune *Behold*, hee euidently ſhews, that they knew by the effects that God neuer deceiued them that truſted in him, nor neuer ſpake any thing by his Prophets in vaine; for his truth was apparant to all, by infallible ſignes and tokens.

Before they come forth.] By this clauſe he ſeparates God from idols, becauſe it is he onely which knowes and foretels things to come: but idols know nothing at all. Now although the gods of the Gentiles often times gaue them anſwers when they ſought vnto them, yet we haue told you in the former Chapter, that ſuch anſwers were either falſe or ambiguous. For thoſe ỹ depended vpon ſuch toies, haue for the moſt part bin groſly deceiued, as they were wel worthy: and if any ſucceſſe at the firſt hath enſued, yet they were thereby

Chap. 41. 22, 23.

The Gentiles iustly punished by the delusions of Satan in their idols.

plunged the more deeply into eternal perdition. And no doubt it fell out by Gods iust iudgement, that Satan by such delusiõs so bewitched thẽ. But the propheties had another drift, for the Church was by them either brought to repentance, to her great profit and saluation; or else was thereby fortified with good hope, to the end shee might not sinke vnder the weight of her afflictions. This remaines sure then, to wit, that *the euent* declares the truth of that which God hath foretold, for hee orders and gouernes all things by his prouidence.

Vers. 10. *Sing vnto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth: yee that goe downe to the sea, and all that is therein: the Iles and the inhabitants thereof.*

What effect Gods benefits should haue in vs.

NOw he exhorts the people to thanksgiuing: for Gods benefits should euer haue this effect in vs, namely, that the remembrance of them should stirre vs vp to *sing his praises*. Besides, in that he sets their deliuerance before their eies by this exhortation,

This exhortation to the praising of God, a further confirmation of the former promises.

he further confirmes the promises whereof he hath spoken: for his drift is to be well obserued; to wit, that the faithfull ought not to be dismayed nor ouerwhelmed with sorrow, though they were in euill case, but to frame their minds to a *ioyfull expectation* of their redemption, and hence forwards to giue themselues to sing the praises of the Lord.

The matter of this song.

The matter of this song is, that Christ was reuealed and sent into the world of his Father, to susteine the miseries of his Church, and to restore her to her perfect estate; yea in a maner to renue the whole world. Now the more difficult the matter was to be beleeued, the more desirous the Prophet was to remoue all obstacles out of their way, that he might the better imprint these p opheties in

The reason of this exhortation.

their minds. And no maruell though he labors thus to awaken them, seeing they were brought into extreame neede, and were left as men destitute of any hope of recouerie. The only sight of present things was sufficient to shake their faith, yea and to thinke that all things which the Prophets had foretold were but vaine & ridiculous. He comes in now therefore with this *exhortation*, that in so desperate an estate they might be of good cheere, and might boldly rest vpon the certaintie of these promises.

What the Prophet meanes by a new song.

By *a new song*, he meanes an excellent, an exquisit, an elegant, and no common song, but such a one as should rauish mens minds by mentioning the wonderfull goodnes of God, the like whereof was neuer seene before, in which sense this word is taken, Psal.

New, is here opposed to that which is common and ordinarie.

33. 3. 96. 1. for *new* is opposed heere to that which is common. And thus the infinit mercie of God, which should be manifested in Christ, is extolled in this place, by whose meanes it fell out that this mercie of God was celebrated with wonderfull praises. Hence we learne that the more God hath inriched any of vs with the abundance of his graces, the more should we giue our selues to *sing his praises*. I grant that all are bound to do it: for what is he vpon whom the necessitie of this dutie is not strictly to be imposed? But those that haue bin inriched with the greatest benefits ought also to publish them with the greater magnificence. Seeing that God then hath bin pleased in Christ to set open vnto vs the fountaine of all blessings, and hath vnfolded his hidden spirituall treasures to all, is it any maruell if he require vs to offer vnto him a *new* and excellent sacrifice of praise? But wee are to note, that this song can not be sung by any man that is vnregenerate, for it must come from the deepest ground of the heart. The holy Ghost must be the inditer and inspirer therefore of these praises, or else they can not be acceptable. Moreouer, he not only exhorts one or two to this dutie, but *all nations* of the earth, because Christ is appointed a Sauiour to all.

A Lesson.

In Christ God hath set open to vs the fountaine of all his blessings, &c.

None but the regenerate can sing this song.

Vers. 11. *Let the wildernes and the cities thereof lift vp* their voyce, *the townes that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rocks sing: let them shout from the top of the mountaines.*

ALthough the Prophet comprehends all the parts of the world, yet he mentions none but such as were best knowne of the Iewes. For Iudea had the Sea lying of the West side, and the desert of Arabia lying on the East: and where he speakes of the pauilions of *Kedar*, of the *wildernes*, and *rocks*, he meanes Arabia; but it is by a figure called Synecdoche, so as vnder these words he also comprehends all the East: it is as much then as if he had said, *From the sunne rising, to the going downe thereof*, these *praises* shal sound forth, because the Lord shall now be worshipped in euery place, whereas before he was only knowne in Iewry. Things shall be changed therefore, for this *song* shall be heard to the vtmost ends of the world.

The figure Synecdoche.

He mentions the *townes of Kedar*, because they knew that the Arabian Scenites dwelt in tents. But in speaking of the *wildernes*, he names the *Cities*: I note then, that he meanes not only that great desert which was between Iudea and Arabia, but the countrie lying beyond, which partly was esteemed as bordering vpon it; as also the plaines lying beyond the Mounts are called *Mountaines*, for the common people are so intent vpon that which is next vnto them, that they think things farre remote, resemble it. But our Prophet in the meane while exalts and sets forth the grace of God, in that it should extend it selfe to sauage and wilde people, whose crueltie and barbaritie was sufficientlie knowne.

Vers. 12. *Let them giue glorie to the Lord, and declare his praises in the Ilands.*

HE now shewes what this *shouting* shall be, Heuen a celebrating of *Gods praises*, in regard

gard his goodneſſe and bountie ſhall be felt in all places. Thus he commands then that this redemption bee ſung forth with one voice, ſeeing the fruit thereof ſhould be common to all nations. By this we are admoniſhed to *ſhout* with ardent affection at this day, when we ſing the praiſes of God, that we for our parts may be inflamed, and may alſo ſet others on fire to doe the like by our example. For ſuch as haue taſted and felt how gracious God is indeed, cannot mutter them forth betweene their teeth; neither will they be luke warme, nor ſing them alone by themſelues onely.

Verſ. 13. *The Lord ſhall goe forth as a giant: he ſhall ſtirre vp his courage like a man of warre: hee ſhall ſhout and cry; and ſhall preuaile againſt his enemies.*

THat which our Prophet addes now, ſerues to ouercome the temptations of the faithfull: for hee attributes *ſtrength and force* vnto God, to teach them that his ſuccour is ſufficient for their ſafetie. In aduerſitie we are perplexed, becauſe wee ſtand in doubt whether Gods power will be ſtrong enough for our defence; but then chiefly, when in hiding his eies from vs, he ſeemes as it were to reiect our praiers. For this cauſe the Prophet is carefull to ſet forth the power of God in ſuch excellent termes, that all might learne quietly and boldlie to reſt themſelues vpon him.

Wherefore the Prophet ſets forth Gods power with ſuch elegancie.

The *going forth* whereof he ſpeakes, is to be taken figuratiuely: for God ſeemed *to be hid* in the time wherein he ſuffered his people to be oppreſſed and afflicted, without any appearance of ſuccour: this clauſe then ſignifies as much as to *goe forth to the reſcue*; which alſo is confirmed by the words following. For in that he attributes *courage* vnto God, who like *a man of warre* ruſheth vpon his enemies; they are ſimilitudes taken from humane affections. Whence we learne what force there is in his helpe, and yet his power without theſe borrowed ſpeeches, would moue vs little or nothing. He applies himſelfe therefore in theſe things to our capacities, as we haue told you before in many other places, that we might know with what affection he bends himſelfe to protect vs; with how great diſcontent he indures the affliction and oppreſſion of the faithfull: and in the third place, how *terrible his wrath is*, as oft as hee once *prepares himſelfe to the fight*.

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These prophecies muſt be referred to the circumſtance of the time.

But the circumſtance of the time is alwaies to be noted, vnto which the Prophet doubtleſſe had a ſpecial regard; & theſe prophecies muſt alſo be applied thereunto: for as long as the rage of the enemies increaſed, and as long as they triumphed ouer the afflicted people of God, the faithfull were to conſider of things farre aboue that which they ſaw with their eies, and to bee reſolued that God was ſtrong enough to ſubdue all their enemies, and to deliuer them out of their hands. Neither was it ſufficient that their perplexed thoughts ſhould onely be quieted by this promiſe, during the time of the captiuitie; but it was alſo needefull that it ſhould continue euen vntill the comming of Chriſt: for they were conſtrained from time to time to reſiſt many incumbrances, as it appeares by the hiſtories.

Verſ. 14. *I haue a long time holden my peace: I haue been ſtill, and refrained my ſelfe:* now *will I cry like a trauailing Woman: I will deſtroy and deuoure at once.*

THe Prophet labors to preuent the temptations which are wont to put vs to much trouble, whileſt God defers his helpe. We are then tempted with impatientie, and thinke all his promiſes vaine. For we iudge it a thing vnſeemly for God *to be ſilent*, and to ſleepe, as you would ſay, when the enemie *awakes*, and aduanceth himſelfe; in a word, that hee ſhould be cold, whileſt they be inflamed with rage to hurt; and to winke at their iniquities, whileſt they ouerflow in all manner of cruelties.

The Prophet minded therefore to ſuſtaine and cheere vp the hearts of the afflicted, which were ouer loden with ſorrowes, and to perſwade them that God had not forſaken them, albeit euery thing ſeemed to threaten their ouerthrow.

Hee doth of ſet purpoſe expreſſe theſe words, *a long time*, leſt ſo tedious a languiſhing ſhould cauſe them to faint: for in regard they had been vexed with warre vpon warre continually after the death of *Iehoſhaphat*, it was hard for them to paſſe ſeuentie yeeres more, being in captiuitie, out of their owne Countrie. But their calamities were not yet an end, and therefore it was needefull they ſhould bee wiſely admoniſhed, that howſoeuer God did not by and by ſuccour them, yet they ſhould loſe nothing by this delay, if ſo bee they waited with patience. Thus alſo hee rebukes the vnbeleeuers, who gaue themſelues to all diſorder by abuſing this patience of God; who proteſts that he wanted not power, though hee contained himſelfe in *ſilence*.

Like a woman trauailing.] By this ſimilitude he ſets forth Gods wonderfull tender affection and ardent loue: for he compares him to the mothers wonderfull ardent loue towards her onely ſon, albeit ſhe hath brought him forth with extreme ſorrowes. One would thinke theſe things ſhould agree nothing at all vnto God: but the vehement loue hee beares vs can no way be expreſſed, but vnder ſuch borrowed ſpeeches. Hee is conſtrained to vſe ſuch ſimilitudes then, as are familiarly knowne, to make vs conceiue that of which we are ignorant: for his loue farre exceedes ours; that is to ſay, it is perfect and entire. And albeit his loue ſurpaſſeth all humane affections, yet there is no exceſſe therein.

No exceſſe in Gods loue.

Note alſo, that he meant to ſhew, that this deliuerance of the people ſhould reſemble *a birth*, to teach the Iewes that their graue was

as a *trouble* vnto them, that ſo they might conceiue hope of ſaluation, euen in the midſt of corruption. Albeit then that he was able to bring forth a new Church without paine *or trauaile*, yet to the end his grace might the better appeare in ſuch a *birth*, it is not without cauſe that he attributes the *cry of a trauailing woman* vnto him. But for as much as this ſimilitude might diminiſh ſomewhat of Gods power and maieſtie, the Prophet ioines the other affection withall: for touching his loue, hee reſembles a mother; but touching his force and power, he is like a lion.

God as touching his loue, reſembles a mother: but as touching his power, a lion.

Verſ. 15. *I will make waſte mountaines and hilles, and dry vp all their hearbs: and I will make the floods Ilands, and I will dry vp the pooles.*

THe Prophet meanes that all the munitions which animated the wicked to retaine theſe poore captiues, could not hinder the Lord from ſetting them at libertie. It was needfull this ſhould be added to the former. For when we ſee the wicked armed (in a manner) with inuincible power, wee then tremble, and haue much a doe to apprehend Gods power, ſo farre as to continue ſtedfaſt in our confidence. *Iſaiah* therefore inſiſts vpon this point, ſignifying that neither men nor munitions can reſiſt the Lord, when he is minded to deliuer his choſen. In a word, hee ſhewes that the change ſhall bee ſuch, that thoſe who were the ſtrongeſt before, ſhall be broken to peeces, and ſhall gaine nothing by reſiſting of him. This I take to be the natiue ſenſe of theſe words; ſo that it is needleſſe to ſtand deſcanting ſubtilly vpon them any longer, as ſome do, who expounding theſe things allegorically, thinke that *mountaines* and *hilles* ſignifie Cities; *hearbs*, the men which dwell in them. But why ſhould we follow ſuch ſophiſtries, ſeeing the Prophet onely ſhewes that God is powerfull enough to fulfill his promiſes, and to deliuer his Church? becauſe hee can eaſilie ſurmount all ſtumbling blockes that ſhall be laid before him. This ſentence therefore anſwers to other propheeies which we haue ſeene heretofore, where *Iſaiah* teacheth, that Gods power is not tied to ſecond cauſes, when he is determined to preuent the enemies of their purpoſe; but goes thorow with his worke after a wonderful faſhion, and breakes downe all impediments which ſeemed to ſhut vp his paſſage.

Gods power not tied to ſecõd cauſes.

Verſ. 16. *And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not*, and *leade them by paths that they haue not knowne: I will make darkneſſe light before them, and crooked things ſtraight. Theſe things will I doe vnto them, and not forſake them.*

HAuing ſhewed that the force of the enemie could not hinder God from deliuering his people, he goes on with that conſolation which hee touched in the 13. and 14. verſes. Now he calles them *blind*, which know not what way to turne them, nor which way to runne, by reaſon things goe ſo croſſe and aukward with them. In a word, ſuch as ſee no iſſue, but bottomleſſe gulphes ready on all ſides to ſwallow them vp: for euen as the way ſeemes plaine and ſmooth whileſt things doe indifferently proſper; ſo in aduerſitie, (but eſpecially when all is darkened with ſorrow, when all hope is gone, and death it ſelfe preſſeth hard vpon vs) wee ſtand then like amazed creatures. The Prophet teacheth therefore, that when all things are deſperate, then, euen then is the time and houre in which wee ſhould moſt of all expect ſuccour and helpe from the Lord.

Who they be that the Prophet calles blind.

The time in which wee ought chiefly to expect help from God.

It is ſometimes alſo very requiſite that we bee brought into ſtraits, ſo as no euaſion be left vs, that we be ſometimes put to our ſhifts, and preſſed on euery ſide: yea, to be left *ſtarke blind* in regard of the ſight of any outward meanes. Why ſo? That we may learne to depend vpon the onely helpe of God, and to reſt our ſelues quietly in him. For as long as we can ſee any leaning ſtocke, or are able to catch hold of any ſtay, bee it neuer ſo little, vpon that we ſet our whole hearts: and thus it comes to paſſe that wee are carried hither and thither, and vtterly neglect the remembrance of Gods wonted fauour.

It is good for vs ſometimes to be brought into ſtraits.

Would we be aſſiſted and ſuccoured then in our aduerſities? Truly wee muſt content our ſelues to be *blind* then: that is to ſay, we muſt turne our eies from beholding things preſent, and keepe our reaſon ſhort, that we may onely reſt vpon Gods free promiſes. I grant this *blindneſſe* will not be very pleaſing to vs, and that therein the imbecillitie of our iudgements may be therein eaſilie diſcerned; yet ought wee not therefore to flee it much, if we wiſelie conſider the fruit that redounds to vs by it. For is it not better to be *blind*, and to bee led by Gods hand, then to ſee with both eies, and to plunge our ſelues into vnauoidable dangers? He confirmes this, in promiſing to turne *darkneſſe into light*. Be it then that we perceiue not ſo much as one ſparkle of light in our afflictions, yet muſt wee not deſpaire of Gods helpe; but vſe it rather as a meanes to truſt more confidently in Gods promiſes then euer we did before: *for God will eaſilie change our darkneſſe into light*, hee will ſoone make *crooked things ſtreight*, and leade vs in the way, that we may boldly walke therein without ſtumbling. But in the meane while, let vs know, that theſe things are onely promiſed to the faithfull that put themſelues into Gods cuſtodie, and are contented to be gouerned by him: in a word, to ſuch as being acquainted with their owne dimneſſe of ſight, doe willingly content themſelues to follow ſuch a leader, waiting in the darkneſſe of their affliction, for the light of his countenance; for to ſuch onely hee reacheth forth his hand. Let vs cleaue faſt therefore to his promiſes, and not imitate the wiſe men of this world, who will walke by their own light whether he will or not, or will wander in vnlawfull deliberations.

Verſ. 17.

Verſ. 17. *They ſhall be turned back: they ſhall be greatly aſhamed that truſt in grauen Images, and ſay to the molten Images, Yee are our Gods.*

BY this we euidentlie ſee to whom the former doctrine belonged: for now he diſtinguiſheth Gods ſeruants from Idolaters. As if he ſhould ſay, *The Lord will leade his people*, but in the meane while thoſe that *truſt in grauen Images ſhall be aſhamed*. As if he ſhould ſay, the choice is here ſet before you, either by grace to be ſaued, or miſerablie to periſh. For all ſuch as put their confidence in Idols ſhall ſurely periſh: but thoſe that reſt vpon Gods word and promiſe ſhall aſſuredly be ſaued. I grant they muſt ſuffer many and tedious afflictions, yet *they ſhall not be aſhamed* nor confounded: for God in the end will ſhew that this difference which he puts betweene them that truſt in him, and thoſe that truſt in Idols was not in vaine.

Two marks to diſcerne Idolaters by.

Moreouer, it is very certaine that by the two marks which he here expreſſeth, all Idolaters are meant, who fix their hope in any thing but in God. For albeit they bow not before their Idols, yet in attributing vnto them I know not what diuinitie, they take that glorie from the only true God which to him belongs: for the principall part of Gods ſeruice ſtands in faith and prayer, both which the Prophet expreſſeth in this place. But it may be demanded, whether they were ſo blockiſh as to ſay to a block, *Thou art my God*. For the moſt ſuperſtitious haue confeſſed that God was in heauen; neither haue they bin ſo groſſe as to attribute a diuine nature directly to wood or ſtone: it ſeemes therefore that *Iſaiah* makes them more ſottiſh then they are. I anſwere, that all Idolaters attribute that power to their *Images* which belongs to God; albeit they acknowledge him to be in heauen: for when they trot ſo faſt after their puppets and Idols, to whom they make and pay their vowes, doe we not euidentlie perceiue that they giue that to them which only appertaines to God? It is in vaine then that they labour to colour and cloake brutiſhnes, for they make gods of wood and ſtone, and in thus doing offer extreame violence to the Lord. The Prophet therefore hath not ouerſhot himſelfe, neither hath he framed a falſe accuſation againſt Idolaters, becauſe *their owne words* doe ſufficientlie teſtifie the ſame to their faces, when they call their *Idols* and *Images*, *gods*. Yea let it be granted that they be not heard to pronounce any ſuch words, yet their madnes may eaſily be diſcerned, in that they thinke God can neither heare, nor help them, vnleſſe they proſtrate themſelues before a ſenſeleſſe ſtock, and mumble vp a certaine ſtint of prayers before it. Now theſe things are thus vttered, to let all know, that none can be ſaued, but he which ſhall truſt in God only.

Queſt.

Anſ.

All Idolaters attribute that to Idols, which belongs to God.

Verſ. 18. *Heare, yee deafe: and yee blinde regard, that yee may ſee.*

HE takes *blinde* and *deafe* here in a contrarie ſenſe to that in the ſixteenth verſe, where by this ſimilitude he noted out thoſe who were ſo deſtitute of counſell, and ouerwhelmed with the weight of afflictions, that it *deprined them of all ſight*. For by *blind* in this place he meanes ſuch as did *ſhut their eies* againſt the cleare light, and would take no knowledge of Gods works. By *deafe*, thoſe that *vvould not heare*, but rather delighted to lie ſnorting in the filthines of their ignorance. He condemnes here therefore the blindnes of the Iewes, or rather of all men, as I take it. For although it be true that he reprocheth the Iewes to be *blind* euen in ſeeing, and *deafe* whileſt they heard: yet this alſo doth in part belong to the Gentiles, to whom he manifeſted himſelfe by the creatures, ingraued in their minds and conſciences the knowledge of himſelfe, and to whom alſo he had and ſhould make knowne his admirable works.

Blind.

Deafe.

A generall blindnes and deafnes gone ouer all men.

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In that he calles for audience then, he giues them to vnderſtand, that the only cauſe which hinders them from comprehending Gods truth and power, is their owne *deafnes, and blindnes*, mixed with a malicious vnthankfulnes. For he is not wanting in giuing them ſufficient teſtimonies of his power, neither is he negligent in teaching them familiarly enough: but the fault is in themſelues, in that they applied not their hearts to inſtruction, nor to meditate in his word: no, nor yet to behold his wonderfull works, ſo as euery one wittingly ſhut their eies: and therfore the Prophet ſhewes that all the fault reſted in themſelues if they ſaw not Gods power.

Verſ. 19. *Who is blind but my ſeruant? or deafe as my meſſenger that I ſent? who is blinde as the perfect, and blinde as the Lords ſeruant?*

ALl expoſitors almoſt doe expound this verſe, as if *Iſaiah* mentioned the outrages which the wicked are wont to belch out againſt the Prophets. For they caſt the ſeruants of the Lord in the teeth with the things which they haue reproued and condemned, which ſuch companions as they can not indure. As if they ſhould ſay, Who are they, I pray thee, whom thou accuſeſt of *blindnes*, and who are they thou calleſt *deafe*? Take it hardly to thy ſelfe. We know none ſo *blinde* as thou art. They thinke then, that it is as much as if the Lord complained thus of the Iewes, I ſee very well that you eſteeme my Prophets for no better then *blinde* and *deafe*. But we ſhall by and by ſee that this interpretation ſutes nothing at all with the ſcope of the text: for the Prophet ſhewes afterwards why he calles them *blind*, to wit, becauſe *they ſaw many things, but kept them not*. Now this can not any way agree to the Prophets, let vs therfore follow the pure and natiue ſenſe.

The miſinterpretation of this place.

Iſaiah before condemned all men of blindnes, but the Iewes eſpeciallie, becauſe they inioyed thoſe meanes whereby they might haue a clearer ſight then any others: for they had not only that glimmering, which was cõmon to all nations, but had alſo the word ſounding

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The right interpretation

ſounding in their eares, by which the Lord fully manifeſted himſelfe vnto them. Though the whole world beſides then was blind, yet theſe ſhould haue had *eies* to ſee and know the Lord, in regard they had the doctrine, as a burning lampe to giue light vnto them. Beſides, hee ſpeakes to theſe afterwards in the ſixtie. Chapter, Riſe vp Ieruſalem, and bee bright, for the darknes ſhall couer the whole earth, but the Lord ſhall giue thee light. Becauſe the Iewes then were *blind* in ſo cleere light, therefore he taxeth them by this particular reprehenſion. As if hee ſhould ſay; I ſtriue but in vaine againſt thoſe which are far off from mee, neither doe I much maruell at their blindneſſe; but this is ſtrange, that ſuch a thing ſhould befall my *ſeruants*, who haue the cleere light ſhining before their eies. I am as one aſtoniſhed to ſee them *deafe*, who haue the word continually ſounding in their eares. The things I teach them are ſo plaine and euident, that the very *blind* and *deafe* may in a manner vnderſtand them: but alas! I ſpeake to them in vaine; for I thinke there is not a more brutiſh and ſottiſh people to bee found. To be ſhort, whereas they ſhould haue had the quickeſt ſenſe of *hearing* and *ſeeing*, they were the worſt of all.

Whom I ſent.] *Iſaiah* deſcends by degrees
1 from all men in generall, to the Iewes in par-
2 ticular; then to the Prieſts, which were the
3 lights of the world as it were: for it was their
The Prieſts. office to interpret the Law, to walke before others in a good example of life, and to ſhew vnto them the high way to heauen. Their lippes, ye know, were to preſerue knowledge, and at their mouth men were to ſeeke it: Mal. 2.7. The Prophet therefore complaines, that thoſe who ſhould bee *lights* and *guides* to others, were themſelues as blinde as the reſt.

Some refer the word *ſeruant*, to *Iſaiah*: others, to Chriſt; and thinke that both were condemned of blindneſſe. But this comes nothing neere the Prophets drift: for his meaning is, by way of compariſon to amplifie the former complaint made, touching the blindneſſe of the Iewes. Their fault was much greater then that of other nations: but the Prieſts were yet in the greateſt fault of all, who were their leaders and guides. Let vs know then, that by how much the more wee come neere vnto God, and the higher hee ſhall haue aduanced vs in dignitie aboue others, the leſſe ſhall our excuſe be.

To the ſame purpoſe he calles them *perfect*; which indeede ſhould haue been ſo: for hee puts them in minde by this reproch, of that *perfection* from whence they were fallen by ſo vnworthy a reuolt, and thereby had ſhamefully prophaned that holy and glorious name of their God. For ſeeing he gaue them a *perfect rule* of righteouſneſſe to direct them both in life and doctrine, it ſhould haue been their parts not to haue ſwarued an haires bredth from it.

Verſ. 20. *Seeing many things, but thou keepeſt them not: opening the eares, but he heareth not.*

NOw himſelfe expounds what this *blinding* is, which he mentioned before; and he ſhewes it to be twofold. Thus we may perceiue well enough, that he ſpeaks only of the Iewes, who wilfully and malicioufly had choked the heauenly light. The fault will bee double then when they ſhall appeare before Gods iudgement ſeat, if wee ſhut our eies before the cleere light, and ſtop our eares whileſt he vouchſafes to teach vs by his word. I grant the prophane nations are iuſtly left without excuſe: but the Iewes, and others, to whom the Lord ſo many waies manifeſted himſelfe, ſhall bee worthy of a double condemnation, in that they would neither *ſee* nor *heare* God. Let vs feare this iudgement then, who haue ſo many worthy lights and examples ſhining before our eies; for there is a *blinding* eſpied at this day in many, and as great aa *hardening* as was among the Iewes; but the one ſhall bee no more excuſed then the other.

What vſe we are to make of the former doctrin.

Verſ. 12. *The Lord is willing for his righteouſneſſe ſake*, that *he may magnifie the Law, and exalt it.*

THat he might amplifie the offence of the Iewes, hee now ſhewes that it was not Gods fault that they were depriued of good daies. Hee ſaid before, that the miſeries and calamities which they indured, were the puniſhments of their wilfull & obſtinate blindneſſe. Now, to fill vp the meaſure of their iniquitie, he addes that by their obſtinacie they had reiected all reliefe. This place is diuerſly expounded. Some reade; The Lord would haue it ſo: others, He is gracious. But I haue tranſlated, *The Lord is willing*: that is to ſay, *is inclined to deliuer his people, to magnifie his law, and to exalt his iuſtice.* And thus God yeeldes the reaſon why he is ready to ſuccour the vnworthy; to wit, becauſe he is willing that his *glory* may be aduanced in their *ſaluation*, that his *iuſtice* by this meanes may alſo appeare, and that his *law* might floriſh in her perfect ſtrength. Now in that the Iewes were in ſuch a diſtreſſed eſtate, it was becauſe they wittingly loued darkneſſe rather then light, and to heape ſorrowes vpon their owne heads, rather then to obey God: for had not this come betweene, it was his onely deſire to haue inriched them, and to haue aduanced them.

This verſe diuerſly expounded. See more in the ſequell.

Some expound it thus; The Lord is as willing to magnifie his law, and to ſhew his iuſtice in chaſtiſing the Iewes, as hee was to threaten them by it: and thus they refer the word *righteouſneſſe*, to the puniſhments and plagues wherewith this people were viſited of God. Others tranſlate, For my righteouſneſſe ſake: and ſo refer it to Chriſt; but they deceiue themſelues in the word *Tſidko*, for doubtleſſe the Prophet ſpeakes of righteouſneſſe, minding to ſhew that the Lord was willing to exalt the truth of his promiſes, and the

the ſignes of his righteouſneſſe in the conſeruation of the Iewes: if they had not ſhewed themſelues vnworthy of ſo great a benefit by their owne vnthankfulneſſe. Others thinke that the Lord is heere excuſed, in regard it ſeemed hee ſuffered his truth to faile, when his choſen people were expoſed to ſo manie calamities; and that the Prophet meant to preuent this ſlander, by telling them that they were not thus ſcattered & made a pray, becauſe the Lord tooke any *delight* therein, but becauſe he reſpected his *iuſtice* aboue all things. But for my part, I expound it ſimply in this ſenſe, *that the Lord to exalt his Law, was readie to doe his people good, that his glory and iuſtice might ſhine therein: but that the people depriued themſelues of ſuch a bleſſing, and thus made their caſe deſperate by their owne obſtinacie.*

The ſenſe according to Maſter Caluins iudgement.

From hence alſo wee may gather, for what cauſe the Lord adornes his Church with ſo many of his fauours; euen that hee might *magnifie his Law*, and bring men to the ſeruice of his Maieſtie, that ſo his truth might ſhine more and more.

The cauſe why the Lord adornes his Church with ſo many fauors.

When the Prophet ſaith that the Lord is *willing*; it is euident that he findes no cauſe out of himſelfe: but yet he expreſſeth it further, in adding *for his righteouſneſſe ſake*: for he excludes all that men bring of their owne; neither can hee be moued to doe good, but becauſe he is iuſt. Adde alſo, that no dignitie or worthineſſe is to be found in any man: but there was a ſpeciall reaſon of this, in reſpect of the Iewes, whom hee had vouchſafed to adopt among the reſt.

Verſ. 22. *But this people is robbed and ſpoiled, and ſhall be all ſnared in dungeons, and they ſhall be hid in priſon houſes, they ſhall be for a pray, and none ſhall deliuer: a ſpoile, and none ſhall ſay, Reſtore.*

NOw *Iſaiah* ſhewes, that the people are miſerable, and appointed to deſtruction by their owne folly, becauſe they reiected God, who otherwiſe was readie to haue ſuecoured them, but they, like deſperate perſons reiected all remedies, and ſought their owne ouerthrow. He ſo excuſeth the Lord then that he vehemently reproues the people, who vnkindly did caſt off the Lord, and turned his grace into wantonnes. And yet, as I haue ſaid alreadie, this is not ſaid ſo much to iuſtifie God, as bitterlie to complaine of this nation, who had ſworne to procure their owne ruine, ſeeing they wilfully threw themſelues into ſundrie calamities. If we ſee the Church ſcattered and deformed at this day, let vs blame our ſinnes, for we thereby would not ſuffer the Lord any longer to continue his louing kindnes towards vs.

The cauſe of the Churches deformitie.

Some tranſlate the coniunction copulatiue *Vau*, Wherefore, which I haue rather tranſlated *But*, for it is oppoſed to the willingnes wherewith the Lord was inclined to defend his people, if themſelues had not hindred the ſame. I haue turned the verb *To bind* into the futuretence: for the Prophet ſpeakes of the people which ſhould be led captiue. As touching the word *Baſurim*, I thinke they are here two dictions, ſignifying *in the caues*; for if they ſhould be taken for yong men, it will not agree with the ſcope of the text.

They ſhall be ſpoiled.] Thoſe who interpret this of all men generallie, of whom Chriſt only is the Sauiour, come nothing neere the Prophets meaning: for he ſimplie affirmes that the people ſhall *periſh*, without hope of deliuerance, becauſe they reiected Gods grace. Hence let vs gather what ſhall vndoubtedlie befall vs, if we forthwith receiue not Gods mercie whileſt it is offered: truly we ſhall deſerue to be deſtituted of all ſuccour, and to periſh miſerablie, being made a *ſpoile* and a *pray*.

What it is to reiect grace being offred.

Verſ. 23. *Who among you ſhall hearken to this, and take heed, and heare, for afterwards.*

Iſaiah goes on with the ſame argument, for he ſaith, that the Iewes are and ſhall be ſo beſotted, that they ſhall ſee nothing, though they be admoniſhed. In the next place he ſpeakes directly to them, and taxeth their dulnes, that could neither conceiue nor know any thing touching Gods iudgements, which yet were ſo manifeſt, whereas in all likelihood they ought to haue been beſt inſtructed and taught of all others.

For afterwards.] That is to ſay, who being at the laſt tamed by afflictions, ſhall come againe to bethinke themſelues, though very late. We ſee then how this admiration *who among you* aggrauates their crime and obſtinacie, when he ſaith, they ſhould be euer vnteachable. In the meane while let vs learne what vſe to make of Gods threatnings and chaſtiſements: for the Lord neither *reproues* nor *corrects* vs for our ſinnes as if he delighted in taking vengeance, or required any recompence, but that wee ſhould ſtand vpon our gard *for the time to come*.

To heare for afterwards.

The vſe we ought to make of Gods reprehenſions and corrections.

Verſ. 24. *Who gaue Iaakob for a ſpoile, and Iſraell to the robbers? did not the Lord, becauſe wee haue ſinned againſt him? for they would not walke in his ways, neither be obedient to his law.*

SEe wherefore *Iſaiah* complaines, that the Iewes tooke nothing to heart; for when they ſuffred, they thought it came to paſſe by chance, and that they wanted the power to make reſiſtance, which their fathers had before them, through the want whereof they were ouercome by their enemies. In a word, they looked ſo much to outward cauſes, that they neglected to thinke vpon the Prophets threatnings; neither regarded they Gods iudgements. He is faine therefore to ſummon them *before Gods heauenly throne*, to proue vnto them, that he was the author of their miſeries: for it was vnpoſſible to perſwade them that their corrections proceeded from God, who puniſhed them for their offences. And

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may not we say the like of the people of this age? Euery one is content in generall termes to confesse that God is the author of all things: but come to particulars, men are ashamed to acknowledge that this & that crosse proceedes from his hand. Why so? Because their mindes are distracted with many thoughts, and being forestalled with this opinion of fortune, they turne their mindes rather to this or that, then to the Lord. *Isaiah* shewes then that the *sinnes* of the people are the cause of such a ruin, and that the Lord is iust in bringing the same vpon them: according also as *Moses* had testified; How should a thousand haue fled at the sight of one, if their strong God had not sold them, and if the Lord had not shut them vp? Deut.32.30.

We wonder why God afflicts vs, but we neuer wonder at our sinnes which are the cause of them.

Wee wonder to see things fall out euerie day contrary to our expectation; and in the meane while, neuer consider the fault to bee in our selues. We must therefore be brought vnto the consideration heereof by force of armes, as it were: it is needfull therefore that this doctrine should bee oft pressed vpon vs.

God takes no pleasure in our afflictions.

Now to the end they might not charge God with crueltie, the Prophet addes, that it came *iustly to passe*: for he snatched not vp the rod rashly, but that necessitie constraines him thereunto; neither takes he pleasure in our afflictions.

Wee are to obserue two distinct things here then. First, that no aduersitie happens but by *Gods prouidence*, lest wee should imagin that things fall out *by chance*, or by some outward cause. Secondly, that no euill comes vpon vs *vniustly*, because we haue first prouoked God to chastise vs for our *sinnes* committed against him. It is in vaine for men to accuse God then of any hard measure; for wee must acknowledge his iust iudgements in the chastisement which are worthily befallen vs.

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When he saith, *they would not walke in his waies*, hee further amplifies the fault of the Iewes, but he changeth the *person*; for in the former member hee put himselfe in amongst the rest, because hee was one of the same bodie, and therefore confessed his faults. Not that hee resembled the common people in anie leaud behauiour; or that he approued of their wickednesses, but it was vnpossible in so great an heape of vices, that he should be vtterly vntainted with some infection and contagion thereof, with the rest of the parts of the body. Therefore in as much as there was great difference betweene him and others, he *changeth the person*, and ads that *they* would not, thereby shewing, that so foule a rebellion displeased him: so as hee could neither winke at it, nor consent vnto it. For he speaks not here of pettie offences, but of a *contempt* and renouncing of God; in regard that they brake out into pride, after they had shaken off his yoke. This is the cause why *Isaiah* in the second place puts himselfe out of the number.

The reason why the Prophet first matcheth himselfe with the multitude, and yet afterward exempts himselfe.

Now if these things fell out iustly vpon the Iewes, let vs know that the like hangs ouer our heads, and will bee inflicted vpon the whole world, if being admonished, we repent not: for we see how gratiously the Lord calles vs to him, how many waies hee manifests his good will towards vs, and with what loue he protests hee is ready to be appeased, though he be iustly offended. But if after so many fauourable summons, and daily experiences of his patience, we still refuse to giue eare, it is most certaine that wee shall feele by wofull experience, that the miserie which befell these, is common to all rebels.

If Gods patience be abused, we shall be sure to smart for it.

Vers. 25. *Therefore hee hath powred vpon him his fierce wrath, and the strength of the battell: and set it on fire round about, and hee knew not; and it burned him vp, * yet hee considered not.*

*Or, but he put it not vpon his heart.

BEcause Gods chastisements which had begun to seize vpon them, and were afterward to be finished in their captiuitie, were very grieuous, therefore the Prophet sets forth the vehemencie of them by these similitudes. For he saith, that the Lord will *powre out his wrath*: as if some thunder-clap should fall vpon their heads with great violence; or as if the *waters* should ouerflow, and make great breaches thorowout a whole Country; as the waters gushed forth hastily in the deluge, after the windowes of heauen were broken, and that the bottels thereof were set open: Gen.6.11. In the next place he vseth an other figure, saying, that God will *gather together his forces to fight vnto his people*, and to assaile them to the vtmost. If any vnderstand this of the enemies which the Lord raised vp against the Iewes, I gainsay him not: for it is certaine that they came forth by Gods iust iudgement. For what was *Nebuchadnezzer* but Gods rod? Yet I rather thinke it should bee taken by way of similitude; to wit, that God *entred by violence as an enemie armed, and powred out his fierce wrath vpon them.*

God hath diuers means to correct.

Now he hath diuers means to *fight* against vs; for hee corrects his people sometimes by plague, sometimes by the sword, sometimes by famin: and therefore I thinke that in this similitude hee comprehends all sorts of afflictions wherewith the Lord smites his people. And if wee thinke them now and then too sharpe, let vs consider the vglinesse of our sinnes, and we shall perceiue that they be not excessiue, neither that he is too seuere and rigorous in punishing vs.

We must set the vglie shape of our sins against the bitter taste of our afflictions.

And he knew it not.] He cries out againe against this grosse sottishnes wherewith ỹ Iews were so possessed, that they could no way feele their misery; neither could they so much as lift vp their eies to heauen, to acknowledge Gods hand which smote them.

But he put it not vpon his heart.] This phrase of speech signifies to consider of a thing seriously and diligently; for if we thought vpon it, and had it *well grauen in our hearts* that God is the Iudge, and that hee iustlie chastiseth vs, wee should forthwith repent. The world at this day is pressed vnder manie calamities; there is almost no corner

The vse of this doctrine belongs to vs.

Gods iudgements abound in euery place, but no man layes ſhē to heart.

ner thereof exempt from his wrath: yet who *knowes it*, or *puts it vpon his heart?* Doe not all band themſelues furiouſlie againſt him with an vntamed rebellion: it is no maruell then if he lay on loade, and *powre out his wrath* on euery ſide vpon the mad world, which deſperately oppoſeth it ſelfe againſt him.

THE XLIII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *But now thus ſaith the Lord that created thee ô Iaakob: and he that formed thee ô Iſrael, Feare not: for I haue redeemed thee: I haue called thee by name, thou art mine.*

WEE can not well tell whether this verſe depends vpon the former, or is ſeparated from it. For the Prophets (whoſe writings are left vnto vs) diſtinguiſhed not their Sermons into certain Chapters, ſo as we ſhould be able to define of euery dayes Sermon. Yet me thinks this doctrine is ioined to the former, ſo as hauing ſhewed himſelfe very angry againſt the Iewes euen to threaten their deſtruction, he meant now to ſweeten this ſharpnes. For the Lord hath euermore reſpect to the faithfull: neither is impietie at any time ſo ouerſpread, but hee reſerues a ſmall remnant which hee keepes from falling into ſuch extremities, becauſe he cares for their ſafetie, and therefore the letter *Vau* ſhould be reſolued into a particle aduerſatiue thus, *Yet*, will the Lord leaue ſome conſolation to the faithfull which ſhall ſucceed. This place therefore is to be well obſerued, for albeit the whole world ſhould conſpire to roote vs out, and that Gods wrath ſhould burne on euery ſide about vs, and that we were brought to deaths dore, *yea* if there doe but two or three of the faithfull remaine, we ought not to deſpaire, ſeeing the Lord ſpeakes thus vnto them, *Feare not.*

How this verſe depēds vpon the former.

The word *now*, which the Prophet here vſeth hath great weight, for it ſignifies that the calamitie is preſent, or very neere at hand. In a word, that it is the time wherin all things ſhall ſeeme deſperate and forlorne; yet euen then, God will neither ceaſe to comfort his elect, nor ſweetly to aſſwage their ſorrowes, that ſo in the greateſt of their extremities they may haue a firme and an inuincible faith. Hereunto appertaine theſe Titles of *Creator*, and *Former*, without which theſe propheſies would haue bin vtterlie vneffectuall. Now we may gather from other places, that the Lord ſpeakes not here of that generall *creation* which is common to vs with other men, when we are borne dead in treſpaſſes and ſinnes, but of our regenetation into the hope of eternall life, in which reſpect we are alſo called *new creatures*: and in this ſenſe S. *Paul* ſaith, that we are *Gods vvorkmanſhip*, Epheſ. 2. 10. as we haue ſufficientlie ſhewed heretofore. In this ſenſe he alſo calles himſelfe the *former*: as if he ſhould ſay, I haue not formed my Church, in which my glory clearely ſhines, to bring ſo excellent a worke to nought. Whence we may obſerue, that the Church hath nothing in her ſelfe whereof ſhe can boaſt, but of Gods grace, to which all theſe gifts wherewith ſhe is adorned, ought to be attributed.

This creation muſt be applied to regeneration.

The Church hath nothing in her ſelfe to boaſt of.

That which is added, *for I haue redeemed thee*, may be as well referred to the time to come, as to that which was paſt: for the firſt deliuerance out of Egypt gaue them hope of that which was to come: but albeit he ſpeakes of the future deliuerance from Babylons captiuitie, yet the verb which is put in the time paſt ſuites well, in reſpect the Lord hath in his ſecret counſell alreadie redeemed vs, before the effect thereof extends it ſelfe vnto vs. Minding therefore to teſtifie what he had decreed in himſelfe, to wit, to deliuer his Church which ſeemed as good as forlorne, he fitly vſeth the time paſt, ſaying, *I haue redeemed thee.* 1 2

To call by name, ſignifies to receiue one into a neere band of familiaritie, as when God adopts vs for his children. What is the reaſon of this ſpeech? Surely the reprobates are ſo reiected of him that it ſeemes he *forgets their names*, in which reſpect the Scripture ſaith, that he knowes them not, Math. 7. 23. Now by this oppoſition we ſee more clearely what it is to be *called* of God: to wit, when he leaues others to honour vs with a ſpeciall fauour, in putting vs into his familie, whereas we were ſtrangers from him before: ſecondly, when he receiues vs into his charge and protection to order and guide vs and all our actions.

What it is to be the called of God. 1 2

To the ſame purpoſe he addes, *Thou art mine.* To giue the faithfull to vnderſtand, that he will euer haue a Church among his elect, becauſe he will not be depriued of his right of poſſeſſion. To be ſhort, he ſhewes that it is his peculiar and pretious inheritance, which he will at no hand indure to be diſpoſſeſſed of. 3

The Church Gods proper inheritance.

Verſ. 2. *When thou paſſeſt through the waters I will be with thee, and through the floods, that they do not ouerflow thee. When thou walkeſt through the very fire thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flame kindle vpon thee.*

THis is a preuention, whereby the Prophet ſhewes that the faithfull ought not to faint vnder their afflictions, ſeeing God is at hand to ſuccor them. Thus he ſpeakes more plainely then he did in the former verſe: for

in teaching that the Church shall not bee free from miseries and calamities, but must wrestle with them without ceasing, he thereby incourageth her to patience and magnanimitie. As if hee should say; *The Lord hath not redeemed thee that thou shouldest inioy thy pleasures, and shouldest giue thy selfe to ease and idlenesse*, but to the end thou shouldest prepare thy selfe to indure all sorts of euils.

What is meant by fire and water.

By fire and water, he meanes the infinit varietie of troubles, to which we are subiect in this present life: for we haue not to incounter with one calamitie onely, but with many, and those of diuers natures: so as wee must make account to goe thorow *fire and water*. As the Apostle *Iames* also, Chap. 1.2. exhorts the faithfull to count it exceeding ioy, when they fall into *diuers tentations*. For certainlie our faith hath need of many trials, in regard that oft times, he which for once hath gone away conqueror, may faint and be ouercome the second time. God exerciseth vs therefore with *many afflictions*, but in the end wee shall escape: the *waues* shall beat vpon vs, but they shall not *swallow vs vp*; the *fire* shall burne vs, but it shall not *consume vs*. Wee shall haue a sense and feeling, I grant, of the misery as wel as others, but God will sustaine vs by his grace, and fortifie vs with the spirit of patience, that our hearts faile vs not, till putting forth his hand vnto vs, he hath drawne vs vp vnto himselfe.

See Pſ. 66.11.

Our faith hath need of many trials.

See Exod. 3.2. & 2.Cor.4.8, 9,10.

Though we be brought into many straits, yet the Lord will giue vs a timely issue.

Verſ. 3. *For I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel thy Sauiour: I gaue Egypt for thy ransome, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.*

*Or, in thy stead.

A confirmation of the former consolation.

HE confirmes the former sentence by the experiences of *the time past*. For if the Lord had in former time succoured his people, it was good reason they should stay assuredly vpon his fauour *(for the time to come.)* Wee must euer keepe that in minde which is contained in the first verse; *Feare not, for I haue redeemed thee*: for these things should bee ioined together, because they tend all to one end. For if the Lord be *our God*, then by consequence he *is with vs*: vers.2. and wee shall proue by *experience* that he is our *Sauiour*. But if wee will find him such a one to vs, it is necessarily required, that wee proue our selues to be a part of *Israel*; not in name onely, but to shew some infallible markes thereof in the whole course of our life. Thus you see the foundation of our confidence is in this, that *the Lord is our God*. Whence it followes, that those who acknowledge him not for their father, neither will rest vpon his good pleasure, must needes haue trembling consciences for euer. The wicked reioice and lift vp their crests against God, but their securitie and ioy is nothing else but a giddines, & frensie of spirit; by reason whereof, they hasten their owne perdition the sooner. But the faithfull are heere assured, that he who hath chosen them, will alwaies continue *their God* and *Sauiour*: for which cause he hath separated them frō the rest of ỹ world, to be his heritage.

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To feele God our Sauiour, we must be a part of Israel, not in name onely, but by some infallible testimonies.

In this sense he calles himselfe the *holy one of Israel*, because amongst all mankind, which is naturally estranged from him, he chose his people *Israel* to be his peculiar flocke. Now howsoeuer the outward separation be to little purpose, vnlesse the elect also bee sanctified by the power of the *holy Ghost*; yet although Israel was polluted as well as other nations, God notwithstanding pronounceth that his couenant shall neuer be broken with them, in regard he will remaine alwaies like himselfe. Moreouer, it is euident enough that the word *holy*, is taken for him that sanctifies. Will wee be assured then of Gods loue? Let vs euer set before vs the pledge of our adoption, which will bee vnto vs as a sure rocke whereon to settle our hearts: this grace therefore let vs beg of God with all the powers of our soule.

The meanes to keepe our selues in the assurance of Gods fauour.

I gaue Egypt for thy ransome.] I meane not to expound these repetitions which the Prophet so often vseth, which also are frequent in his language: for hee puts, *To giue the ransome*; and, *to giue in thy stead*, in one and the same sense. Wee haue told you already that the Prophet confirmes the faithfull, by setting these former presidents of Gods grace before them. As if he should say; You haue proued long since, that the Lord hath had care of your saluation; for how was it possible for *Sennacherib* to bring his forces against the *Ethiopians*, and other nations, but that God had a purpose to spare you, and to turne the violence of your enemies against your neighbours? Seeing then that hitherunto hee hath imploied himselfe so much in your seruice (as it were) you haue no reason to doubt of his fauour for the time to come. If therefore at any time it so fall out, that our necessities shall cause vs to call Gods prouidēce or his promises into question, let vs remember what mercies he hath bestowed vpon vs in times past: for hee may iustly condemne vs of exceeding vnthankfulnesse, if hauing receiued so many fauours from him, wee yet stand in doubt of his good will towards vs for hereafter.

How to stay our selues as oft as occasiō is giuen vs to call Gods prouident care ouer vs into questiō. Obiect.

But some may aske why hee calles *Egypt* and *Ethiopia* the Churches *ransome*, seeing prophane nations are vnworthy of such an honor, as to be the redeemers of Gods children? I answer, the Prophet borrowed this phrase of speech from mens vsuall maners of speaking: as if hee should say; The *Egyptians*, *Ethiopians*, and *Sabeans were put in thy stead: I constrained them to sustaine the harmes which hung ouer thine head, euen as if there had been an interchange made betweene you: for to saue thee, I destroied them, and in thy stead, put them into the hands of thine enemies*. Wee must resort to the historie for the better vnderstanding hereof: for when *Sennacherib* came with violence against Iudah, God arested him by the way, and sent him to fight with others; so as hee was constrained to turne backe his forces. And thus the *Egyptians* and the *Ethiopians* were *destroied, whilest Gods people were spared*: 2.King.19.9.

Anſ.

See Prou.11. 8. & 21.18.

Hence we may easilie gather, that the same prouidence

Gods prouidence the ſame in reſcuing his Church at this day, as in former ages.

prouidence and infinite goodneſſe of God, is as far extended vnto vs at this day, as it was towards the Iewes, vnleſſe wee be more then blockiſh. Is it not he, thinke you, that makes tyrants (who would eate vs vp at a morſell, and with one conſent are all of them readie in their furie to ſwallow vs vp quicke) to deuoure one another, and to turne their rage which was kindled againſt vs, vpon others? Doe wee not ſee by experience, that to preſerue vs, hee puts *others in our roomes*, and ſo they become our *ranſome*? When wee therefore are thus fauoured of God, that the wicked lets vs alone in quiet, whileſt they are aſſaulting one another, (for it is not of anie good will they beare vs that wee are freed from their furie,) let vs then lift vp our eies vnto heauen, and with all thankfulneſſe acknowledge that *God puts others in our places* by a miracle, to the end he might *ſpare vs*: for we are as ſheepe appointed to be ſlaine; naked ſwords are gliſtering on euery ſide ouer vs; and if hee either plucked them not out of their hands, or turned the points and edges of them towards others, wee ſhould feele the ſmart which they doe.

Whence it is that the Church liues in peace.

A generall doctrine. God eſteems the faithfull more then all the world beſides.

Hence we may draw a generall doctrine; to wit, that God hath ſuch a reſpect to the faithfull, that hee eſteemes them aboue all the world beſides. Be it then that the world doe caſt vs off, yet let vs reioice in this, that the Lord doth highly eſteeme of vs: firſt, in that he prefers vs aboue all his creatures: ſecondlie, in deliuering vs ſo wonderfully out of dangers: yea, and in that hee preſerues vs in the midſt of a thouſand deaths. If all things were in quiet amongſt vs, and that we ſaw no troubles at all, this fauour of God could not be ſo well diſcerned of vs. But when it ſeemes we are compaſſed in ſo on euery ſide, that all hope of eſcaping is taken from vs, and that then on a ſudden the enemie is forced to recoile backe, and is turned from vs another way, we ſhall haue good experience of that which the Prophet heere ſaith, and ſhall acknowledge Gods ineſtimable fauour towards vs.

See 1. Sam. 23. 26, 27.

Verſ. 4. *Becauſe thou waſt pretious in my ſight, and thou waſt honourable, and I loued thee, therefore will I giue man *for thee, and people *for thy ſake.*

*Or, in thy ſtead.

*Or, in the place of thy ſoule.

This verſe containes the reaſon of the former.

SOme expound; Thou waſt honourable, becauſe I aduanced thee vnto honour: but me thinks God yeelds a reaſon heere, why he deliuered Egypt and Ethiopia into the enemies hands, in the ſtead of his people: to wit, becauſe they were his *beloued*, and that he held them deere and *pretious in his ſight*. And thus this particle ſhould be expounded in this ſort; Becauſe I loued thee, *I gaue man for thee*. Now in theſe words he ſhuts out all merit, to the end the Iewes might challenge nothing vpon deſert. Euen ſo, the very cauſe of our ſaluation, and of all the bleſſings wherewith wee are adorned, is onely from Gods *free loue*. Thence alſo flowes all our dignitie and *honourableneſſe*: for if hee ſhould eſteem vs according to our vertues, he might ſoone ſhake vs off. Let vs therefore renounce all opinion of merit which is not to be found in vs, that ſo we may wholly attribute all to Gods free grace, who ſhewes vs no meane or common fauour, when he vouchſafeth to intitle vs *precious*. In which reſpect he alſo calles vs his firſt borne; Exod. 4. 22. and friends, Iohn 15. 15.

All merit ſhut out.

The cauſe of ſaluation, and of all benefits beſides, comes vnto vs of Gods meere liberalitie.

In that he ſaith, he *gaue man for them*, it is nothing elſe but an explication of the former ſentence, taking *man* for men: as if hee ſhould ſay; There is not a man whom the Lord will not deſtroy for thy ſafetie: for hee makes more reckoning of the ſoule of one faithfull man, then of all the world beſides. And yet hee heerewithall admoniſheth the Church that ſhe is heere redeemed at their coſt, who by nature and birth differ nothing at all from her.

Man taken for men.

Verſ. 5. *Feare not, for I am with thee: I will bring thy ſeede from the Eaſt, and gather thee from the Weſt.*

WE muſt not thinke there is any ſuperfluitie in that the Prophet ſo often repeates this exhortation. All of vs know, and haue ſufficient experience how inclinable our nature is to diſtruſt. Now it is hard for vs to thinke or imagin into what wonderfull ſtraits and diſtreſſes the Church of the Iewes was then brought. As ſoone as we begin once but to call Gods promiſes into queſtion, our mindes are diſtracted with many paſſions, we ſtand amazed at the greatneſſe and diuerſitie of the dangers, wee are daily aſſaulted with vexations of ſpirit; at laſt we grow ſottiſh, and cannot bee brought to taſte how gracious our God is. Our mindes therefore being thus poſſeſſed with deſpaire, haue we not neede that this voice ſhould againe & againe ring in our eares, *I am with thee, feare not*? that ſo this *feare* may either be wholly rooted vp out of our hearts, or at leaſt ſo corrected by little and little, that we may not be ouercome of it: for I can tell you, if it take neuer ſo little rooting there, it is not ſo eaſilie diſplanted. Hence we obſerue, that we ought to place our hope in nothing but in Gods *being preſent with vs*: for if he be *abſent*, we muſt needes tremble *for feare* or wax dull and dead hearted, or ſtagger to and fro like a drunken man. And yet the Lord would not haue vs be ſo void of feare, as that we ſhould thereby grow careleſſe or idle; but when we heare that he is *neere*, and that he will aſſiſt vs, faith muſt then ouercome all difficulties in the middeſt of eminent dangers.

Wherein our hope ought to be placed.

I will bring thy ſeed from the Eaſt.] This place is drawne (as we know) out of Deut. 30. 3, 4. For the Prophets are the expoſitors of *Moſes*, and doe gather their doctrine out of his writings, as we haue ſhewed you from the beginning. Thus the Prophet applies this place of *Moſes* then to the circumſtance of the time preſent, vnto which in this Sermon he hath a ſpeciall reſpect. *Moſes* had thus foretold, The Lord thy God ſhall cauſe thy captiues to re-

See his preface.

turne, and will haue compaſſion vpon thee, and will gather thee together againe out of all nations among whom he hath ſcattered thee: yea, though thou wert ſcattered *to the vtmoſt parts vnder heauen*, yet from thence thy God will gather thee, and from thence will he take thee. *Iſaiah* applies that now to a particular, which *Moſes* then ſpake in generall, vttering the ſame thing, only changing ſome of the words. The ſumme is, that howſoeuer it be as difficult to gather together in one a people not only diſioined, but alſo ſcattered among many nations to the vtmoſt coaſts vnder heauen, as to gather aſhes together againe, being ſprinckled here and there, yet God by his admirable power will cauſe theſe members thus rent in ſunder, and diuided ſo farre one from another, to be gathered againe together into one body.

Verſ. 6. *I will ſay to the North, giue: and to the South, keepe not back: bring my ſonnes from farre, and my daughters from the end of the world.*

See verſe 5. VNder the *foure quarters* here mentioned, he comprehends the whole world, for ſo it is vſuallie taken in all languages. But *Iſaiah* ſpeakes ſomewhat in an higher ſtile then *Moſes* doth, becauſe he meant as it were to ſet the people againe to the poſſeſſion of their land: and this is very fitting for ſuch deſcriptions which place things before our eies as if they were preſentlie acted: he might haue determined this matter in a word, but this varying of the ſentence hath much more weight in it; for he brings in the Lord as it were vſing his prerogatiue royall ouer all creatures, *commanding all parts of the world to ſet his people againe at libertie.*

Not all Iſrael but the true Iſrael ſhall be gathered. *Bring my ſonnes.*] By this he ſignifies that all Iſrael ſhall not be gathered, but that part only which is *the true Iſrael*: for all thoſe that deſcended from *Abrahams* loines according to the fleſh, were not Iſraelites indeed, but there were many baſtards. Theſe things therfore appertaine to the *true ſeed*: for the whole body of this great people eſcaped not, but a little handfull only, as we haue ſeene heretofore in the tenth Chapter. The number of thoſe that were led captiue was exceeding great: the flock or remnant that returned was very ſmall: there was that *ſeed* with which the Lord would not breake his couenant made with their fathers, nor ſuffer them to periſh.

But this ſeemed an hard matter for the Iewes to beleeue, who were deſpiſed of all, and were not only hated, but reiected as the curſedeſt nation vnder heauen, ſo as they were thought vnworthie to be reckoned among the cõmon ranke of men. It was needfull for them then to cleaue faſt to theſe promiſes: they knew well enough indeed that Cyrus. *Cyrus* ſhould come, but yet they could not imagin what maner of man he ſhould be, ſeeing he was yet vnborne. Had they not need then, thinke you, to be armed with a conſtant and firme faith to wait vpon the Lord with inuincible hope and patience, when many held theſe propheſies for no better then fables? Let vs from hence learne to looke only vnto God, that ſo we may be reſolued of his help, and of the performance of his promiſes in due ſeaſon.

Verſ. 7. * *Euery one ſhall be called by my name: for I created him for my glorie,* * *formed him and made him.*

* All called by my name.

* Or, yea, I haue.

I Reſolue this ſentence thus, becauſe the Prophet vſeth the ſingular number in ſtead of the plurall, and therefore the expoſitors haue erred here. For thus they tranſlate, All thoſe that are called by my name, I haue formed for my glorie. But I rather vnderſtand it thus: All called; that is to ſay, All ſhall be called by my name: as in another place he ſaith, My name ſhall be called vpon them. Why ſo? Becauſe I haue *created, made,* and *formed* them for my glorie.

You ſhall finde the expoſition of theſe words in Chap. 29. 23. & 43. 21.

Hee continues the argument which hee handled before touching the *gathering* of the people into one body, though it were diſperſed into diuers and farre Countries. As if he ſhould ſay, If this worke ſeeme incredible, you muſt not iudge of it by the order of nature, but according to the abſolute power of God.

By my name then, ſignifies vnder my conduct, for we haue told you in another place, that he ſhewes himſelfe fauorable vnto vs, when in reſpect of the right of adoption, he reputes vs for his people. Now becauſe the Iewes were to be led vnder his gouernment and power, and not by the ſtrength or riches of men, he affirmes that his *name* ſhall be exalted in this deliuerance.

Gods glorie ſhines in the Churches ſaluation. *For my glorie.*] The Prophet addes a reaſon, which conteines in it a ſtrong confirmation, to wit, God will haue his glory to ſhine in the ſaluation of his people: wherein he proteſts, that it is his proper office to protect his Saincts, and to be as carefull for their good, as for the glorie of his owne name, which he will neuer ſuffer to be blaſphemed. In a word, that his honour (of which he is the perpetuall defender) and the ſaluation of his people, are things ſo neerely conioined, that nothing can ſeparate them.

And the further to amplifie the ſame, he repeates one and the ſame thing in diuers formes of ſpeech, that he might the better perſwade them to be the finiſher of that good worke which he had begun in them. To this appertaines the particle *Ak*, which ſignifies *Yea*, or Alſo, and in ſome places, Now: ſo as many expound, Euen as I haue created and formed this people, ſo doe I deſire to ſet them in their firſt eſtate, and reſtore them to their former libertie. It may alſo be tranſlated *Yea*, which I thinke agrees beſt, and I haue alſo followed it in the text, to ſhew, that whatſoeuer the people receiued, proceeded from the meere grace of God, who had a ſpeciall care ouer their ſaluation, ſo as he could not indure his ſo faire and excellent a worke to remaine vnperfected. This place then ſets before vs a ſingular teſtimonie of Gods exceeding

creeding fauor, in that he hath not only created vs men, but hath alſo reformed vs according to his owne image.

Verſ. 8. *I will bring forth the blind people, and they ſhall haue eies: and the deafe and they ſhall haue eares.*

THe breuitie and ſhortneſſe of the words breeds ſome obſcuritie in the ſenſe. For ſome tranſlate thus; I will bring forth the blind, and him that hath eies: that is to ſay; as well him that ſees, as thoſe that ſee not: The deafe, and thoſe that heare. Others, by this word Blind, vnderſtand ſuch as haue eies; but yet ſo dazeled, that they cannot behold the ſecrets of Gods heauenly wiſdome. But when I conſider the words well, I had rather expound them diſtinctly thus, *I will ſo bring forth the blind, that I will giue them ſights; and will deliuer the deafe in ſuch wiſe, that they ſhall recouer their hearing.* Word for word it is; *To bring forth the blind, and there ſhall be eies; the deafe, and they ſhall haue eares.* For the drift of the text requires that this benefit ſhould be noted diſtinctly: ſo as the people muſt *firſt be deliuered, and then eares and eies ſhall bee giuen them.*

The Lord effected this, when he brought his people forth of Babylon: but the Prophet doubtleſſe looked further off, euen to the kingdome of Chriſt: for then the faithfull were not onely gathered out of Caldea, but from the foure quarters of the world alſo; as wee may plainly and excellently ſee in the firſt ſermon made by Saint *Peter*, where *manie of diuers nations* were gathered together to profeſſe the ſame faith. Many alſo afterwards, which ſeemed altogether ſtrangers, came and ioined themſelues to the ſame bodie, and ſhewed that they were the true children of *Abraham*.

Where we ſhall find the full accompliſhment of this propheeie.

Therefore if we will finde the full accompliſhment of this propheeie, we muſt come to Ieſus Chriſt, by whom onely wee are deliuered from the bondage of Satan, and maintained in a free eſtate. It is he that giues vs *eies* and *eares*, who before were both deafe and blind by nature. But we muſt call to minde that which I haue often ſaid heeretofore; to wit, that this reſtauration wrought by Chriſt, is ioined with the returne of the people: for that which God then began in drawing his people out of their captiuitie, he continues while Chriſts ſecond comming, and then in the end will finiſh it: and thus there is but one and the ſame deliuerance ſtill. Whence it followes, that the benefits mentioned in this verſe, ought not to bee reſtrained to ſo narrow bounds, as to the captiuitie onelie.

Three extēts of this and the like propheeies.

Verſ. 9. *Let all the nations bee gathered together, and let the people bee aſſembled: who among them can declare this, and ſhew vs ſomething? Let them bring forth their witneſſes, that they may be iuſtified; but let them heare, and ſay it is truth.*

THe Prophet takes to him heere the perſon of God, and derides the Idols; as hee hath done before. For it ſtood him in hand (eſpecially then in reſpect of the time) to ſeparate the true God from Idols. It is no great matter to attribute the glory of the diuinitie vnto God in generall termes, but it is exceeding difficult to giue it to him onely, and to ſuffer all falſe gods to be brought to nothing, which then were in great requeſt. For in the deſtruction of the Iewes, the Idolaters feaſted their gods of gold and ſiluer, no leſſe then if they had ouercome the God of Iſrael. The Prophet therefore inſtructs the people afore hand, what they ſhould anſwer touching the ſcoffes and taunts of their enemies, in reſpect of whom, they were but a little handfull; and chargeth them notwithſtanding to continue conſtant in their holy profeſſion againſt all the power of their aduerſaries, and not to feare though great troopes of them ſhould bee aſſembled to defend their errors. We haue told you before that preſcience and power belongs to God onely, in regard that he *ſees and gouernes* all things according to his will: by which two arguments, he conuinced all falſe gods of falſhood: Chap. 40. and 41. Now he repeates the ſame thing, not ſo much to draw the Idolaters from their error, amongſt whom theſe propheeies were not read, but to confirme and eſtabliſh the Iewes in faith, who were aſſured that they knew the true God. I grant this doctrine now is common both to Iewes and Gentiles. The Iewes haue indeede deprined themſelues of it by their owne vnthankfulneſſe: ſo as that benefit which was then proper to them, is now tranſlated vnto others. But *Iſaiah* ſpake then eſpecially to the Iewes, to force them to an vnfained deteſtation of Idols, and of the ſuperſtitions of the Gentiles, which had then their full ſwinge. Now hauing *ſummoned the Idolaters to maintaine their Idols cauſe*, he takes it for granted, that it will be but in vaine for them to giue ſuch honour to their puppets, becauſe they are able to foreſee nothing to come.

The reaſon why the Prophet inſtructs the people againe in the doctrine of Gods preſcience.

He addes, that no *witneſſes* will be found, which can auouch that the falſe gods haue euer indeed propheeied of any thing truly: in which regard their cauſe is left deſtitute of a lawfull defence. It is not to bee denied but in all times there haue gone many flying reports touching the miracles which Idols haue done: and we heare of many wonders now a daies: for Idolaters are no leſſe obſtinate in auouching their fables and lies, then they are bold and impudent to inuent them: but if we come to examin them, we ſhall find no truth therein, but meere fancies and ſottiſh deuices. For this cauſe the Propher giues them the prize, if they bring in ſuch witneſſes as are worthy of credit: and thus it is to God onely then, to whom this honour appertaines to haue *witneſſes* on his ſide.

Lying miracles.

See verſ. 12.

To conclude, as if the matter were cleere enough of it ſelfe, he ſtands vp more boldly,

and commands the vanquiſhed to hold their peace. Yet in that he bids them *heare*, it is to ſhew that the only let that keepes men from the knowledge of ỹ truth is, that their minds being foreſtalled with error, they ſcorne to giue eare vnto God. For this contempt hinders them from comming to repentance, but rather ſtand proudly to defend the inuention of their owne braine. But the Lord was readie to haue taught them if they had had but *a patient eare*. For where could they haue foũd a better Maſter? But their pride and rebellion blinds them ſo, as they can not ſee the truth, and ſhuts vp their eare from hearkning to the voice of God. Are they not iuſtly left without excuſe then, ſeeing they obſtinately reiect him, and will not lend their eare to his doctrine, who offers himſelfe in ſuch milde ſort to inſtruct them? For if they were in any meaſure teachable, *Iſaiah* well affirmes that they ſhould be conſtrained to ſubſcribe to their owne condemnation: for in truth, all ſuch as ſhew themſelues teachable ſhall eaſily vnderſtand that the truth of God is grounded vpon infallible arguments, and not vpõ vncertain opinions which haue their foundation in the ayre.

The only let that keepes men from the knowledge of the truth.

Thoſe that are willing to learne, ſhall ſoone perceiue that the truth is grounded vpon infallible arguments.

Verſ. 10. *You are my witneſſes, ſaith the Lord, and my ſeruant, whom I haue choſen: therefore ye ſhall know and beleeue me, and ye ſhall vnderſtand that I am: before me there was no God, neither ſhall there be after me.*

THe Lord hauing prouoked the Gentils to diſputation, and hauing ſhewed that all that which they eſteemed touching the excellencie of their Idols, was meere vanitie and lies: now he leaues their aſſemblie, and brings forth his *witneſſes*, that men may know, that his caſe is not like that of the falſe gods. He rightly boaſts then that the true witneſſes take his part: for the Iewes had bin taught by reuelations from heauen ſo farre forth as ſufficed to giue them vndoubted aſſurance of their ſaluation. And yet he priuily taxeth their ingratitude, if ſo be they did not publikely and vnfeinedly proteſt that they had learned all things requiſit for the defence of Gods glorie: and thus indeed he alſo ſummons them to vow neuer to forget nor conceale ỹ truth of theſe propheſies, by meanes whereof they might be able to ſhew the certentie of the true religion: for it had bin treacherie in them to haue defrauded ſo good a cauſe of any defence which they were able to bring vnto it.

The truth of the propheſies muſt neuer be forgotten.

Gods cauſe muſt not be left deſtitute of our defence.

By the name *ſeruant*, ſome vnderſtand *Iſaiah*: but I had rather vnderſtand it of all the Prophets, becauſe there is here a change of the number. This name then is giuen particularly to the Prophets whom the Lord choſe to maintaine his truth: and yet I doubt not but in vſing the ſingular number he had a ſpeciall and chiefe reſpect vnto *Chriſt*, who is the end and accompliſhment of all the propheſies: and it is alſo very ſure that he is the ſpeciall *witnes* that ſhall conuince the whole world. But yet we muſt haue regard to the Prophets intention, which is, to call the Iewes indeed to be the Lords witneſſes? and to accuſe them of ingratitude if they did not franckly profeſſe what they had heard and ſeene. For hauing had ſo many good leſſons taught them from time to time, they could not without groſſe diſloyaltie either doubt or call into queſtion the power and goodnes of God. Thus then he ſhewes that the Church is picked out to *beare witnes* to the truth of God: in which ſenſe S. *Paul* calles her the pillar and ground of truth, 1. Tim. 3. 15. It is her office then to publiſh and maintaine it, ſo as it may be receiued of the poſteritie frõ age to age. Not that the Lord ſtands in need of ſuch an aid, but becauſe it is his good pleaſure neither to approue nor eſtabliſh the ſame among men by any other meanes.

Chriſt, the end and accompliſhment of all the propheſies.

The Church muſt beare witnes to Gods truth.

Iſaiah therefore vnder this one word comprehends *all the ſeruants of God*, who ſtand bound to defend their Maſters quarrell, but *chiefly the Miniſters*, who ought to be as the Standard-bearers, and by their example to ſhew the way vnto others. It is therefore ſpeciallie ſpoken *to them* here, though in generall he is to be held no faithfull ſeruant of God, who ſo ſmothers the knowledge of the truth within him that he dares not auouch it before men.

Therefore you ſhall know.] That the Lord might not ſeeme to procure to himſelfe witneſſes of things vnknowne, he addes, *you ſhall know, you ſhall beleeue, you ſhall vnderſtand*: thus ſhewing by the order of the words, that faith precedes, or goes before confeſſion. If this confeſſion then haue no deeper foundation then in the tip of the tongue, and is not laid in the heart, it ſhall be held but vaine and friuolous, for the Lord neither allowes nor approues of it. And yet there is ſome difficultie in the order of the words, To know, To beleeue, and To vnderſtand: for faith is not alwaies ioined with knowledge: for a man will not ſay that ſuch beleeue becauſe they know; faith is often abſent, where knowledge is preſent. Beſides, it is doubtfull in what ſenſe *vnderſtanding*, which is here added after beliefe, is to be taken, as if it ſhould differ from knowledge. But our Prophet in this place ſhewes that there is a certaine preparation vnto faith, by which God firſt giues authoritie vnto his word as oft as he ſees a neceſſarie vſe of that meanes. I grant, that faith begins at humilitie, which captiues all our reaſon vnder Gods lore: but becauſe we imbrace not the doctrine that is offred with ſuch an aſſurance as we ought, therefore God confirmes it vnto vs by ſundrie teſtimonies, and by our owne experience, the better to ſettle vs firmely in this faith. In this ſenſe the Euangeliſt S. *Iohn* ſhewes, that himſelfe and S. *Peter* beleeued the Scriptures after they had ſeene the ſignes of Chriſtes reſurrection in the Sepulchre, Iohn 20. 8. In another place alſo he ſaith, That the diſciples beleeued in Chriſt, when that was accompliſhed which he had ſpoken with his mouth, Iohn 2. 22.

Faith goes before confeſſion.

Many haue knowledge that are deſtitute of faith.

The ſumme then is, that the Iewes ſhall feele

A true faith diſtinguiſhed from inconſtant infidelitie.

feele by the effects that they worſhipped the true God, after their faith ſhall be confirmed by viſible ſignes. In the meane while, he diſcernes true faith from that wauering infidelitie, which carries vnconſtant men hither and thither: for God giues *knowledge* & iudgement alwaies to his elect, whereby they ſhall be able to diſtinguiſh truth from lies. After this, followes *faith* and ſtedfaſt confidence, which cauſeth them without doubting to receiue whatſoeuer the Lord hath reuealed vnto them: and then faith kindles a greater light in the *vnderſtanding*, and as we profit by degrees, ſo *knowledge* growes in vs, and ſhines more clearly. But this is not effected in vs by our owne reaſon, but by the power of the holy Ghoſt; for it is his office to inlighten vs.

The power of the holy Ghoſt, and not mans reaſon muſt effect all theſe things in vs.

That I am.] His meaning is, that it is needfull to know *what a one God it, if we would rightly beleeue:* and that it is he only, and none other that we worſhip, leſt our mindes ſhould wander & erre in receiuing whatſoeuer men ſhould approue, or thruſt vpon vs. That is not properly termed faith, which forgeth ought according to mẽs fancies, or that lightly credits whatſoeuer is ſet before her: neither is that faith which by and by cleaueth to whatſoeuer is ſet before her, or wauereth in vncertaintie: but true faith is grounded in ſuch aſſurance, that in giuing her ſelfe to the ſeruice of the onely true God, ſhee boldly contemnes all falſe gods, and deliuers mens vnderſtandings from all feare of error.

True faith forgeth not fancies, neither wauereth, but is grounded vpon the infallible truth.

The implicit faith of the Papiſts, is to beleeue as their mother the holie Church beleeues.

By this we may know what to iudge of the implicit faith of the Papiſts: for they account them beleeuers, who are ſenſleſſe and ignorant of that they beleeue, and are not able to vtter one word touching the knowledge of God, (for alas they know not what he is) in regard they openly proteſt that they beleeue as their mother the holy Church beleeues. But the Lord contents not himſelfe with ſuch abſurdities, but ioines *faith* with *vnderſtanding*, to teach vs that the one cannot be ſeparated from the other.

Moreouer, it is no faith, vnleſſe we beleeue *in one God the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt*, who ſpake by the Prophets and Apoſtles. Haue we not this God? Then is our faith but a fancie. Which that he may the better confirme touching that he ſaid before, I am the onely God; he addes in the ſecond place, that there is *no other before him.* The words *Lo-noter*, may indeede in another ſenſe be taken for a creature, or worke of God; for they ſignifie, There is none. But becauſe it ſeemes that this is conſtrained, I willingly agree to the vſuall expoſition, that There is no God formed before. In which there is a kinde of ironie: as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid; *There is none other God but he, vnleſſe hee be forged by vnwiſe men.* I trow then you will not compare them with the eternall God.

He addes, *that there ſhall bee none after*; becauſe himſelfe holds alwaies the intire and perfect ſoueraigntie, and is not changed by age or corruption. The ſumme is, that wee cannot ſay we haue faith indeed, till we come to reſt the ſame wholy in him: for thoſe which acknowledge a kind of diuinitie, and yet are ignorant what it is, are alway purſued with a trembling conſcience, and are wrapped in wonderfull ſnares. Let vs therefore ſtay our ſelues vpon that God which cannot indure any companion with him; or that the leaſt portion of his maieſtie ſhould be impaired; becauſe He onely is.

Verſ. 11. *I*, euen *I am the Lord, and beſides me there is no Sauiour.*

THe Lord triumphs heere as hauing gotten the victorie. In the former verſes he hath ſufficiently inſtructed vs touching the meanes whereby to come to his knowledge; and hath ſhewed that there is no other God but him. Now to confirme this doctrine hee breakes out into this exclamation; It is I, *euen I, that am the Lord, and there is none beſides mee.* And thus wee may ſee how dangerous a thing it is to forge a god according to our fantaſie: for wee haue no ſooner effected it, but behold, an Idoll in ſtead of God. Let not vs therefore accept of any thing but that which proceeds from him, leſt we runne out in this behalfe. Hath he manifeſted himſelfe vnto vs? It is good reaſon wee ſhould dailie profit, grow, and bee more and more confirmed in his knowledge. And this is the vſe wee ſhould make of this repetition, *I, I am the Lord.*

Yet I would not haue you thinke he ſpeaks heere of his eternall eſſence onely; but let vs know that his power and goodneſſe, which he fully manifeſts by cauſing vs to feele the ſame, are here cõprehended. And that is the reaſon why ỹ epithete of *the only Sauiour* is added; which is a mark whereby to ſeparate him from all his creatures. For the world deceiues it ſelfe in attributing vnto God a naked and bare title, and in the meane while tranſpores his dignitie ouer to the creatures. In the Papacie I grant there is mention made of God, but they ſtrip him of his honour; when one part thereof is giuen to *Peter* and *Paul*, and another to *William* and *George*: that is to ſay, when his offices are diuided into ſo many parts, that they leaue nothing to him but the bare title of God. They brag that they worſhip but one God: I wot well; but when wee come to ſpeake of his offices, they forge as many gods as there are creatures, and to them they diſtribute his authoritie and power. But the Lord will haue theſe things to remaine wholly and ſoly vnto him; neither can they be attributed to any other without committing horrible ſacriledge: for it is he onely that beſtowes all good things vpon men, and he onely defends and preſerues them.

Saint Peter, Paul, William, George.

The Papiſts leaue nothing to God but his bare title.

The latter member of the verſe then, expreſſeth that knowledge which proceedes from experience, that ſo we might ſeeke ſaluation in none but in him, who is the author of it. Whence we gather, that the principall part of Gods ſeruice conſiſts in faith; which is, when he is acknowledged to be the *fountaine* of life, when he is adorned with the title of *Sauiour*; as alſo when theſe things which

he affirmes to be proper to him onely, and to dwell in him, be not transported ouer vnto others.

Vers. 12. *I haue declared, and I haue saued; and I haue shewed when there was no strange* god *among you: therefore you are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.*

THis verse is as it were a rehearsall of the former; for the Lord telles them againe that hee hath foretold things to come, and hath brought them to passe accordingly, thus; *To declare*, is, or may be referred to his *foreknowledge*: and, *To saue*; to his *power and goodnesse*. In a word, his meaning is, that he is the onely God who knowes and accomplisheth all things. Now howsoeuer this was spoken to the Iewes, yet wee are to know that it also appertaines vnto vs: for all the prophecies which remaine on record, ought to be so many lessons to teach vs the wisdome and power of God, that so wee may wholly rest vpon him. Now, that wee should abolish all superstitions, and suffer him to sit as our onely Doctor in his heauenly chaire; he tels vs againe, that hee hath *shewed his power*, and manifested *the signes of his fauour*, without any mans helpe: whence it followes, that those are too ingratefull and peruerse, which will not content themselues with him alone.

When there was no strange God among you (saith he) to worship, euen then did I openly discouer my power in the sight of the whole world. How dare you then attribute that to Idols, which belongs to me onely? And yet the Prophet doth not so much in this place commend the antiquitie of the peoples religion, as he labours to reiect all false succors. As if he should say; Seeing you haue knowne none but the true God, whose miracles haue been so wonderfull and apparant, you ought to be resolued, that there is no helpe but in him. Therewithall also the Prophet shewes, that our infidelitie hinders God from shewing his power in the midst of vs: let vs therefore abandon all errors, and all false opinions of God, if we will haue experience of his power; for if we turne aside after idolatries and superstitions, are wee not well worthy to feele the want of his power and goodnes?

In conclusion, he calles them *witnesses*, as accusing them of froward and cursed ingratitude, if they dissemble that goodnesse of his, which was so publikely manifested: for the more God shall haue declared his power by many visible *testimonies*, the more are wee bound to publish and make knowne the same vnto others.

Vers. 13. *Yea, before the day* was, *I am; and there is none that can deliuer out of mine hand: and I will doe it, and who shall let?*

HE speakes now of Gods eternitie; but we must still keepe in minde the Prophets drift. For he which had a beginning, is not of himselfe, neither can hee hold vnder his dominion, nor gouerne the things which hee created not. When the Lord therefore calles himselfe *the eternall*, it is to shew that the world was made by his hand, and that this goodly order of nature fell not out by chãce, but tooke the originall from his admirable wisdome and power: Gen. 1. 1.

He which had a beginning, is not of himselfe.

And therefore he addes in the next place, that *none can deliuer out of his hand*: which yet shewes vs more plainly, that by his eternitie wee may proue his soueraigne and infinite power. For were he not eternall, hee could neither retaine all things in his hands, neither could hee defend his people, nor serue his turne of the creatures according to his owne will. But because he is *without beginning*, it necessarilie followes, that all things be subiect to his disposition. Hereunto appertaines that which is added, that nothing *can let* him from *doing* that which hee hath once determined. All which, serued to teach the Iewes, that they should not stand amazed nor be discouraged, in regard of the force, furie, and multitude of their enemies.

Gods soueraignitie proued by his eternitie.
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2
3

Vers. 14. *Thus saith the Lord your redeemer, the holy one of Israel; For your sake I haue sent to Babel, and brought it downe: they are all fugitiues; and the Caldeans cry in the ships.*

THe Prophet saith that Cyrus shall be as an hired souldier, which shall bestow his trauell in the Lords seruice, for the *redemption* of his people. I grant hee names not Cyrus, but hee speakes of the host which marched vnder his conduct, to subdue the Babylonians. We know this was brought about by *Cyrus* and *Darius*: but all of them were Gods executioners, who had foretold these things long before. He directs not his speech onely to those that saw the accomplishment of all these things, but also to all those whom the Lord meant to sustaine with this hope of deliuerance, which they could neuer haue dreamed of by any humane reason. For hee speakes to the captiues, who being oppressed vnder the cruell seruitude of the Caldeans, were left destitute of all meanes of comfort: in which respect these promises might seeme most fabulous, because in mans iudgement there was no hope that euer they should get out of this prison.

Cyrus.

Darius.

But we must giue this honor to Gods word, euen to beleeue that which otherwise is incredible, to the end wee may hope aboue hope: for such is the power of faith, that she stands not gazing vpon things externall, but fixeth her eies in the heauens, and pierceth thorough euen to the very throne of God.

Wee must giue this honour to Gods word, as to beleeue things incredible.

The vertue of faith.

Now there is great force in that which is added, *for thy sake*. For seeing pride, and an insatiable couetous desire to rule, pricked *Cyrus* forward to this action; and that there were many occasions for which this war was raised, a man would not haue thought that the whole world should thus haue bin shaken

ken in the ouerthrow of this Monarchie, and that the poore Iewes the miserablest of all people vnder heauen, should by this meanes haue had a way made to returne home into their owne countrie. But God protests, that he will giue the Persians victorie, so as they shall easily conquer all the East, because he *saues his Church*.

For this cause he shewes in the first place, that it is *he* which is their *redeemer*, and the *holy one*, the better to perswade them that he held those whom he had chosen to be his peculiar people deare and pretious vnto him.

Obiect. Notwithstanding, this seemes contrarie to that which we haue seene before in the 33. Chapter, Woe to thee that robbest, when thou wast not robbed: the Lord meant by this that he would auenge himselfe vpon the cruelties of the Babylonians, and render them that measure which they had met out vnto others: now hee shewes that the Persians tooke armes by his commandement, that by meanes thereof he might worke his peoples

Ans. deliuerance. But these things may be easily reconciled, to wit, that the Lord had respect to his people euen then whilest he scourged the Chaldeans: for as his prouidence extends it selfe ouer the whole world in generall, so hath he a speciall care of his Church: and as he dearly loues his Saincts, so he turnes all things to their saluation. It is not without cause then that he saith *he sent* them to performe this worke by his *free grace*, because he meant thereby to procure the saluation of his Church. In the same sense he addes, that at his commandement hee brought them

Medes and Persians. downe: for albeit the Medes and Persians had another end, yet their iorney was gouerned by an heauenly instinct. And thus God meant to shew what loue he bare to his chosen people aforehand, lest they should haue fainted in their extreme anguishes and afflictions. This promise therefore was of great *vse*, in respect the poore captiues might from hence greatly comfort themselues that they were beloued of God, although all the world besides contemned, hated, and reiected them as the offscouring of all things, seeing they saw that God in the end was minded to succor them, and *for their sakes* to destroy the Monarchie of the Babylonians.

Where he saith, *they shall flee*, it is to shew that God shall so prosper the affaires of *Cyrus*, that the Chaldeans shall be astonished at his arriuall, and shal throw downe their armes to take them to their heeles: for it often falles out, euen to some mightie Prince, well appointed with all furniture to enterprise war, in which notwithstanding the issue shall be wofull. It was not enough then that *Cyrus was sent* with a great armie, vnlesse therewithall his enterprises had succeeded well.

And that he might further set forth their *hastie flight*, he addes, there shall be a *crie*, or tumult in the *Ships*, for they could not flee by land. True it is they had a riuer fit for the

Euphrates. Tigris. purpose, to wit Euphrates, which met with the riuer Tigris, by reason whereof they had meanes to escape: but they were disappointed of their purpose in this behalfe, in regard the riuer was drawne drie.

Vers. 15. *I am the Lord, your holy one, the Creator of Israel, your King.*

THis verse conteines in it only a description of him that speakes: first, shewing how great his power & maiestie is: secondly, with what affection he entertaines his elect, and all to the end the promises before mentioned might haue the greater waight. I call this verse therefore a scale to the former sentence, as if the people should haue said, We heare much spoken of God, and of his promises; but I pray you what is this God? The Prophet answers, Euen he that is *your holy one*, the *creator of Israel, and your king*.

He is called *holy one*, because he called and separated a people to consecrate them vnto himselfe. By this title then he puts them in minde of their adoption, wherein he ioined himselfe vnto them by a speciall band, to assure them for the time to come that he would be their Father and Sauiour. In which sense wee at this day ought to acknowledge that God is *our holy one*, in that he hath put vs apart to be members of his Church, whereof he hath assured vs, by our vocation and calling.

The title *Creator* is not to be referred to the generall creation of all things: for so he is also the Creator of the wicked: but to reformation, in which respect we are called his workmanship, Ephes. 2. 10.

In that he addes *your king*, it might seeme somewhat strange: for what appearance was there of a *kingdome* among the Iewes now? Were they not loaden with reproches and contumelies, because they were left destitute of all succor? Yet faith was to breake thorow all these obstacles: in this title therefore the Prophet gaue them hope that the *kingdome* should againe be restored, howsoeuer to the eies of flesh and blood it lay now in the dust, yea vtterly extinct; notwithstanding all this, they were to hold God for their Soueraigne and *King* still.

This verse a scale to the former sentence.

1
2
3
Holy one.
God our Holie one now.
Creator.
1
2
King.

Vers. 16. *Thus saith the Lord which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mightie waters.*

HE once againe comes to confirme that which otherwise seemed incredible: and that this confirmation might haue the greater authoritie, he takes vnto him the person of God. Now he puts them in mind of *former benefits*, to teach them, that as they had found him an Almightie Sauiour before, so they should assure themselues that he would be no lesse powerfull and gracious vnto them for the time to come: neither lesse able nor willing to worke their deliuerance. As if hee should say, *The Lord who speakes* will certainly shew the greatnes of his power by the effects: of which *as your forefathers haue had experience, so his meaning is to giue you no lesse triall of it then they had.* Are we not too vnthankfull then if by former benefits receiued, we be not drawne to hope in him for hereafter? but

God alwaies the same.
1
2
Vnthankfulnes.

especiallie

especially when hee hath showne so certaine and so excellent testimonies of his continuall care ouer vs.

Israel deliuered out of Egypt, to the end they should neuer forget it.

Hee brought Israel out of Egypt, vpon condition they should neuer forget such a deliuerance: Exod.13.9. The Prophet now sets *the same* God before their eies, shewing that nothing could withstand him, which by his power hee ouercame not, when he tooke his peoples saluatiõ in hand. For then *he made a way for them in the sea*, Exod.14.21. and guided them thorow the tempestuous & mightie waters; to wit, thorow the riuer Iordan, which he dried vp, though it was very boisterous: Ios.3.16. Now hee expresly names these two admirable miracles, because they might imagin that all passage was shut vp against them, in regard of their returne into Iudea: and that all these promises therefore were but fables.

Vers.17. *When hee bringeth out the chariot and horse, the armie and the power lie together, and shall not rise: they are extinct and quenched as towe.*

NOw he shewes that neither *munition*, nor *strength* can resist God, or hinder him from deliuering his people when hee thinks good, no more then the *sea* was able to let him from sauing them: but hee diuided the same, and *drowned their enemies* with their *chariots and horses* therein. See here then an amplification of the former verse: as if he should say; Be it that the whole world haue conspired your destruction, and would hinder mee from working your deliuerance; shall it not be in vaine? For when I list, I will not onely find out *a passage* for you in the midst of bottomlesse gulphes, but I will also scatter and ouerthrow all *force* and *power* of your enemies: yea, I will so dash them in sunder, that they shall neuer be able to arise. It may be he that hath lost one victorie, will gather his forces afresh together the second time, and win that he lost before: but the Lord in this place promiseth *a perpetuall victorie*; shewing that their enemies shall bee so discomfited, that they shall be vtterly extinct. Which sudden destruction he further expresseth by the similitude of *towe*: when fire is put to *towe*, it may well make a blaze for a while, but forthwith it is consumed and gone.

*Or, Forget ye the, &c.

Vers.18. **Remember ye not the former things? neither regard yee the things of old?*

This verse must bee vnderstood by way of comparison.

THe Prophet hitherunto hath shewed at large how mightie the Lord is to saue his people: now hee saith that all the miracles which were wrought in the first redemption, *were nothing* in comparison of those that should be effected hereafter: that is to say; the glory of this second deliuerance should be so rare & excellent, that it should darken the first: not as if the Iewes were to *forget* so great a benefit; for the memorie thereof worthily deserued to be celebrated from age to age, euen to the worlds end: and as the Lord had commanded, was to stand vpon perpetuall record. For in the preface of the Law, Exod.20.2. thus he speakes; I am the Lord thy God, *which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*. He also commanded the fathers to be *often recording* of it to their children, and to continue the remembrance of it to their successors. This therefore must be taken by way of comparison: as in *Ieremiah*; Behold the daies come, saith the Lord, that *they shall say no more*, The Lord which brought the children out of Egypt: but the Lord liues, which hath brought the posteritie of *Iacob* out of the land of the North, and out of all the coasts of the earth, whereinto he hath scattered them: Ier.23.7. The summe is, that the last deliuerance shall be far more glorious then the first, if the one be compared with the other. Whence it followes, that this prophecie is not to be referred to a few yeeres; because the Prophet extols not here the beginnings of their deliuerance onely; but extends the fruit of this returne euen vnto Christ, at whose comming both the *kingdome* and *priesthood* were reallie established.

Vers.19. *Behold, I doe a new thing; now shall it come forth: shall you not know it? I will euen make a way in the desert, and floods in the wildernesse.*

BY this wee may yet better perceiue what the Prophets drift was in the former verse. For heere he saith, there shall be a *new* worke: that is, no common or ordinary, but such a one as by the excellencie and greatnesse of it, shall darken the fame of all the rest, no lesse then the Sunne when it shineth in his might, darkens all the starres in the firmament. In that hee saith, it shall *now* come forth; the meaning is, it shall not be long deferred. I grant these things were not by and by accomplished; but when wee haue respect vnto him that speakes, foure hundred, nay a thousand yeeres in his sight, are but as yesterday. Thus hee comforts them, because hee would not that their seuentie yeeres captiuitie should discourage them.

A new work is heere opposed to that which is cõmon and ordinarie: See Chap.42. 10.

When he addes, *shall you not know it?* This interrogation hath more force and vehemencie in it then a simple affirmation. And this manner of speech is much vsed both among the Hebrewes, and also among Greeks and Latines.

The interrogation hath more force in it then a bare affirmation.

Further, he promiseth to *make a way in the desert*, wherein he hath respect to that desert which was betweene Babylon and Iudea: for here he speakes of the peoples returne home. And for that cause also hee mentions the *floods*: for they might well haue perished for thirst, in trauelling thorow a place so barren and waste. Therefore the Lord promiseth to prouide them of water for their iourney: as if he should say; Feare not for want of necessaries, for I wil furnish you sufficiently; so as you shall returne vnder my conduct and leading.

The desert betweene Babylon and Iudea.

But it ſeemes the Prophet paſſeth his bounds, when he magnifies this deliuerance in ſuch exceſſiue ſpeeches. For we reade not that the *riuers* were heere turned into *blood*, nor that a groſſe and *palpable darkneſſe* troubled the aire, or that the *firſt borne* were ſlaine, or that any *vermin* were ſent to deuoure the fruits of the earth; neither any of the like wonders which came to paſſe in Egypt: none of theſe happened, as wee know in Babylon. What meanes hee then by this *new* deliuerance? This hath cauſed almoſt all the writers that are Chriſtians, to expound this place ſimply of Chriſts comming: wherein no doubt they haue been deceiued no leſſe then the Iewes, who onely reſtraine this to the deliuerance out of Babell. And therefore as I haue ſaid in another place, wee muſt heere comprehend the whole time that paſſed betweene the deliuerance out of Babylon, vntill the comming of Chriſt. The redemption out of Egypt may bee compared to the firſt birth of the Church; becauſe the people were then gathered into a body, and the Church was eſtabliſhed, which before was without forme: yet this redemption ended not at the peoples comming forth of Egypt, but continued till they were poſſeſſed of the land of Canaan, which was giuen them after the Kings were driuen thence. The like may bee ſaid of this birth by which the Iewes were brought out of Babylon, and reſtored home into their owne Country: for this reſtauration muſt not bee reſtrained to their going out of Babylon onely, but it ſtretcheth it ſelfe vnto the comming of Chriſt; during which ſpace of time, there came great and wonderfull things to paſſe indeed.

The Churches redemption out of Egypt, may be compared to her firſt birth.

1 Was it not an admirable thing that a ſort of poore captiues, contemned of all as miſerable abiects and ſlaues; yea held and eſteemed as deteſtable as the diſeaſe of the peſtilence, ſhould notwithſtanding bee reſtored and ſent home into their Country by infidell Kings? Beſides, that they ſhould be furniſhed 2 with all things fit for their iourney, and order taken for their affaires: as alſo for the building of the Citie, and reſtoring of the 3 Temple? But yet behold wonders much greater then theſe, which came to paſſe afterwards; when there were but a few of the people which would returne backe againe, and the moſt were ſo diſcouraged, that they preferred ſo miſerable a ſeruitude before ſo bleſſed and happy a freedome. When a ſmall handfull (I ſay) of them then returned into Iudeah, in reſpect of that great multitude which was led into captiuitie, yet fell there out greater lets and hinderances. For were there not conſpiracies, new hatreds & grudgings raiſed vp againſt this people, who were in too much contempt and diſgrace already? Did not the worke ceaſe, and was not all meanes procured to hinder the finiſhing of 1 it? In which reſpect they might well haue 2 thought that the Lord had brought them out in vaine, ſeeing they were now expoſed to greater dangers then euer they were before. After the Temple was built, things ſucceeded no whit better; for they were inuiro- 3 ned on all ſides with mightie aduerſaries, who hated them moſt deadly, and vexed them without ceaſing. Afterwards they were viſited with ſundry afflictions and perſecutions; ſo as it might ſeeme they were as good as ouerwhelmed and rooted out by them. Yet notwithſtanding God ceaſed not ſtill miraculouſly to preſerue them euen in the midſt of fire and ſword. If we conſider their poore and miſerable eſtate, and the ſore trials they were put to by tyrants, wee may well admire how any one of them eſcaped. 4

See Exod. 14. 11. 12.

What impediments happened to the Iewes in their returne.

That we may the better vnderſtand then how wonderfull this deliuerance was, and in what ſort it ſurpaſſed the firſt, wee muſt haue an eye to the hiſtories of things begun and continued vntill Chriſts comming; who then added infinite graces and benefits to the former: for doubtleſſe the ſecond deliuerance was greater then the firſt.

To vnderſtand this laſt deliuerance of the Church aright, we muſt looke to the hiſtories of things begun and continued till Chriſts comming. The Prophets ſtill kept their eye vpon Chriſt.

Neither is this any conſtrained expoſition, but it agrees with the maners of ſpeech vſed among the Prophets: for they haue alwaies reſpect vnto the Meſſiah, and inceſſantly did they fix their eies vpon him. The Prophet *Haggai* therefore will giue vs much light for the vnderſtanding of this place. For he ſhews, that when the Temple was built, the olde men which had ſeene the excellencie of the *firſt*, wept, ſaying, that this *latter* was nothing in cõpariſon of the former: and hardly could they be perſwaded but that God had vtterly forſaken them, and that his promiſes were of none effect. But *Haggai* to comfort them, and to ſhew that the glory of the ſecond Temple ſhall far ſurpaſſe the firſt, albeit the outward forme of it were leſſe beautifull, brings them forthwith to the Redeemer, ſaying on this manner: Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſtes; Yet a little while, and I will ſhake the heauens and the earth, and the ſea, and the dry land, and all nations: the deſire of *all nations* ſhall come; and I will fill this houſe with glory, ſaith the Lord of hoſtes. The gold and ſiluer is mine, ſaith the Lord of hoſtes: the glorie of this houſe ſhall bee greater then the firſt: Haggai 2.7. As *Haggai* then continues the reſtauration of the Temple till Chriſts comming, to which he refers the true glory of it: ſo this deliuerance out of Babylon held on the courſe thereof till Chriſt; for theſe things are conioined together, or rather haue affinitie one with another; ſo as it is no maruell though he ſay, it did euery way ſurpaſſe that deliuerance out of Egypt.

Verſ. 20. *The wild beaſts ſhall honour me, the Dragons and the Oſtriches; becauſe I gaue water in the deſert, and floods in the wilderneſſe to giue drinke to my people, euen to mine elect.*

HE adornes the former ſentence; for all things ſtanding in this confuſed maner, it was needfull to ſet out Gods power in the higheſt termes that might be, that at leaſt the word might ſupplie that which ſeemed to be wanting in effect. His meaning is then, that Gods hand ſhall be ſo ſenſible felt and perceiued

he affirmes to be proper to him onely, and to dwell in him, be not transported ouer vnto others.

Verſ. 12. *I haue declared, and I haue ſaued; and I haue ſhewed when there was no ſtrange* god *among you: therefore you are my witneſſes, ſaith the Lord, that I am God.*

THis verſe is as it were a rehearſall of the former; for the Lord telles them againe that hee hath foretold things to come, and hath brought them to paſſe accordingly, thus; *To declare*, is, or may be referred to his 1 *foreknowledge*: and, *To ſaue*; to his 2 *power and goodneſſe*. In a word, his meaning is, that he is the onely God who knowes and accompliſheth all things. Now howſoeuer this was ſpoken to the Iewes, yet wee are to know that it alſo appertaines vnto vs: for all the prophecies which remaine on record, ought to be ſo many leſſons to teach vs the wiſdome and power of God, that ſo wee may wholly reſt vpon him. Now, that wee ſhould abolith all ſuperſtitions, and ſuffer him to ſit as our onely Doctor in his heauenly chaire; he tels vs againe, that hee hath *ſhewed his power*, and manifeſted *the ſignes of his fauour*, without any mans helpe: whence it followes, that thoſe are too ingratefull and peruerſe, which will not content themſelues with him alone.

When there was no ſtrange God among you (ſaith he) to worſhip, euen then did I openly diſcouer my power in the ſight of the whole world. How dare you then attribute that to Idols, which belongs to me onely? And yet the Prophet doth not ſo much in this place commend the antiquitie of the peoples religion, as he labours to reiect all falſe ſuccors. As if he ſhould ſay; Seeing you haue knowne none but the true God, whoſe miracles haue been ſo wonderfull and apparant, you ought to be reſolued, that there is no helpe but in him. Therewithall alſo the Prophet ſhewes, that our infidelitie hinders God from ſhewing his power in the midſt of vs: let vs therefore abandon all errors, and all falſe opinions of God, if we will haue experience of his power; for if we turne aſide after idolatries and ſuperſtitions, are wee not well worthy to feele the want of his power and goodnes?

In concluſion, he calles them *witneſſes*, as accuſing them of froward and curſed ingratitude, if they diſſemble that goodneſſe of his, which was ſo publikely manifeſted: for the more God ſhall haue declared his power by many viſible *teſtimonies*, the more are wee bound to publiſh and make knowne the ſame vnto others.

Verſ. 13. *Yea, before the day* was, *I am; and there is none that can deliuer out of mine hand: and I will doe it, and who ſhall let?*

HE ſpeakes now of Gods eternitie; but we muſt ſtill keepe in minde the Prophets drift. For he which had a beginning, is not of himſelfe, neither can hee hold vnder his dominion, nor gouerne the things which hee created not. When the Lord therefore calles himſelfe *the eternall*, it is to ſhew that the world was made by his hand, and that this goodly order of nature fell not out by chãce, but tooke the originall from his admirable wiſdome and power: Gen. 1. 1. He which had a beginning, is not of himſelfe.

And therefore he addes in the next place, that *none can deliuer out of his hand*: which yet ſhewes vs more plainly, that by his eternitie wee may proue his ſoueraigne and infinite power. For were he not eternall, hee could neither retaine all things in his hands, neither could hee defend his people, nor ſerue his turne of the creatures according to his owne will. But becauſe he is *without beginning*, it neceſſarilie followes, that all things be ſubiect to his diſpoſition. Heereunto appertaines that which is added, that nothing *can let* him from *doing* that which hee hath once determined. All which, ſerued to teach the Iewes, that they ſhould not ſtand amazed nor be diſcouraged, in regard of the force, furie, and multitude of their enemies. Gods ſoueraignie proued by his eternitie. 1 2 3

Verſ. 14. *Thus ſaith the Lord your redeemer, the holy one of Iſrael; For your ſake I haue ſent to Babel, and brought it downe: they are all fugitiues; and the Caldeans cry in the ſhips.*

THe Prophet ſaith that Cyrus ſhall be as an hired ſouldier, which ſhall beſtow his trauell in the Lords ſeruice, for the *redemption* of his people. I grant hee names not Cyrus, but hee ſpeakes of the hoſt which marched vnder his conduct, to ſubdue the Babylonians. We know this was brought about by *Cyrus* and *Darius*: but all of them were Gods executioners, who had foretold theſe things long before. He directs not his ſpeech onely to thoſe that ſaw the accompliſhment of all theſe things, but alſo to all thoſe whom the Lord meant to ſuſtaine with this hope of deliuerance, which they could neuer haue dreamed of by any humane reaſon. For hee ſpeakes to the captiues, who being oppreſſed vnder the cruell ſeruitude of the Caldeans, were left deſtitute of all meanes of comfort: in which reſpect theſe promiſes might ſeeme moſt fabulous, becauſe in mans iudgement there was no hope that euer they ſhould get out of this priſon. Cyrus. Darius.

But we muſt giue this honor to Gods word, euen to beleeue that which otherwiſe is incredible, to the end wee may hope aboue hope: for ſuch is the power of faith, that ſhe ſtands not gazing vpon things externall, but fixeth her eies in the heauens, and pierceth thorough euen to the very throne of God. Wee muſt giue this honour to Gods word, as to beleeue things incredible. The vertue of faith.

Now there is great force in that which is added, *for thy ſake*. For ſeeing pride, and an inſatiable couetous deſire to rule, pricked *Cyrus* forward to this action; and that there were many occaſions for which this war was raiſed, a man would not haue thought that the whole world ſhould thus haue bin ſha-

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ken in the ouerthrow of this Monarchie, and that the poore Iewes the miſerableſt of all people vnder heauen, ſhould by this meanes haue had a way made to returne home into their owne countrie. But God proteſts, that he will giue the Perſians victorie, ſo as they ſhall eaſily conquer all the Eaſt, becauſe he *fauors his Church*.

For this cauſe he ſhewes in the firſt place, that it is *he* which is their *redeemer*, and the *holy one*, the better to perſwade them that he held thoſe whom he had choſen to be his peculiar people deare and pretious vnto him.

Obiect. Notwithſtanding, this ſeemes contrarie to that which we haue ſeene before in the 33. Chapter, Woe to thee that robbeſt, when thou waſt not robbed: the Lord meant by this that he would auenge himſelfe vpon the crueltie of the Babylonians, and render them that meaſure which they had met out vnto others: now hee ſhewes that the Perſians tooke armes by his commandement, that by meanes thereof he might worke his peoples

Anſ. deliuerance. But theſe things may be eaſily reconciled, to wit, that the Lord had reſpect to his people euen then whileſt he ſcourged the Chaldeans: for as his prouidence extends it ſelfe ouer the whole world in generall, ſo hath he a ſpeciall care of his Church: and as he dearly loues his Saincts, ſo he turnes all things to their ſaluation. It is not without cauſe then that he ſaith *he ſends* them to performe this worke by his *free grace*, becauſe he meant thereby to procure the ſaluation of his Church. In the ſame ſenſe he addes, that at his commandement hee brought them

Medes and Perſians. downe: for albeit the Medes and Perſians had another end, yet their iorney was gouerned by an heauenly inſtinct. And thus God meant to ſhew what loue he bare to his choſen people aforehand, leſt they ſhould haue fainted in their extreme anguiſhes and afflictions. This promiſe therefore was of great vſe, in reſpect the poore captiues might from hence greatly comfort themſelues that they were beloued of God, although all the world beſides contemned, hated, and reiected them as the offcouring of all things, ſeeing they ſaw that God in the end was minded to ſuccor them, and *for their ſakes* to deſtroy the Monarchie of the Babylonians.

Where he ſaith, *they ſhall flee*, it is to ſhew that God ſhall ſo proſper the affaires of *Cyrus*, that the Chaldeans ſhall be aſtoniſhed at his arriuall, and ſhal throw downe their armes to take them to their heeles: for it often falles out, euen to ſome mightie Prince, well appointed with all furniture to enterpriſe war, in which notwithſtanding the iſſue ſhall be wofull. It was not enough then that *Cyrus was ſent* with a great armie, vnleſſe therewithall his enterpriſes had ſucceeded well.

And that he might further ſet forth their *haſtie flight*, he addes, there ſhall be a *crie*, or tumult in the *Ships*, for they could not flee by land. True it is they had a riuer fit for the

Euphrates. Tigris. purpoſe, to wit Euphrates, which met with the riuer Tigris, by reaſon whereof they had meanes to eſcape: but they were diſappointed of their purpoſe in this behalfe, in regard the riuer was drawne drie.

Verſ. 15. *I am the Lord, your holy one, the Creator of Iſrael, your King.*

THis verſe conteines in it only a deſcription of him that ſpeakes: firſt, ſhewing how great his power & maieſtie is: ſecondly, with what affection he entertaines his elect, and all to the end the promiſes before mentioned might haue the greater waight. I call this verſe therefore a ſeale to the former ſentence, as if the people ſhould haue ſaid, We heare much ſpoken of God, and of his promiſes; but I pray you what is this God? The Prophet anſwers, Euen he that is *your holy one*, the *creator of Iſrael, and your king*.

This verſe a ſeale to the former ſentence. 1 2 3

He is called *holy one*, becauſe he culled and ſeparated a people to conſecrate them vnto himſelfe. By this title then he puts them in minde of their adoption, wherein he ioined himſelfe vnto them by a ſpeciall band, to aſſure them for the time to come that he would be their Father and Sauiour. In which ſenſe wee at this day ought to acknowledge that God is *our holy one*, in that he hath put vs apart to be members of his Church, whereof he hath aſſured vs, by our vocation and calling.

Holy one. God but Holie one now.

The title *Creator* is not to be referred to the generall creation of all things: for ſo he is alſo the Creator of the wicked: but to reformation, in which reſpect we are called his workmanſhip, Epheſ. 2. 10.

Creator. 1 2

In that he addes *your king*, it might ſeeme ſomewhat ſtrange: for what appearance was there of a *kingdome* among the Iewes now? Were they not loaden with reproches and contumelies, becauſe they were left deſtitute of all ſuccor? Yet faith was to breake thorow all theſe obſtacles: in this title therefore the Prophet gaue them hope that the *kingdome* ſhould againe be reſtored, howſoeuer to the eies of fleſh and blood it lay now in the duſt, yea vtterly extinct; notwithſtanding all this, they were to hold God for their Soueraigne and *King* ſtill.

King.

Verſ. 16. *Thus ſaith the Lord which maketh a way in the ſea, and a path in the mightie waters.*

HE once againe comes to confirme that which otherwiſe ſeemed incredible: and that this confirmation might haue the greater authoritie, he takes vnto him the perſon of God. Now he puts them in mind of *former benefits*, to teach them, that as they had found him an Almightie Sauiour before, ſo they ſhould aſſure themſelues that he would be no leſſe powerfull and gracious vnto them for the time to come: neither leſſe able nor willing to worke their deliuerance. As if hee ſhould ſay, *The Lord who ſpeakes* will certainly ſhew the greatnes of his power by the effects: of which *as your forefathers haue had experience, ſo his meaning is to giue you no leſſe vſe of it then they had*. Are we not too vnthankfull then if by former benefits receiued, we be not drawne to hope in him for hereafter? but

God alwaies the ſame. 1 2

Vnthankfulnes.

especiallie

especially when hee hath showne so certaine and so excellent testimonies of his continuall care ouer vs.

Israel deliuered out of Egypt, to the end they should neuer forget it.

Hee brought Israel out of Egypt, vpon condition they should neuer forget such a deliuerance: Exod.13.9. The Prophet now sets *the same* God before their eies, shewing that nothing could withstand him, which by his power hee ouercame not, when he tooke his peoples saluatiō in hand. For then *he made a way for them in the sea*, Exod.14.21. and guided them thorow the tempestuous & mightie waters; to wit, thorow the riuer Iordan, which he dried vp, though it was very boisterous: Ios.3.16. Now hee expresly names these two admirable miracles, because they might imagin that all passage was shut vp against them, in regard of their returne into Iudea: and that all these promises therefore were but fables.

Vers.17. *When hee bringeth out the chariot and horse, the armie and the power lie together, and shall not rise: they are extinct and quenched as towe.*

NOw he shewes that neither *munition*, nor *strength* can resist God, or hinder him from deliuering his people when hee thinks good, no more then the *sea* was able to let him from sauing them: but hee diuided the same, and *drowned their enemies* with their *chariots and horses* therein. See here then an amplification of the former verse: as if he should say; Be it that the whole world haue conspired your destruction, and would hinder mee from working your deliuerance; shall it not be in vaine? For when I list, I will not onely find out *a passage* for you in the midst of bottomlesse gulphes, but I will also scatter and ouerthrow all *force* and *power* of your enemies: yea, I will so dash them in sunder, that they shall neuer be able to arise. It may be he that hath lost one victorie, will gather his forces afresh together the second time, and win that he lost before: but the Lord in this place promiseth *a perpetuall victorie*; shewing that their enemies shall bee so discomfited, that they shall be vtterly extinct. Which sudden destruction he further expresseth by the similitude of *towe*: when fire is put to *towe*, it may well make a blaze for a while, but forthwith it is consumed and gone.

*Or, Forget ye the, &c.

Vers.18. **Remember ye not the former things? neither regard yee the things of old?*

This verse must bee vnderstood by way of comparison.

THe Prophet hitherunto hath shewed at large how mightie the Lord is to saue his people: now hee saith that all the miracles which were wrought in the first redemption, *were nothing* in comparison of those that should be effected heereafter: that is to say; the glory of this second deliuerance should be so rare & excellent, that it should darken the first: not as if the Iewes were to *forget* so great a benefit; for the memorie thereof worthily deserued to be celebrated from age to age, euen to the worlds end: and as the Lord had commanded, was to stand vpon perpetuall record. For in the preface of the Law, Exod.20.2. thus he speakes; I am the Lord thy God, *which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*. He also commanded the fathers to be *often recording* of it to their children, and to continue the remembrance of it to their successors. This therefore must be taken by way of comparison: as in *Ieremiah*; Behold the daies come, saith the Lord, that *they shall say no more*, The Lord which brought the children out of Egypt: but the Lord liues, which hath brought the posteritie of *Iacob* out of the land of the North, and out of all the coasts of the earth, whereinto he hath scattered them: Ier.23.7. The summe is, that the last deliuerance shall be far more glorious then the first, if the one be compared with the other. Whence it followes, that this prophecie is not to be referred to a few yeeres; because the Prophet extols not here the beginnings of their deliuerance onely; but extends the fruit of this returne euen vnto Christ, at whose comming both the *kingdome* and *priesthood* were reallie established.

Vers.19. *Behold, I doe a new thing; now shall it come forth: shall you not know it? I will euen make a way in the desert, and floods in the wildernesse.*

BY this wee may yet better perceiue what the Prophets drift was in the former verse. For heere he saith, there shall be a *new* worke: that is, no common or ordinary, but such a one as by the excellencie and greatnesse of it, shall darken the fame of all the rest, no lesse then the Sunne when it shineth in his might, darkens all the starres in the firmament. In that hee saith, it shall *now* come forth; the meaning is, it shall not be long deferred. I grant these things were not by and by accomplished; but when wee haue respect vnto him that speakes, foure hundred, nay a thousand yeeres in his sight, are but as yesterday. Thus hee comforts them, because hee would not that their seuentie yeeres captiuitie should discourage them.

A new work is heere opposed to that which is cōmon and ordinarie: See Chap.42. 10.

When he addes, *shall you not know it?* This interrogation hath more force and vehemencie in it then a simple affirmation. And this manner of speech is much vsed both among the Hebrewes, and also among Greeks and Latines.

The interrogation hath more force in it then a bare affirmation.

Further, he promiseth to *make a way in the desert*, wherein he hath respect to that desert which was betweene Babylon and Iudea: for here he speakes of the peoples returne home. And for that cause also hee mentions the *floods*: for they might well haue perished for thirst, in trauelling thorow a place so barren and waste. Therefore the Lord promiseth to prouide them of water for their iourney: as if he should say; Feare not for want of necessaries, for I wil furnish you sufficiently; so as you shall returne vnder my conduct and leading.

The desert betweene Babylon and Iudea.

But it ſeemes the Prophet paſſeth his bounds, when he magnifies this deliuerance in ſuch exceſſiue ſpeeches. For we reade not that the *riuers* were heere turned into *blood*, nor that a groſſe and *palpable darkneſſe* troubled the aire, or that the *firſt borne* were ſlaine, or that any *vermin* were ſent to deuoure the fruits of the earth; neither any of the like wonders which came to paſſe in Egypt: none of theſe happened, as wee know in Babylon. What meanes hee then by this *new* deliuerance? This hath cauſed almoſt all the writers that are Chriſtians, to expound this place ſimply of Chriſts comming: wherein no doubt they haue been deceiued no leſſe then the Iewes, who onely reſtraine this to the deliuerance out of Babell. And therefore as I haue ſaid in another place, wee muſt heere comprehend the whole time that paſſed betweene the deliuerance out of Babylon, vntill the comming of Chriſt. The redemption out of Egypt may bee compared to the firſt birth of the Church; becauſe the people were then gathered into a body, and the Church was eſtabliſhed, which before was without forme: yet this redemption ended not at the peoples comming forth of Egypt, but continued till they were poſſeſſed of the land of Canaan, which was giuen them after the Kings were driuen thence. The like may bee ſaid of this birth by which the Iewes were brought out of Babylon, and reſtored home into their owne Country: for this reſtauration muſt not bee reſtrained to their going out of Babylon onely, but it ſtretcheth it ſelfe vnto the comming of Chriſt; during which ſpace of time, there came great and wonderfull things to paſſe indeed.

The Churches redemption out of Egypt, may be compared to her firſt birth.

1 Was it not an admirable thing that a ſort of poore captiues, contemned of all as miſerable abiects and ſlaues; yea held and eſteemed as deteſtable as the diſeaſe of the peſtilence, ſhould notwithſtanding bee reſtored and ſent home into their Country by infidell Kings? Beſides, that they ſhould be furniſhed

2 with all things fit for their iourney, and order taken for their affaires: as alſo for the building of the Citie, and reſtoring of the Temple? But yet behold wonders much greater then theſe, which came to paſſe afterwards; when there were but a few of the people which would returne backe againe,

3 and the moſt were ſo diſcouraged, that they preferred ſo miſerable a ſeruitude before ſo bleſſed and happy a freedome. When a ſmall handfull (I ſay) of them then returned into Iudeah, in reſpect of that great multitude which was led into captiuitie, yet fell there out greater lets and hinderances. For were there not conſpiracies, new hatreds & grudgings raiſed vp againſt this people, who were in too much contempt and diſgrace already? Did not the worke ceaſe, and was not all meanes procured to hinder the finiſhing of it? In which reſpect they might well haue thought that the Lord had brought them out in vaine, ſeeing they were now expoſed to greater dangers then euer they were before. After the Temple was built, things ſucceeded no whit better; for they were inuironed on all ſides with mightie aduerſaries, who hated them moſt deadly, and vexed them without ceaſing. Afterwards they were viſited with ſundry afflictions and perſecutions; ſo as it might ſeeme they were as good as ouerwhelmed and rooted out by them. Yet notwithſtanding God ceaſed not ſtill miraculouſly to preſerue them euen in the midſt of fire and ſword. If we conſider their poore and miſerable eſtate, and the ſore trials they were put to by tyrants, wee may well admire how any one of them eſcaped.

See Exod. 14. 11. 12.

What impediments happened to the Iewes in their returne.

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That we may the better vnderſtand then how wonderfull this deliuerance was, and in what ſort it ſurpaſſed the firſt, wee muſt haue an eye to the hiſtories of things begun and continued vntill Chriſts comming; who then added infinite graces and benefits to the former: for doubtleſſe the ſecond deliuerance was greater then the firſt.

To vnderſtand this laſt deliuerance of the Church aright, we muſt looke to the hiſtories of things begun and continued till Chriſts comming. The Prophets ſtill kept their eye vpon Chriſt.

Neither is this any conſtrained expoſition, but it agrees with the maners of ſpeech vſed among the Prophets: for they haue alwaies reſpect vnto the Meſſiah, and inceſſantly did they fix their eies vpon him. The Prophet *Haggai* therefore will giue vs much light for the vnderſtanding of this place. For he ſhews, that when the Temple was built, the olde men which had ſeene the excellencie of the *firſt*, wept, ſaying, that this *latter* was nothing in cõpariſon of the former: and hardly could they be perſwaded but that God had vtterly forſaken them, and that his promiſes were of none effect. But *Haggai* to comfort them, and to ſhew that the glory of the ſecond Temple ſhall far ſurpaſſe the firſt, albeit the outward forme of it were leſſe beautifull, brings them forthwith to the Redeemer, ſaying on this manner: Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſtes; Yet a little while, and I will ſhake the heauens and the earth, and the ſea, and the dry land, and all nations: the deſire of *all nations* ſhall come; and I will fill this houſe with glory, ſaith the Lord of hoſtes. The gold and ſiluer is mine, ſaith the Lord of hoſtes: the glorie of this houſe ſhall bee greater then the firſt: Haggai 2.7. As *Haggai* then continues the reſtauration of the Temple till Chriſts comming, to which he refers the true glory of it: ſo this deliuerance out of Babylon held on the courſe thereof till Chriſt; for theſe things are conioined together, or rather haue affinitie one with another; ſo as it is no maruell though he ſay, it did euery way ſurpaſſe that deliuerance out of Egypt.

Verſ. 20. *The wild beaſts ſhall honour me, the Dragons and the Oſtriches; becauſe I gaue water in the deſert, and floods in the wilderneſſe to giue drinke to my people, euen to mine elect.*

HE adornes the former ſentence; for all things ſtanding in this confuſed maner, it was needfull to ſet out Gods power in the higheſt termes that might be, that at leaſt the word might ſupplie that which ſeemed to be wanting in effect. His meaning is then, that Gods hand ſhall be ſo ſenſiblie felt and perceiued

ceiued in this worke, that not only men *but vvild beasts* also should be touched with a sense of it, so as they should yeeld a kind of honour and thanks vnto God. This prophesie therefore answers to Psal 114.3.4. where it is said, That the sea saw it and fled, Iordan went back; the mountaines skipped like sheepe; and the little hilles as lambs: the earth trembled at the presence of the God of Iaakob.

Isaiah attributes heere the same feelings to the *brute beasts*, in regard that by a secret instinct they should be constreined to giue place, that the people might passe with more securitie. And yet the reason hereof hath a larger extent, to wit, that they shall stand amazed at the beholding of so many miracles. To be short, God shewes, that he will not leaue his people destitute of necessarie foode that they should be inforced to returne back through want: for by this excessiue kind of speech, he expresseth the incomprehensible loue of God towards the Iewes, that by the power of their hope they might mount aboue all present obstacles.

The vse. Now when we heare of these things, let vs not measure his power (in our distresses) according to the order of nature: but by faith let vs fix our eies aboue all things visible and comprehensible.

Moreouer, lest these poore banished orphanes should lose all hope of Gods euerlasting fauor in seeing themselues thus reiected and despised of all: *Isaiah* brings them to the remembrance of their adoption, as if he should say, Thinke not but ỹ you remain the *people* of God still, notwithstanding this your horrible scattering: for he who hath once *elected* you neuer changeth his counsell. As oft then as we stand in neede of incouragement to hope well, let vs remember the calling of God: for albeit we feele our owne vnworthines, yet it ought to suffice that the Lord hath vouchsafed vs this honor, to make vs *his people*.

My people, mine elect.

We must in temptation oppose our vocation against our vnworthines.

Vers. 21. *This people haue I formed for my selfe: they shall shew forth my praise.*

THe Prophets meaning is, that the Lord must needs performe that which he spake before, because it concernes his owne *glorie* to deliuer the people which he hath *chosen* to himselfe. This appertained therefore very much to the consolation of the Iewes, as if he should say, Do ye thinke I will suffer my glory to fall to the ground? It is ioined with your saluation, and therefore it stands me in hand to looke to it, *Be you sure therefore that all shall goe vvell vvith you: for I can not suffer you to perish, but my glorie must therewithall be abolished also.* But your saluation is sure; for I haue determined that you shall magnifie my greatnes for euer.

Gods glorie and our saluation ioined together.

Where he saith he hath *Created* this people, it is to let vs vnderstand that our regeneration is a worke supernaturall: for we are to hold this principle which we haue often told you of heretofore, that he speakes not here of that generall worke of his creation touching mankinde; but of regeneration or adoption, by which God separates his Church from the rest of the world, and from all the remainders of it. Let no man be so bold then as to attribute this worke either to himselfe, or to the merits of men; but let vs from this place learne to ascribe so excellent a benefit wholly and only to the free grace of God.

Isaiah speak not here of our common creation, but of our spirituall regeneration. See Chap. 29.23.

They shall set forth my praise.] Although the Prophets meaning be (as I haue said) to shew that the people should be deliuered in regard it neerely concerned Gods glorie: yet from this place we also learne, that the end of our *election* is the setting forth of Gods glorie in all things. I grant that the reprobates are instruments of this glorie; but it shines in a farre diuers sort in vs: for we are chosen, as S. *Paul* saith, that we should be holy and without blame before him in loue: and he hath also predestinated vs, to adopt vs in himselfe by Iesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will to the *praise of the glorie of his grace*, wherewith he hath freely accepted vs through his beloued, Ephes. 1.4.5.6. Hereunto appertaine the words of *Peter*, where he saith, We are a chosen generation, and that *we should shew forth the vertues of him who hath called vs* out of darknes, into his maruelous light, 1. Pet. 2.9. And *Zacharie* sings, That we are deliuered out of the hands of our enemies to *serue our God in holines and righteousnes before him all the daies of our life*, Luk. 1.75. Here ye see the end then both of our election and calling: which is, that we being consecrated and set apart for Gods vse as it were, wee might praise and honor him as long as wee haue any being in this world.

The end of our election & vocation.

Exod. 14.4. and 17.18.

Election.

Vocation.

Vers. 22. *And thou hast not called vpon me, ô Iacob: but thou hast * wearied me ô Israel.*

* rather.

WIth this priuie rebuke he confirmes that which was said in ỹ former verse: to wit, that the merits of the people had no way moued him to deale so graciously with them. This deliuerance therefore was to be ascribed to his free goodnes. For proofe hereof, he saith, *Thou hast not called vpon me:* vnder which word he cõprehends the whole seruice of God, whereof prayer was a principall part. And thus he takes a part for the whole, according to the vsuall maner of the Hebrues. Now the Lord manifests it sufficientlie in other places, that Inuocation is a speciall part of his worship: for hauing said in the fiftieth Psalme that he reiects sacrifices and ceremonies, he presentlie addes, *Call vpõ me.* For this cause the Scripture mentions this exercise of *prayer*, when it notes out the marks of Gods worship. For *Moses* minding to shew that the same was againe restored, saith, that then men began to *call vpon* the name of the Lord, Gen. 4.26.

God saues none for his merits sake.

The proofe.

This phrase, Called vpon me, expounded.

Prayer, a speciall part of Gods worship.

I take the particle *Ci* in the second part of this verse for a coniunction aduersatiue thus, But thou hast *rather* wearied me. Others translate, For thou hast trauailed: as if he should say, Thou hast done that which I commanded thee

God requires a willing obedience. Psal. 110. 3.

thee vnwillingly: which comes all to one. For as the Lord requires obedience, ſo would he haue his ſeruants to performe the ſame cheerfully and readily. Hee loues a *cheerfull giuer*, as the Apoſtle ſaith. 2. Cor. 9. 7. but thoſe that ſerue him by halues, or by *conſtraint*, cannot properly be called his ſeruants; neither doth he accept of them, nor of ſuch ſeruices. To ſhew then that the Iewes had not worſhipped as they ought to haue done, hee ſaith, they did it *vnwillinglie*.

If any had rather haue it an expoſition of the former member, and ſo tranſlate it thus; *Thou haſt not called vpon me, O Iſrael, becauſe thou haſt yeelded me but a forced and conſtrained ſeruice*; I gainſay him not, becauſe the difference is not great as touching the ſenſe. Yet if it be taken as I haue tranſlated it, I thinke it is neerer to the Prophets meaning: and the oppoſition containes alſo in it a rendring of the cauſe. Will we haue our ſeruices acceptable vnto God then? let vs yeeld him a frank and willing obedience.

The vſe.

Verſ. 23. *Thou haſt not brought me the ſheepe of thy burnt offerings, neither haſt thou honoured mee with thy ſacrifices: I haue not cauſed thee to ſerue with an offering, nor wearied thee with meenſe.*

Obiect.

SOme may demãd why the Prophet ſhould thus reproch the Iewes, ſeeing it is apparent that they were very diligent in offering ſacrifices, according to the ordinances of the Law. Some refer this to the captiuitie, during which time they could offer no ſacrifices, though they had bin willing ſo to haue done. Why ſo? Becauſe it was vnlawfull to offer them any where but in Ieruſalem: for which reſpect, their ſacrifices could not be acceptable vnto God. But I rather take it as a generall reproch: for whileſt the people had opportunitie to ſacrifice, yet they could alleadge no merit nor worthineſſe, as if God had been any way beholding vnto them for the ſame: for there was neither faith nor obedience to bee ſeene in their ſacrifices. But faith, as we know, and obedience, are things which God chiefly lookes vnto, without which, nothing we doe, is, or can be pleaſing in his ſight. They wanted therefore integritie of heart; their hands were full of blood; they were wholly defiled with robberies and deceit; iuſtice and equitie was baniſhed far from them. Albeit then that they brought their *beaſts euery day vnto the Temple, and offered them there*, yet hee rightly affirmes that they *offered none of theſe things (to him)* becauſe God accepts of no ſacrifices which are ſeparated from the truth, and ſo offered them to another, and *not to him*: for all he required was, that by theſe outward meanes, his people ſhould exerciſe their faith and obedience. But theſe being wanting: what worth was there in the ſacrifices? Hence wee gather that the Prophet ſpeakes here of no new thing, but continues that which hee began to teach in the former verſe; to wit, that hee reiects all hollow and ſeruile ſeruices.

Anſ.

God lookes rather to our faith and obedience, then to our ſacrifices.

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Verſ. 24. *Thou boughteſt me no ſweet *ſauour with thy money, neither haſt thou made me drunke with the fat of thy ſacrifices: but thou haſt made mee to ſerue with thy ſinnes, and wearied me with thine iniquities.*

*Or, cinch.

BY the word *Caneh*, he meanes that wherewith they made the precious ointment which was ſeldome vſed; as is recorded in Exod. 30. 25. For therewith were the high Prieſts, the Tabernacle, the Arke of the couenant, with the inſtruments thereunto appertaining, annointed. Hee ſaith then; Albeit thou ſhouldeſt lay forth thy money to buy me of that odoriferous ointment, thou ſhalt but ſpend it in vaine, if thou lookeſt that I ſhould accept of it. For all their labour was loſt, becauſe they aimed not at the right marke. God eſteemed none of all theſe ceremonies, as long as they were ſeparated from faith, and the vprightneſſe of the heart, and a pure conſcience.

High Prieſts. The Tabernacle. The Arke. The Inſtruments.

Where he ſaith, *thou haſt not made me drunke*; it anſwers to a phraſe of ſpeech in the Law, where the Lord teſtifies that he felt a ſweete taſte in the ſauour of the ſacrifices: not that he tooke delight in the killing of beaſts, but becauſe by ſuch helpes he meant to keep his people in true obedience. Here on the contrary he ſaith, that the people ſacrificed not rightly, becauſe they defiled all by their impuritie. As if he ſhould ſay; You haue *affamiſhed me* (as much as in you is) *in that you bring me nothing in ſinceritie, but that which through your ſinnes is corrupt and vnſauours*. Preſently after the Prophet ſets out the foulneſſe of this fact, in that the people were not onely *careleſſe* in doing their ſeruices to God: but which is worſt of all, indeuored to ſubiect the Lord their God to their will, or rather to their diſordered appetites and luſts.

Thoſe who refer this place to Chriſt, offer violence to the Prophets meaning: and therfore the expoſition which I haue vſed, ſeemes to me the moſt native: for the Lord complaines that they haue inforced him to beare *an heauie burden*, in regard of their ſinnes, whereas they ſhould haue ſubmitted themſelues to him in all reuerence, and with all good conſciences: for when we aduance our ſelues againſt God, we doe by our inſolencie and rebellion, make him as it were a ſeruant to our luſts.

God eſteems neither of our labour nor large expences in his ſeruice, if the integritie of the heart bee wanting: See Mich. 6. 6, 7, 8.

Now hee expreſſeth this better when hee ſaith, that hee hath been *wearied*: that is to ſay; I haue ſwallowed many diſcontentments, in regard of the diſſolute behauiour of my people: for we wound and pierce him to the heart, when we reiect his voice, and will not indure that he ſhould raigne ouer vs. But it ſeemes he alludes to that hee ſaid erewhile touching the peoples *vnrighteouſneſſe* in ſeruing of God: which being ſet as oppoſite vnto the

same, it shewes that these rebels did much grieue him.

Vers. 25. *I*, euen *I am he that putteth away thine iniquities for mine owne sake, and will not remember thy sinnes.*

The conclusion.

BY this exclamation the Lord puts an end to the former sentence, as if he should say, that he for his part can reioyce, that he puts away the iniquitie of his people, and holds them in freedome, that they can pleade no merit whereby to obteine this at his hands, seeing they deserue rather to be seuerely chastised, nay to be vtterly confounded.

No man is saued for his merits.

Now he repeates *one and the same thing twice*, that he might touch men to the quick for their vnthankfulnes: for we are wont either to take vnto our selues, or in some sort to obscure the honour which belongs to God only. Those take the Prophets words in too naked a sense, which thinke that God attributes vnto him here the authoritie and preheminence in pardoning of sinnes, for he rather *opposeth his mercie to all other causes*, as if he should say, *There is nothing moues me to shew mercie, but only my free fauour*, and that *Redemption* therefore is wrongfullie attributed to *Merits* or satisfactions, seeing I am the only author of it. The summe is, that the people were to continue their hope of returne, because God was willing for his owne *names sake freely to remit their sinnes*, and to worke their deliuerance.

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The doctrine of remission of sinnes handled in this place.

In this place then there is handled the doctrine of the remission of sinnes. It now remaines to see vpon what occasion: for there is no doubt but the Prophet promiseth deliuerance in regard of Gods free grace. And for this cause he rather spake of forgiuenes of sinnes, then of Redemption: for they being sore pressed & corrected for their sinnes, the cause was to be remoued ere the effect could cease. A disease can not be cured till the matter which feeds it be first remoued: so, as long as Gods wrath stands vnappeased, so long must our chastisements continue. Therefore it is necessarie that this wrath be pacified, and we reconciled vnto God, before we can be freed from our afflictions.

Why God speakes rather of remission of sinnes, then of redemption. Simile.

This maner of speech therefore is to be well obserued against a childish distinction of the Sophisters: who confesse indeed that God pardons the fault, but they wrangle and say, that we must satisfie for the punishment. And hence haue proceeded Satisfactions, Indulgences, Purgatorie, and infinite other inuentions. But our Prophet speakes not only here of the *faults*, but makes expresse mention also of the *punishments*, which is likewise done away, in regard *their sinnes and iniquities* were freely pardoned. Which is yet more clearely prooued, in that he addes this particle, *For mine owne names sake*. For it is certaine that this exception is opposed against all merits. As how? *That God respects neither our persons, nor ought that is in vs, vvhen he is to do away our offences, but is moued thereunto by his owne free mercie.* For if he should consider any thing in vs, he should then seeme to be bound to vs, and so the pardon should not be free. For this cause *Ezechiel* expresseth the opposition, *I do not this for your sakes ô house of Israel, but for mine owne sake*: Whence it followes, that God is the author of forgiuenes, and is also inclined freely to forgiue, because he finds no cause at all in man (vnlesse it be his miserie) why he should do it.

This exception opposed to merit.

And therefore I vvill not remember thy sinnes.] The Prophet added this for the consolation of the faithfull, who by the feeling of their owne vnworthines, might easily haue slipped into despaire. For this cause he puts them in good hope, and confirmes them in this confidence: to wit, That they should obteine remission of their sinnes, and so be deliuered out of captiuitie, notwithstanding their vnworthines. Hence we haue to gather a very profitable doctrine, to wit, That no man can assure himselfe of obteining pardon, vnlesse he rest vpon the free grace of God. For such as looke to their works must of necessitie wauer, and in the end despaire. For if they were not besotted with grosse hypocrisie, they would alwaies set their guiltines before their eies, which would constreine them whether they would or no to doubt of Gods fauor.

None can be assured of obtaining pardon, vnlesse he rest vpon Gods free goodnes.

Where it is said, that the Ministers also do remit sinnes, that is not repugnant to this place, for they are witnesses of this free remission. They vse this common distinction, *That God forgiues sinnes by his power*, and *The Ministers by their office*: but because this distinction doth not sufficientlie explane the Prophets meaning, it is best to hold that which I haue set downe, to wit, that God not only pardons sinnes by his power, but also that all benefits which we are to expect, flow vnto vs only from his free grace. And thus the Lord hath so adorned the Gospel and the Ministers with this authoritie, that he reserues it notwithstanding intirely in his own absolute power.

A distinctiō.

How God is said to pardon by the Ministers.

Vers. 26. *Put me in remembrance: let vs be iudged together: count that thou mayst be iustified.*

Mans pride not easily subdued.

BEcause it is an hard matter to correct mens pride, the Lord goes on still with this argument; and insists the longer vpon it, that he might the better bring the Iewes to humilitie, as also that he might cause them to renounce the confidence of their works. *He giues them libertie freely to say and alledge vvhat they can in their owne behalfe*, to make their partie good against him: *vnlesse if vpon better aduice, they should rather thinke it best for them to lay their hand vpon their mouth.*

God giues vs leaue to make our defences, if we thinke his accusatiō ouerstrict.

By way of yeelding so much vnto them therefore he bids them *put him in minde*: If thou hast any thing to alledge for thy selfe, saith he, I pray thee *remember me of it*. Speake thou in thy turne, and I will giue thee audience. And by this maner of speech he gaules men more to the quick, then if he should haue spoken to them in plaine termes. For thus he shewes, that *they are more then senselesse, if they dare attribute any thing vnto themselues*. Why so? Because, if libertie were giuen them

Ironia, a figure in speaking, when one meanes contrarie to the signification of his words, to mock him whom he reasoneth withall.

them to tell their faire tale, they would be conuinced of their vanitie and emptines, without being able to say ought for themselues.

Thus thou mayst be iuſtified.] That is to say, that thou maiest get the day, and goe away conqueror: I therefore giue thee free leaue to say what thou canst. Now this is spoken after such a kind of taunting and deriding maner, as did more cut their combs, thé if the Lord should haue stood to haue iudged thé in his own person, according to his absolute authoritie. In the meane while we must not forget the Prophets drift, who was constrained to plucke this maske of merit from the Iewes, that in all humilitie and meeknes, they might receiue the grace of God.

Ironia.

The Prophets drift.

Verſ. 27. *Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers haue trangreſſed against me.*

THe expositors for the most part vnderstand this place of the *first Father Adam*: others rather refer it to *Abraham*. As if the Prophet should say; You haue not onely sinned, but your father *Abraham* also: notwithstanding all the holinesse wherewith he was indued. By *teachers*, they vnderstand *Moses* and *Aron*, which *sinned*: albeit they were adorned with singular graces. And if the case stood so with your *father* and *teachers*, how much more are you *sinners*, who are their inferiours? And thus according to their sense, it should bee an argument taken from the greater to the lesse.

The Prophets argument according to some interpreters. Adam. Abraham. Moses. Aron.

An argument from the greater to the lesse.

But I vnderstand it otherwise; for vnder this word *father*, *he comprehends not onely one or two* of their predecessors, *but many*; and that *by a change of the number*. A thing vsuall among the Hebrewes. And this manner of reprehension is often found both in the Prophets, as also in the booke of Psalmes: for they knowing themselues to be the holy nation, they swelled in pride against the Lord; as if this honour had been due vnto them, either in regard of the excellencie or merits of their *fathers*: and thus the right of inheritance made them swell. The Prophets therefore were carefull from time to time, to discouer the iniquities of their *fathers*: for which cause Saint *Stephen*, who succeeded them, is bold to pronounce, that they had alwaies resisted the holy Ghost: Acts 7.51. As if he should say; You haue not begun this day to be thus wicked; *your fathers* were as bad long agoe. Of an euill Crowe, there is issued forth a naughtie egge. But you, saith our Prophet, are growne *worse* then your fathers, and far surpasse the wickednesse of your predecessors: so as if the Lord had onely respected you as you are in your selues, hee might iustly haue consumed you long since.

Stephen.

A Prouerbe.

In the next place he addes their *teachers*; to shew that the fault rested not onely in the people: for euen those which ought to haue been their guides and leaders, to wit, the *Priests and Prophets*, were first in the transgression, and plunged them into error which followed them. And thus (to bee short) hee shewes that there was no estate nor condition free from vices nor corruptions. As if the Lord should haue said; Let them goe now and brag of their merits, & let them alleadge any way but the least shew of reason why I should be bound to succour them, and they shall find there is nothing but my free mercy.

If any shall obiect, that it is iniustice *to reproch the children with the offences of their forefathers*, because it is written, *The soule that sinneth shall die*: and, *The sonne shall not beare the iniquitie of his father*: Ezech. 18.20. The answer is easie, for the Lord punisheth the sinnes of the fathers vpon their children which succeeded them: and yet they are not punished for the faults of another, seeing themselues stand guiltie of the same crimes. And when it so falles out that the Lord smites the whole body of a people, *hee couples the fathers with the children*, that he may wrap them all in the same condemnation.

Obiect.

Answ. God punisheth the children of wicked parents, because they walke in their steps.

Verſ. 28. *Therefore I haue prophaned the rulers of the Sanctuarie, and haue made Iaakob a curse, and Israel a reproch.*

THe letter *Vau*, must bee resolued into a coniunction of concluding: and the verb *To pollute*, should bee translated in the future tence, though it may also bee left in the preterperfect. Yet I had rather turne it; *shall pollute*: and to apply it to the time of the captiuitie, in regard he speakes properly to those which should liue in Babylon. If any had rather extend it to the diuers calamities wherewith the Lord afflicted his people, and so ioine it to the captiuitie of Babylon, it will not be greatly amisse. And it may be the sense will runne better, if we should say, that hee speakes here of those things which often fell out before; to the end he might warne them for the time to come, not to stand too much vpon their pantables, lest with shame and great dishonour, they againe receiued the iust reward of their ingratitude. He sets forth the cause of their ruine then, in regard that both fathers and children were to drinke of one cup, who ceased not to sin, but would frō day to day kindle Gods wrath against them without ceasing; not giuing ouer their bad courses till God seuerely scourged them.

This verse contains the cause of the Iewes ruin.

Now it is said that God *prophanes the rulers of his Church*, when hee despiseth and reiects them as things of nought: and so it is taken in Psal. 89. and in many other places. For euen as when we are set apart, and sanctified by him, we dwell vnder the wings of his safegard and protection, as long as wee retaine and keep that sanctitie pure and vndefiled: so as soone as we cast the same off, he *prophanes* vs, because wee cease to be holy; and so wee make our selues also vnworthy of his defence. And thus hee laies them open for a pray to the enemies, which before he called his annointed, and could not indure that any should touch them. But is it not strange that the *Priests*, which represented the person of

The sense of this word, To profane. Psal. 89.

God prophanes vs, because we cease to be holy.

Christ, should be said to be *polluted*? The reason is, because they erred out of the right way themselues, who should haue been lights to others.

The Hebrew word *Cherem*, which I haue translated *execration*, is as much to say, as cutting off: but it also signifies execration; and therefore I haue iudged it to sute best with this place, because *reproch* followes. The Prophet borrowes all these words from *Moses*, whom he followes so neere, that we may well discerne the stile of the one, in the writings of the other. The Prophets therefore forged nothing of their owne heads: for thus saith *Moses*; Thou shalt be an astonishment, a *prouerbe*, and a *scorne* to all nations, whether the Lord thy God shall leade thee: Deut. 28.20.37. Thus then hee threatens to afflict this people in such wise, that they should be a *reproch vnto all*; for whosoeuer hee were that gaue himselfe to cursing, this people should bee a fit subiect for such a one to exercise his *execrations* vpon, so as hee might make them the foote of his cursing song. Euery one should haue such a fling at them, that their name should flie abroad as a common prouerbe from one to another, in euery ones mouth that were disposed to scorne. As for example, the name of a Iew at this day (howsoeuer it bee honourable in it selfe) yet how odious and hatefull is it? The Lord then pronounceth by *Isaiah* these horrible threatnings, to teach them that they could not bee too seuerely punished for their hainous offences; and that when God should beginne to visit them, they should haue no cause to complaine of ouer hard measure, neither should they thinke that the Prophet was too sharpe in his reprehensions.

Iaiah followes Moses stile.

The name of a Iew iustly execrable at this day, howsoeuer it be honourable in it selfe.

THE XLIIII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Yet now heare O Iakob my seruant, and Israel whom I haue chosen.*

The coherēce of this verse, with the latter part of the former Chapter.

ISaiah hauing a little before taxed the wickednes of the Iewes; and also hauing pronounced that they were all worthie to perish eternallie, in regard that as well small as great, had *defiled* themselues in all things. He now somewhat sweetens the sharpnesse of the chastisements, and beginnes to comfort them. I expound the particle *Vau* here, *Yet*: as in many other places. Euen as if he had said; *Albeit you are inuironed with many miseries, yet heare now what I will doe for your sakes.* For this verse ought to be knit to the argument afore going, because the Lord shewes hee will neuer suffer the people vtterly to perish, though he be content they should feele much smart for a time.

God will neuer suffer vs to perish, though he lets vs feele a little smart for a time.

Hence let vs gather, that Gods wrath is neuer so far inflamed against his Church, but he alwaies leaues some place for his mercie, which we haue often noted before. As often therefore as the Prophets threaten; they euer adde some word of *consolation*, seruing to mitigate the former seuerity.

Doctrine.

But lest we should imagin mē deserued this by their good *seruices*, he addes, *whom I haue chosen*: for God calles vs not to be his *seruants* for any dignitie or merit he sees in vs, but because he hath made vs meete (to be partakers with the Saints in light) by his free *election*. In this place then the two words, *seruant* and *chosen*, haue the same signification: yet so, that election goes before. And therefore *Dauid* saith, that hee was Gods *seruant* before he was borne; because he was receiued into his household from his mothers wombe: Psal. 116.16.

Merits still excluded.

Coloss. 1.12.

Election goes before vocation.

Vers. 2. *Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the wombe; he will helpe thee: Feare not O Iakob my seruant, *and thou righteous whom I haue chosen.*

*Or, my beloued whom, &c.

ALbeit he dealt roundly with the Iewes in the latter end of the former Chapter, to strippe them of all false confidence, and to humble them that hee might driue them to *seeke pardon*: yet now hee sweetly allaies that tartnes, with a speech full of exceeding comfort, to assure them that they should lose nothing by renouncing themselues. Therefore we must heere supply some oppositions thus; *True it is, O Iakob, that in thy selfe thou art nothing: but thy God that formed thee will not despise the vworke of his owne hands. There is no worthinesse at all in thee that can procure thy redemption from ruin and destruction; but mine adoption, for the which I haue vouchsafed as a mercifull father to receiue thee, shall be more then sufficient to saue thee.*

Chap. 43.25.

Some oppositions supplied.

But we must note what I haue oft told you before; to wit, that the Prophet speakes not heere of the *first creation*, as wee be borne naturally the sonnes of *Adam*, but of *regeneration*, which is onely proper and peculiar vnto the elect, by which it comes to passe that they haue place in the Church of God. And to the end men should attribute nothing to themselues, as if they had moued God hereunto, hee addes, *which formed thee from the wombe*: by which words, he sets before them that couenant which was at the first made with their fathers, in the right whereof, God had set them apart also to be his people, euen before they were borne: which some refer vnto the person of *Iakob*, because by taking his brother by the heele, he gaue an excellent testimo-

See Chap. 43. 21.

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nie of his election: but this is conſtreined. I rather therefore referre it further; to wit, That the Lord ſhewed himſelfe liberall and bountifull vnto his people frō the *beginning*: and thus he takes away from them all boaſting of merits, becauſe he *formed* them at the firſt of his free grace, and hath ſtill from time to time freely added new benefits to the former.

He will help thee.] Others ſupplie the relatiue *Ci*, as if he had ſaid, Thy helper: notwithſtanding, it ſeemes beſt to reade it apart, and the ſenſe had bin clearer if we had read it in the firſt perſon, *I will help thee*: but the difference is not great. The ſumme of the whole comes to this; that he which is the *Creator* of the people, will be readie *to ſuccor* them when the appointed time is come. In which regard it is free for euery one to reſt in the expoſition he thinks beſt: yet I had rather follow the plaine and the leſſe conſtrained ſenſe, without ſupplying any thing.

If God haue regenerated vs he will ſurely help vs.

The word *Ieſhurun* is diuerſlie expounded, for ſome would deriue it of *Iaſchar*, which ſignifies, To be vpright, or, To pleaſe: others deriue it otherwiſe: but I agree rather with thoſe who tranſlate *Beloued*, deriuing it from the verb aboue mentioned. *Moſes* alſo hath giuen this title to the Iſraelites in his ſong, Deut.32.15: for howſoeuer ſome tranſlate the Hebrue word there *vpright*, as in this place, yet the old tranſlation agrees beſt, which reades it, *My beloued* is waxed fat. Now our Prophet adornes his people with this name, to the end that by the remembrance of benefits paſt, they might conceiue good hope for the time to come.

A generall and perpetuall rule.

For the faithfull are to hold this as a generall and perpetuall rule, that by mercies formerlie receiued they ought to expect no leſſe fauors for hereafter, otherwiſe we ſhould ſauour too much of ingratitude; and ſhould ſhew our ſelues not to reſt at all in the promiſes: which if they were ſoundly and deeply imprinted in our hearts, would worke a ſetled peace and tranquillitie of ſpirit: not to make vs idle, but to chaſe away al inordinate feares and diſtruſt.

A ſoueraigne remedie to appeaſe our feares.

For which cauſe he once againe repeates, *Feare not ô Iaakob*: whereunto alſo belongs that conſolation of Chriſt, Luk.12.32. Feare not little flock, for my Father takes pleaſure in you, and will giue you the Kingdome. And queſtionleſſe among ſo many dangers which threaten vs with death on euery ſide, there is no remedie more ſoueraigne to appeaſe our feares then this ſentence, namely, that God vouchſafeth ſo farre forth to fauour vs, that we ſhall be euerlaſtinglie ſaued by him. By the word *Beloued* then he giues them the better to vnderſtand, that their ſaluation depends vpon the grace and good will of God, who reſerues and attributes whollie to himſelfe all that which is found praiſe-worthie in his people.

Verſ. 3. *For I will powre water vpon the thirſtie, and floods vpon the dry grōd: I will powre my ſpirit vpon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing on thy buds.*

In the former verſe he promiſed them help: here he deſcribes the meanes.

HE continues on the ſame argument, and therewithall ſhewes wherein this promiſed *help* ſhall ſtand. We muſt ſtill keepe in mind therefore that theſe propheſies are to be referred to thoſe wofull and dolefull times whereof mention hath bin made before: to wit, when all things were confuſed, the people forſaken, and all the promiſes of God ſeeming as if they had been of none effect: the Prophet therefore meets with theſe doubts, and compares the people to a *drie* and *thirſtie ground* which hath no moyſture left in it: which ſimilitude *Dauid* vſeth Pſal.143.6. to ſet forth his miſerie. Now howſoeuer they were ouerwhelmed with ſorrowes and had loſt all vigor, yet leſt their hearts ſhould faint within them in theſe extremities, they were to ſet theſe and the like ſweete ſentences before them.

The vſe for vs.

And wee alſo are to haue our recourſe to ſuch promiſes as oft as dangers beſet vs on euery ſide, ſo as we can ſee nothing but preſent death ready to ſwallow vs vp quick: and by this meanes ſhall we remaine more then conquerors. But it is required that we be ſuch as haue a ſenſe and feeling of our *thirſt* and pouertie, that ſo our fainting and parched ſoules may cheerefullie receiue refreſhing from theſe *floods*.

By the word *ſpirit*, he tels vs what is ſignified by *waters* and *floods*. The *ſpirit* is alſo called *water* in Ezech.36.25. but in a diuers ſenſe. For when *Ezechiel* attributes the name of *waters* to the *holy Spirit*, he calles them *pure waters*: hauing reſpect to the purgations vnder the Lawe. *Iſaiah* will afterwards likewiſe call the holy Spirit *water*, but in another reſpect: to wit, in that it giues ſtrēgth and vigor to fainting ſoules, by his ſecret and inward power. But here the Prophets words haue a further extent: for he not only ſpeakes of the ſpirit of regeneration, but there is an alluſion to that generall vertue which it ſheds into all the creatures, whereof the Pſalmiſt ſpeakes, Pſal.104.30. When thou ſendeſt forth thy *ſpirit*, they are created: and thou renueſt the face of the earth. Now as *Dauid* there in the firſt place ſhewes that *all the parts* of the world *are renued* by that ſecret power which God breathes into them: ſo afterwards he attributes vnto the Lord a ſufficient abilitie, forthwith (as ſoone as it pleaſeth him) to *renue* the whole frame of heauen and earth, that it ſhould not fall to ruine. In the ſame ſenſe doth our Prophet call *water*, the *ſudden reflouration* of the Church: as if he ſhould ſay, the reſtoring therof is in the hand of God, as well as it reſts in him by dewes or ſhowers to fructifie barren & parched grounds. Thus the *Spirit* is compared vnto *water*, becauſe without it all things would fade and wither with drouth: he it is alſo that reuiues the world by a ſecret ſprinkling of it with his power, and redreſſeth the barrennes that proceeds of heate and drouth, whereby the earth recouers a new face as it were: which

This word Spirit here not only ſignifies the ſpirit of regeneration, but that generall vertue which it ſheds into all the creatures.

is yet further amplified by the word *blessing*, added in the end of the verse.

Vers. 4. *And they shall grow as among the grasse*, and *as the willowes by the riuers of waters.*

This verse is an amplification of the former.

THere is nothing contained in this verse, but that which I haue alleadged out of the hundreth and fourth Psalme; to wit, that when God *sends forth his Spirit*, then the whole face of the earth is renued, and the things which were before parched vp with heate, shall beginne to wax greene and florishing; euen as the hearbs sprout, after they haue been watered by the dewes from heauen. He amplifies his speech by these similitudes, and shewes more plainly, that it shall be no lesse difficult for God to repeople his Church a new, which was barren and deformed, in regard of the wofull estate in which shee was, then to giue the *earth power to bud, and bring forth grasse and hearbs.* Moreouer, albeit hee speakes not properly heere of regeneration: yet may wee refer this sentence vnto it, because hee handles the doctrine of the Churches restauration, whereof regeneration is a principall part: for God thereby repaireshis image in his elect & chosen people. We might insist longer vpon this matter, and lay it out more fully, but we must first labour to attaine the Prophets meaning, and shew the plaine and native sense of his words.

Regeneratiō a principall part of the Churches restauration.

Vers. 5. *One shall say, I am the Lords: another shall bee called by the name of Iakob: and another shall subscribe with his hand vnto the Lord, and name himselfe by the name of Israel.*

Hitherto the Prophet hath spoken vnder borrowed speeches, now he sets forth the thing plainly.

HItherunto the Prophet hath spoken by similitudes, but now he deliuers his mind plainly and without any figures, shewing what these *buds* and *hearbs* bee, whereof hee hath spoken; to wit, that the Lord will gather his people out of all nations, and will bring them into his Church, which were far off before: also that he would restore and augment the same, which in a manner seemed to bee brought to nothing: for all should runne vnto it out of all quarters of the world, and should *craue that they might bee inrolled among the faithfull*: according to that which is said in Psal. 87. Behold, Philistia, Tyre, and Ethiopia; *there was he borne.* Which place of the Psalme, howsoeuer it hath seemed to be obscured by the ignorance of the expositors, yet it serues to giue light to this propheeie. For we know the number of those which returned from the captiuity were very few: the faithfull therefore had cause to bee astonished, and to blush for shame: much more cause had they to be hindered from comprehending the glorious and wonderfull worke of their redemption, which was so highly extolled by the Prophets. The author of this Psalme therefore labours to preuent this astonishment, and giues them to vnderstand that the *Babylonians* and *Egyptians* shall also become members of the Church: that the *Ethiopians, Tyrians*, and all such as were strangers, should come and be incorporated into the number of Gods chosen. As if he should say, Ierusalem is now desolate indeed, yet will God not onely gather together his banished, but will also call *from euery part of the world*, and make them one body, which now are sundered, in such sort, that they shall reioice that God hath made them Citizens with the Saints, and shall no lesse appertaine to the body of the elect, then if they had issued forth of the same.

Now for as much as wee are wont *to take their names*, who are to be *inrolled* in bookes, the Prophet hauing respect vnto this custome, vseth these phrases of speech: One shall subscribe with his hand vnto the Lord, and shall *name himselfe* by the name of Israel: another *shall protest* I am the Lords, and shall *call himselfe* by the name of Iacob. By which words the Prophet signifies that this shall bee a new and extraordinarie worke, when hee which before was a meere stranger frō God, should now reioice that hee was adopted of him. *Shall be called* signifies heere as much as wee vsually say, To bee called by anothers name: as in the fourth Chapter, where it is spoken of the women which desired husbands, onely to take away their rebuke and shame, We will eat our owne bread, and will weare our owne garments: onely let *vs bee called by thy name.*

Now howsoeuer *Isaiah* seemes to make distinction heere betweene such as in expresse termes professe themselues to be *Gods people*; and those which desired to bee called *by the name of Iaakob*, yet the two members are to be referred both to the one and to the other: for to be *Gods child*, and to bee *of Israel*, are things conioined with an inseparable band. Why so? *Because God will be Father to none, but such as haue the Church for their mother.* And yet *we also note, that there are no true Citizens of the Church, but such as subiect themselues vnder the Lords dominion.*

God wils that all his children should acknowledge the Church for their mother.

If the Prophet had omitted this word *Lord*, and had onely mentioned *Iakob* and *Israel*, yet we must haue risen from thence to the *fountaine* of *Iakob, of whom all things in heauen and in earth are named.* But to take away all ambiguitie, he repeates this order twice; to wit, that those onely are to bee accounted the children of *Iakob*, which submit themselues to God.

The Prophets drift.

By this we may easily see the Prophets drift: for he shews that the church no sooner feeles the want of Gods *blessing*, vers. 3. but by little and little she falles to ruin, and withers away: on the cōtrary, when the *Spirit* is shed abroad vpon her, she by & by recouers new strength and force; not onely in regard of obtaining her first beautie and glory, but contrary to all hope, shee attaines wonderfull increases. We are also to note that the Prophet speakes not heere of the order of nature, as if the new children of the Church were borne so; for no man gets such a dignitie by his owne industry: but when those which were strangers

gers before, ſhall be regenerated; then the Prophet ſaith, they ſhal come and *giue in their names*, to teſtifie, that they are indeed the children of God. We ſee here therefore a deſcription of a change which farre ſurmounts nature, and all reaſon of fleſh and blood: to wit, when out of the *curſed race of Adam*, there iſſues *a ſpiritual Iſrael*.

A change farre ſurmounting all humane reaſon.

Some thinke that *Iſaiah* notes heere how ſmall the number of the faithfull ſhall be, when it is ſaid, *one ſhall ſay:* and *another ſhall be called*; and the third ſhall *ſubſcribe*: but this coniecture wants ground, and the very ſcope of the text eaſily confutes their error. As I thinke therefore, wee haue rather to gather, that the Church ſhall come in by troopes out of diuers nations far remote one from the other: in regard that God will bring home ſtrangers vnder his dominion, and ſo touch their hearts, that they ſhall glory not *in words onely, but in truth*, that they are of the number of his people. Hence alſo wee may obſerue, that true faith cannot be in the heart, but it will forthwith breake out into a voluntarie and franke confeſſion, which may be gathered from theſe foure diſtinct members: *one ſhall ſay, I am the Lords: another ſhall be called by the name of Iakob: the third ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand: and the fourth ſhall call himſelfe by the name of Iſrael*. For the very truth is, that Gods ſeruants ought not to be *mute* or ſilent, but both by words and deeds to teſtifie what is in their hearts, ſeeing they profeſſe to obey him, and reioyce in his *name* the whole courſe of their life.

True faith in the heart will manifeſt it ſelfe by a voluntarie confeſſion. *Pſal.* 116.10. 2. *Cor.* 4.13. *Rom.* 10.10. *Act.* 4.20.

Verſ. 6. *Thus ſaith the Lord the King of Iſrael, and his redeemer the Lord of hoſts; I am the firſt, and I am the laſt, and without me there is no God.*

THe Prophet enters not in to any new diſcourſe, but onely confirmes the former doctrine, which it was needfull for him to do: for mens mindes are wonderfully inclined to diſtruſt, and they are quickly out of heart in the time of aduerſitie; neither can they be raiſed vp by one or two exhortations. He ſpends no waſt labor then in *confirming* this doctrine with ſo many words, becauſe we neuer attribute ſo much to Gods power as we ſhould. We are often diſtracted with penſiue cares, and are ouermuch glued to the things of this life. The Prophet therefore hauing fixed this vnutterable name of *Iehouah* in the forefront, he alſo calles him *King*, and *Redeemer*, becauſe it is not enough to apprehend his power, vnleſſe we be alſo aſſured of his fatherly loue which he beares vs. That the promiſes of God then might haue their authoritie with vs, he not only mentions his *glorie*, but his goodnes alſo, to aſſure vs that it appertaines vnto vs. But it might ſeeme rediculous that he calles himſelfe *King* ſeeing the people were in a maner brought to nothing, yet were the faithfull notwithſtanding to cleaue faſt to this promiſe, ſo as by faith they were euen in this ſeruitude to apprehend a *kingdome to come*, though for the preſent they ſaw not ſo much as any glimps of it. And the very truth is, the former doctrine would neuer haue entred into the minds of men oppreſſed vnder ſo extreme a bondage (yea almoſt ouerwhelmed with deſpaire) had not this preface prepared a way and paſſage for it. But when God familiarly inuites vs vnto him, ſhewing that he indeed *is ours*, faith being allured by ſo ſweet a ſummons breakes forth though it were euen out of hell it ſelfe.

A confirmation of the former doctrine. The reaſon of it.

By theſe two titles of King and Redeemer, the Lord ſets forth his power and loue.

The faithfull by the eies of faith behold glorie in their loweſt abaſement.

In ſaying *I am the firſt*, he meanes not to magnifie *the eternitie* of God, but to ſet forth his *vnchangeablenes*, that ſo the Iewes might beleeue him to be ſuch a one for the time to come, as they had found him in times paſt. But what neceſſitie was there of this, may ſome ſay, ſeeing he ſpeakes to the faithfull, who were rightly informed of this truth alreadie? I anſwer, that albeit men beleeue in God, yet doe they not know him for ſuch a one as he is, and oftentimes they attribute leſſe to him then to a creature. Therefore the Prophet would haue vs to lift vp pure hearts vnto heauen, that being emptied of all falſe imaginations concerning him, we might intirely fixe our faith vpon one God only. I adde further, that it was needfull this people ſo extreamely vexed ſhould be confirmed againſt ſuch violent temptations, that they might neither loſe their hope, nor patience.

The vſe of this clauſe, *I am the Lord.*

Obiect.

Anſ.

Verſ. 7. *And who is like me that ſhall call, and ſhall declare it, and ſet it in order before me ſince I appointed the ancient people? and what is at hand, and what things are to come? let them ſhew vnto them.*

NOw the Lord compares himſelfe with Idols, as we haue ſeene before, Chap. 40. 18.19. His purpoſe is to deliuer the Iewes from being diſcouraged or offended when the victorious Babylonians ſhould proudly triumph ouer them: for, the reproches wherewith the wicked loded them, were exceeding intollerable and fearefull, as, *Where is your God? Why doth he not help you now?* Such blaſphemies were ſufficient to haue ſhaken the hearts of the faithfull in ſunder, and ſo farre to diſmay them, as to driue them into vtter deſpaire. The Prophet therefore inſiſts very carefully vpon this point, that he might euer be confirming of them againſt ſuch aſſaults.

Another confirmation of the former doctrine.

Wicked blaſphemies.

This lamentable deſolation into which the people were then falne, was as a thick cloud which ſhadowed from them the ſight of Gods louing countenance: and the wicked on the other ſide reioiced, as if their gods had now obteined the preheminence. But the Prophet intending to ſcatter the darknes of ſuch miſts and clouds of errors, ſhewes, that Gods glorie ſhines as it were in certaine and infallible marks of his *diuinitie*, which diſcernes him from Idols. Why ſo? Becauſe the Lord *foretold all things* that ſhould come to paſſe, to the end his people might acknowledge him a iuſt Iudge in his chaſtiſements inflicted vpon them, and yet might alſo aboue hope be aſ-

ſured, that he would be fauorable and merciſull vnto them.

To call, is taken heere two waies: either it is to be referred to Gods *foreknowledge*, or to *the execution* thereof: for as all things are gouerned by his *prouidence*, ſo doth hee alſo know what is to come, and giues plaine proofes of his *preſcience*. But we neede not ſtand long in diſcuſſing the ſignification of this word, ſeeing it plainly appeares, that the Prophet attributes vnto God both preſcience, and the adminiſtratiõ of al things. Yet I rather iudge, that he refers it to the act: as if he ſhould ſay; Shall there be found any among the gods of the Gentiles, *that can call*: that is, can publiſh, ordaine, and raiſe vp deliuerers? May you not eaſilie diſcerne by this, that there is *none other God but me*? And thus hee derides the Idols, to whom men attributed ſuch power cauſleſly.

By the verbe *to ſhew*, which is preſently added, he ſets forth the ſpeciall goodneſſe of God, who vouchſafed to reueale his ſecrets to the elect and choſen people, by the miniſterie of the Prophets. By *the antient people*, ſome vnderſtand the Gentiles, ſaying, that the ſinguler number is put for the plurall; becauſe the Lord no ſooner furniſhed the nations with people, but he ſeparated them one from another, and eſtabliſhed an order which ſhould indure for euer. Others extend it vnto the creatures, ſo as the ſtarres ſhould bee one people; and the hearbs, beaſts, and ſuch like, ſhould be another. But when I conſider all circumſtances, I am conſtrained to follow another expoſition; to wit, that the Lord ſpeakes *of his people*, and calles them *ancient*, becauſe he preferred them before all others: and yet it is certaine that there were ſome long before them. The Egyptians, Arcadians, and others, brag of their antiquitie. As touching *Abraham*, he came out of Meſopotamia, whileſt the Caldeans floriſhed: and liued ſolitarily in his houſe, as if the memorie of his name ſhould haue been buried in obliuion, when the neighbour Countries were repleniſhed with people, and with all ſorts of benefits. Neither muſt we iudge of *the antiquitie* of Iſrael by the length of yeeres, or in reſpect of any thing externall, *but by Gods election*: for which cauſe indeed, the foundations of Ieruſalem are called *euerlaſting*. It is as much then as if he had ſaid; *Before there were any men to forge or frame Idols, I determined in my ſecret counſell to haue a Church, which ſhould indure for euer.* This people therefore is *the moſt ancient* and excellent of all others, though others be before them both in yeeres and in dignitie. For as all things were created for man, ſo all men were made to ſerue the Church: yea, there is not any nation whatſoeuer, be it neuer ſo high or mightie, which is not much inferiour. For the Church is the body of Chriſt, which far ſurpaſſeth both, in age and excellencie. We will not ſtand to recount fables, as the Iewes doe, who affirme Ieruſalem to be built from the beginning: for the Prophet reſpects not *beginnings of time* here. And yet wee muſt hold this principle, that the elect people are more honourable and ancient, then the ſtrange nations; becauſe they approch neerer vnto God, who is the *fountaine of eternitie*.

Egyptians, Arcadians, Abraham. *Gen.* 11. 31.

We muſt fetch our antiquitie from Gods election.

All men made to ſerue the Church. The Church Chriſts bodie, therefore ſhee is the moſt ancient and excellent of all. Fables. A principle.

Let them ſhew.] This permiſſion giuen, ſhewes that men ſhall but loſe their time in looking for any anſwer from Idols, touching the foretelling of things to come: and if they ſhould, yet their anſwers would proue nothing but impoſtures and words, hauing alwaies a double ſignification, wherewith they were ſure to bee ſeduced that went to aske counſell of them, as wee haue ſaid heeretofore.

Idols vſed equiuocation.

Verſ. 8. *Feare yee not, neither be afraid: haue I not told thee of old, and haue declared it? You are euen my witneſſes, whether there be a God beſide me, or a* *God that I know not.

*Or, ſtrong.

ISaiah ſhewes now wherefore hee ſpake of the power of God; to wit, that hee might confirme the peoples faith: for this is the concluſion which he gathers out of the former arguments: *Seeing the Lord is ſo powerfull, and gouernes all things after the counſell of his own will, therefore the people whom he hath taken into his protection, haue no cauſe to feare.* In the next place hee repeates that which was ſaid before; to wit, that God had not onely ſuccoured the Iewes in hugger mugger, in ſhewing himſelfe at vnawares, when none waited for his helpe; but had alſo vpheld their faith by many prophecies, and gaue them ſufficient teſtimonies of his fatherly fauour: ſo as his diuinitie was manifeſted to the vtmoſt. For what ſhould it profit vs to know that God both foreſees and is able to doe all things, if he did not therewithall manifeſt the ſame vnto vs concerning our ſaluation? Albeit then it is his pleaſure that many things ſhould be vnknowne to vs, yet hee communicates ſo much of his counſels, as is expedient and fit for vs to vnderſtand.

A concluſion out of the former arguments.

The knowledge of Gods preſcience and power ſhold little auaile vs, if he manifeſted not the ſame for our good.

The word *Meaz*, ſignifies a long time: or, (if any had rather take it otherwiſe) it notes out an opportunitie or fitneſſe of time: for the Lord reueales his ſecrets vnto his elect, when he ſees the time to be conuenient. But the firſt interpretation ſeemes to me the leaſt conſtrained.

Wherefore you are my vvitneſſes.] His meaning is, as I haue touched before, that the people could not pretend ignorance, if they contented not themſelues with one God, ſeeing he hath ſo fully manifeſted himſelfe vnto them, that they might be the beſt *vvitneſſes* of his diuine power. What is the end of our knowledge then concerning Gods glorie? Euen openly to *vvitneſſe* the truth of God before men, as hath been ſaid before: vnleſſe we had rather be counted ſmotherers of that light which hee hath manifeſted vnto vs by his holy Spirit. Moreouer, we can be no *lawfull vvitneſſes* of Gods truth, if he confirme vs not by his truth: for what validitie is there in his teſtimony, who doubts of the truth which he is to profeſſe? Wee muſt therefore be both taught by Gods word, if we will haue ſuch

ſuch a faith and hope as accompliſheth ſalvation.

He attributes heere vnto God the title of *ſtrength*, as in many other places; becauſe it is not enough to know the eternall eſſence of God, vnleſſe wee therewithall aſcribe vnto him power & ſtrength. Otherwiſe, we ſhould leaue him onely a bare and naked title, as the vnbeleeuers doe; who indeed confeſſe there is a God with their mouthes, and afterwards attribute his power to this and that creature.

Verſ. 9. *All they that make an Image are vanitie, and their * delectable things ſhall not profite them: and they are their owne witneſſes that they ſee not nor know: therefore they ſhall be confounded.*

* Or, deſirable.

THe Lord now on the contrarie ſhewes how miſerable the Idolaters are which erre and vaniſh away in their inuentions, being not faſt grounded vpon his eternall truth, to wit, they are ſenſeleſſe and void of ſound iudgement. And as he hath heretofore iuſtly condemned the ingratitude of the people, if by the teſtimonies of Gods preſcience and prouidence they were not incouraged to hope well: ſo now on the contrarie, he armes and fortifies them againſt the ſuperſtitions of the Gentiles. But in regard the vnbeleeuers were many in number, and flowed in forces and riches, he denounceth that *all is vanitie*; and to be ſhort, that all their goodly ſhewes would proue deceiptfull helps in the end. By their *deſirable* things, he not only comprehends their Idols, but alſo all their ſeruice, veſtments, pomp, and ceremonies, which fooles are wont to honour them withall. And he ſets out theſe things by a very fit word: for ſeeing the chiefe end of mans life conſiſts in aduancing the true knowledge and worſhip of God (wherein ſtands the maine difference betweene vs and brute beaſts) ſo muſt it be preferred before all things be they neuer ſo excellent: to this (I ſay) we ought to referre all the thoughts and *deſires* of our hearts. It is not without cauſe then that the Scripture vſeth this word, when it ſpeakes of Gods worſhip and ſeruice: but it is vſed here touching a corrupt and *furious zeale* wherewithall Idolaters are caried away after their Idols, and their ſeruices: for this cauſe he ſaith that all their *deſirable things* about which they ſpend ſo much time, are both vaine and vnprofitable. Oftentimes alſo this *deſire* is compared to the filthie luſt wherewith men are ſo bewitched, or wholly blinded, that they can not ſee their villanie, nor yet obey common reaſon, whereof we haue largely ſpoken in the firſt Chapter.

The faithfull armed againſt the ſuperſtitions of the Gentiles.

Deſirable.

The chiefe end of mans life.

In that he addes, *themſelues are vvitneſſes*: ſome expound it that the Idols beare witnes againſt themſelues, and plainely teach what vanitie there is in thé, ſo as they which perceiue it not are wonderfullie blinded. But I like not of this expoſition: I had rather follow thoſe therefore which referre this to the Idolaters, who can *ſine ſufficiēti teſtimonio* themſelues of their vanitie, and know that indeed their Idols neither *heare nor ſee*.

There is an oppoſition in this place betweene Gods witneſſes verſe 8. and the Idols witneſſes in this verſe, for the firſt yeeld a glorious witnes to the truth of God by the ſight of his works, and the vnderſtanding of his propheſies and promiſes: the others are conſtrained to ſtand mute and dumb, vnleſſe they will lie falſlie, and beare witnes to vaine things, hauing no truth at all in them. I denie not but Idolaters brag of their ſeruices, and extoll them aboue the skies: but this blind conſcience of theirs doth more then ſufficientlie witnes how great vanitie and wauering of mind there is in that which they doe: for they alwaies tremble and are in continuall vnquietnes, though they carie it out with great ſtirres by their rebellions. *Themſelues* then are *vvitneſſes* againſt their Idols: as if one hauing an ignorāt teacher, ſhould plead againſt his inſufficiencie. So the Idolaters ſhall *teſtifie* that their gods neither know, nor are able to doe ought; becauſe they are driuen to confeſſe that the matter whereof they conſiſt is nothing but wood and ſtone, or ſuch like ſtuffe wrought with hands: and that things thus framed and faſhioned can neither ſee nor feele ought at all. The faithfull therefore only are the lawfull and true witneſſes, in affirming that their God both ſeeth, gouernes, and effects all things done in heauen and in earth. The reſt muſt needs be *confounded*, albeit they ſtoutlie maintain their errors ſtow with fire and fagot, for their owne conſciences beare them witnes that their minds are enthralled with a vaine opinion, and corrupt imaginations.

Idolaters need no better confutation of their Idollworſhip then their owne blind conſciences.

Simile.

Verſ. 10. *Who hath made a God, or molten an Image, that is profitable for nothing?*

HE now derides mens madnes who preſume to be the forgers of gods: for is it not an horrible and execrable thing that a mortall creature ſhould dare to *make himſelfe a Creator?* truly there is no reaſonable man that would not greatly deteſt ſuch a furie, and yet the moſt part are caried away with ſuch a ſenſeles rage euen to *make gods*; and no admonition whatſoeuer can reclaime them. But they will anſwere me, that they haue no ſuch thought, and that we do them great wrong to accuſe them of ſuch follie. And the Papiſts at this day tell vs that we belie them, and offer them iniurie in vſing this and the like teſtimonies of ỹ Prophets againſt them: but they indeuor in vaine to iuſtifie themſelues by ſuch cauils. For *Iſaiah* very truly affirmes that they are ſo bewitched, that they thinke they can *make a god*: in regard they attribute a diuinitie to blocks and ſtocks; as ſoone as they be once framed and poliſhed, then they forthwith run a gadding after thé, they vow vnto them, they pray and bow their knees before them: in a word, they attribute that

Idolaters ſcorned.

Papiſts forgers of gods.

Papiſts attribute a diuinitie to the Images which the caruer hath made.

that to them which belongs only vnto God.

Which is profitable for nothing.] This is to be well obserued, for by these words it is euident that all figures, by which men would represent God, are condemned for vaine and *vnprofitable*. Whence it followes, that God is not only blasphemed, and oft times his glorie giuen to dead stocks, but that those which *make* and *receiue them*, do also *lose their labor* to their owne confusion of face. The Papists alledge that these be lay mens bookes. But this is a weake and childish shift: for the Prophet testifies, that they are *profitable for nothing*. I wish them therefore either to confesse that their Images are vaine and vnprofitable, or if they dare be so bold, to blot this testimonie of our Prophet out of his booke. In a place before, hee hath expressed somewhat more: for Chap. 41. 23. he saith they teach nothing but lies. But wee haue spoken sufficiently of this matter in the 40. and 41. Chapters.

Images made to represent God, good for nothing.

Images lay mens books.

Note.

Vers. 11. *Behold, all that are of the fellowshippe thereof shall bee confounded; for the workemen themselues are men: let them all be gathered together, and stand vp*, yet *they shall feare, and be confounded together.*

HEe not onely rebukes the workemen and forgers of Idols, but all Idolaters, who are so blind and senslesse, as to inclose the power of God within a truncke of wood, as soone as it hath but receiued a *new forme*. His meaning is then, that the *arts men* should not onely be punished for their *presumption*, but those also which shall be *companions* with them in their superstitions. These shall not escape: for it is good reason that both being guiltie of the same crime, they should both receiue like iudgement. Now they cannot by anie meanes excuse themselues, in regard they see that their Idols are vaine and dumbe, forged and framed with mans hand: how can they be gods then?

A reproofe both of Idoll makers, and Idoll worshippers.

See Psal. 97. 7

Let them all be gathered.] As if he should say; Let Idolaters and their Idols *combine* themselues together; yet shall they *feare* and bee *confounded*, when they shall stand vp before Gods tribunall seat.

But it is not without cause that the Prophet threatens them with *feare* and *confusion*: for Idolaters are wont proudly to aduance themselues, and to despise others. They glory much in their multitude, as the Papists doe now adaies; who in reproch and disdaine, esteeme vs but a small handfull. They insolently insult ouer vs, and band themselues with wonderfull pride both against God and his word. *Isaiah* therefore appeales heere to the consciences of such men: for howsoeuer obstinacie and extreme rebellion of heart hath possessed them, yet are they constrained to *tremble* and quake when they are alone, crying out, What shall wee doe? especiallie when they looke towards the end of all their actions: for they haue no stabilitie whereupon they may boldly rest. When their rage prickes them forward, then they are audacious enough; but when they come againe to themselues, and at leasure bethinke them what they haue done, they melt away for verie feare. Their furie, pride, and multitude then, ought not to terrifie nor astonish vs. Why so? Because all this wil in a moment be brought to nought. Let vs not be much moued therefore at the *combinations*, brauadoes, and diuelish plottings of the Papists, seeing we know that all these things shall turne to their ouerthrow; for the more they ouerflow in insolency, and aduance themselues against God, the more heauie and shamefull shall their extreme fall be.

A multitude.

Idolaters forced to quake, will they nil they, because they haue no firme resting place.

Papists bold for a brunt.

Vers. 12. *The smith* taketh *an instrument, and worketh in the coales, and fashioneth it with his hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his armes: yea, hee is an hungred, and his strength faileth: hee drinketh no water, and is faint.*

13. *The Carpenter stretcheth out a line, he fashioneth it with a red threed: he planteth it, and he pourtraieth it with the compasse, and maketh it after the figure of a man*, and *according to the beautie of a man, that it may remaine in an house.*

IT is not in vaine that the Prophet makes this large description; for his meaning is to rouze vp the drowsie consciences of the superstitious, out of their senslesse blockishnes; if by any meanes he might either terrifie, or at least hinder the Iewes from being made drunke with this poisoned cup: for they were compassed about on all sides with an infinite number of idolaters. He disciphers out euerie thing point by point, that he might giue them cleerly to discerne of their spirituall frensie and madnesse. I grant he might haue condemned this their wickednesse euen in few words; but this large description makes it very apparant, when hee thus reckons vp the *Smith*, the *Carpenter*, the *tooles*, *labour*, and *diligence* of these workemen; to bring vs (as you would say) euen to the acting of the thing it selfe. For men who naturally haue these errors ingrauen in their vnderstandings, are more moued this way, then by a plaine sermon. Neither can they be wakened from their sluggishnesse, but by continuall loud cries. All things therefore must of necessitie be minced out vnto them by small morsels; yea they had neede haue it chewed for them, and put into their mouthes like young children, that so at the last they may comprehend that doctrine, which otherwise seemes new and strange vnto them.

The furie of Idolaters amplified.

Yea, is hungrie.] Hee expresseth the zeale wherewith Idolaters are carried away in forging their gods: for they are so fierie and vehement, that they can keepe no measure at all. Their lusts pricke them forward as mad men,

men, to runne vpon their owne deſtruction: they will not afford themſelues time to *eate* nor *drinke*. This furie therefore may well be compared to the raging luſts of whoremongers, as we haue ſaid before. In a word, they ſpare not their *ſtrength*, but imploy all the faculties & powers both of ſoule & body in this buſineſſe; which is better vnderſtood by *The ſtrength of the wine*. As if he had ſaid, They depriue themſelues of *diet* and *reſt*, they apply to the vtmoſt the *ſtrength of their armes*: yea, they will ſcarſly allow themſelues the common comforts of nature. In a word, they ſpare neither *paines* nor *coſt* to finiſh their gods, which they ſo much *deſire*: verſ. 9.

Now, whereas hee ſaith, that though theſe *faint*, yet they *giue not ouer*, but indure *hunger* and *thirſt*, rather then to hinder their work, it is to be vnderſtood of the *workmen*: yet it may alſo as well extend it ſelfe to all the indeuors of an inconſiderate zeale. For we ſee how the ſuperſtitious will torment their bodies in their feruent deuotions (as they call them.) But the more they melt and pine away themſelues to fall into perdition, the more vile and abominable is our ſloth, when wee defraud God of that ſeruice which to him appertaines. But in the end hee ſhewes with what folly this diligence is filled, ſeeing the whole fruit of their labour is to behold their Idols, idlely to reſt without feare in whatſoeuer place they were faſtened: as if ſome lazie bodie ſhould wallow in the aſhes, or lie all day ſoaking in his bed.

Verſ. 14. *He will hew him downe cedars, and take the pine tree and the oke, and taketh courage among the trees of the forreſt: hee planteth a firre tree, and the raine doth nouriſh it.*

In this verſe the Prophet deſcribes not onely their violent furie, but their wilfull obſtinacie.

THe Prophet ſets forth not onely the zeale and witleſſe rage of Idolaters, but alſo their obſtinacie and rebellion. For in that he ſaith, they *cut downe cedars*, and did *plant a firre-tree*; it is to ſhew that they perſeuered long in their follie, and were not ouertaken with any ſuddē paſſion, which droue them to forge theſe gods. They are not content onely to *chuſe trees* of ſufficient growth, but they alſo *plant* them young, water, and husband them, and *waite a long while*, till they be come to a ſufficient ſtature to make an Idoll of. When wee reade theſe things, and ſee ſuch an horrible rage, let vs know that God takes vs by the necke (as it were) to pull vs thence, and to continue vs in true pietie. Wee muſt take theſe foxes (I meane theſe luſts) betimes, and kill them whileſt they be cubs, leſt if we nouriſh them ouer long in our breaſts, they grow wild and impregnable. Wee are euermore to watch ouer our owne hearts, that a wicked luſt no ſooner creepes in to carry vs away to the loue of Idols, but wee forthwith roote it out, for feare of falling into theſe deepe gulphes; becauſe euen the beſt of vs all beares about with vs ſome ſeedes of this brutiſhnes, which by no meanes can be weeded out: nay, they wil bud & ſprout vp in vs without ceaſing, vnleſſe we be purged of them by the power of the holy Ghoſt.

In that Idolaters are ſo vehement in their Idoll ſeruice, it ought to make vs bluſh, that are ſo cold in Gods ſeruice.

Moreouer, ſeeing Idolaters are thus violently carried downe the ſtreame in ſeruing their Idols, haue not wee cauſe to bluſh for ſhame, that are ſo cold in the ſeruice of our God? Let vs (I ſay) bluſh and be aſhamed of our ſloth and lukewarmneſſe; nay, key coldneſſe, whileſt thoſe that worſhip Idols, are fire hote as it were with zeale: and let vs alſo bethinke vs of the count wee are to make. With what vehemencie are the Turkes carried away, when the matter concernes the maintenance of their Mahomet and his blaſphemies? Are they not ready to ſhed their owne blood, and to giue their liues for the defence thereof? The Papiſts are not behind them herein: for they are no leſſe inflamed with furie to vphold their ſuperſtitions. And we in the meane while can content our ſelues to ſit ſtill; much adoe there is to quicken vp our zeale: nay, doe we not often euen quench thoſe good ſparkles which God hath kindled in vs by his holy Spirit? Heare what *Ieremiah* ſaith; Hath any Nation changed their gods? But my people hath forſaken me the fountaine of liuing waters, to dig vnto themſelues broken pits that can hold no water: Ier. 2. 11. This compariſon therefore ought to be well obſerued, leſt wee be found leſſe conſtant in maintaining the trueth, then Idolaters are obſtinate in defending lies.

Turkes.

Mahomet.

Papiſts.

Note.

Verſ. 15. *A man burneth thereof; for he will take thereof, and warme himſelfe: alſo hee kindleth it, and baketh bread, yet hee maketh a god, and worſhippeth it; he maketh it an Idoll, and boweth vnto it.*

16. *Hee burneth the halfe thereof in the fire, and vpon the halfe thereof hee eateth fleſh: hee roſteth the roſt, and is ſatisfied: alſo hee warmeth himſelfe and ſaith, Aha, I am warme, I haue been at the fire.*

17. *And of the reſidue thereof he maketh a god: hee boweth vnto it, and worſhippeth, praieth vnto it, and ſaith; Deliuer me, for thou art my god.*

Experience, which is the Miſtris of fooles, cannot make theſe fooles wiſe in heart.

HEe worthily taxeth their ſottiſhnes, that manifeſt experience it ſelfe cannot lead them to conclude it for a thing vnpoſſible, that *a trunke of wood* ſhould become a god. He alſo taxeth their vnthankfulneſſe, in defrauding God of his honour, ſeeing his power may eaſily be diſcerned euen in the *growth* of themſelues. For when a man puts wood to diuers vſes, the bountie of God forthwith preſents it ſelfe before his eies, be it in *warming* himſelfe by it, or in *baking* bread in the ouen, in *roſting*, or heating his meate with it. In a word, as oft as we warme vs, and inioy theſe benefits by our fires, ſhall wee not be conuinced of inexcuſable ingratitude, if we therein

therein consider not of Gods goodnesse, who hath so prouided, as to destitute vs of nothing, that is needfull for vs?

Hereunto appertaines these words, *Aha, I am warme*: for this speech expresseth the ioy of such as being freed from incommodities and wants, begin to blesse their owne good estate. But can there be a more vnworthie or vnreasonable thing committed, then for men in such comfortable maner to haue the vse of Gods blessings, that their hearts are therewith filled with gladnes, and yet neuer to be thankfull to the author from whom they proceed; nay, to abuse his great riches to violate his honor? No doubt in the meate that is in their kitchins, and in other commodities, they see that the wood is their seruant and made for their vse, why then should they *bow* before a trunck of wood, that shall resemble the shape of a man? Is not God robbed of his right by such a course? And when they *pray* to their Images, rob they not the Lord of that sacrifice which he principallie requires? The very prophane writers haue sometimes derided the follie of these Idolaters, which durst after their owne inuention frame a god of a corruptible substance, whereof they made no reckoning before. Thence came this flout of the Poet *Horace*, who brings in an Idoll speaking thus:

Horace.

I was once the stock of a figge-tree, serning to no purpose, whilest the Carpenter not knowing whether it were best to make me a seate to sit vpon, chose rather to make me such a god as you now here see mee.

But such folke notwithstanding could not see the fountaine from whence this impietie sprang, because they gaue not themselues to consider of that goodnes and power of the only true God which shines in all his creatures.

Now when the Prophets dealt thus bitterlie against Idolaters in laying forth their furie and sottishnes, no doubt but they complained as if he had offred them great iniurie: neither wanted they their tricks, but to the vtmost coloured ouer their errors with goodly pretences: to wit, they confessed that the gods were in heauen, as may be seene euen in their owne writings: neither would they in expresse termes affirme the stone or wood was a God indeed. And this shift also the Papists haue fownd out at this day against vs, because they would not be condemned of so grosse a blindnes. But we haue told you, that the Prophet stands not so much here to debate about the simple essence of God, who also were no better then an Idoll, if nothing but that were giuen vnto him: but the question here is touching his proprieties, to wit, his *prescience, power, prouidence*, iustice, saluation, and such like, which our Prophet would haue ascribed vnto him fullie and whollie. And when Idolaters erect Images and runne vnto them for aid and succor, supposing that God heares them; also, when they speake to their puppets which they set before them, tie they not their saluation to the things themselues? But this brutishnes proceeds frō the ignorance of the nature of God, in that they imagin him to be carnall like themselues, who is a pure and spirituall substance: and thus they manifest the base opinion they haue conceiued of God, whose glorie they reiect and prophane, in likening him to corruptible and earthly things: for what is more dissonant from his Maiestie then Images? and yet those that worship them, indeuor to include God in heauen, and to make him stoup to their lusts. The Prophet is iustly displeased then with such corruptions, and therefore gaules the furious desires of these superstitious ones, seeing a man can not thinke of nor vtter a thing more detestable.

A shift of the Papists.

1 2 3

Nothing iarres more with Gods Maiestie then Images.

Vers. 18. *They haue not knowne, nor vnderstand: for* God *hath shut their eyes that they can not see, and their hearts that they can not vnderstand.*

* Or, he.

HIs conclusion is, that it were impossible for men indued with common reason to be thus reasonlesse, if *God* had not *shut vp* both their *eies* and *hearts*. For had they but a dram of wit in their heads, they must of necessitie be drawne to consider how absurd a thing it is to worship a fragment of that wood which themselues had burned, and with their owne eies saw it consumed to ashes before them. But in as much as they neither *know* nor *vnderstand* any thing, nor will bee brought to beleeue their owne senses, a man may well conclude, that they are become beasts: for this *ignorance* wherewith *Isaiah* reprocheth them, is as much as if hee had said; *They are beasts in the forme of men*. And howsoeuer many among them were otherwise sharpe witted enough, yet in this behalfe they were more then sufficiently conuinced of their brutish sensleshesse.

The conclusion.

They are become brutish that will not beleeue their owne senses.

The reason added in the latter member of the verse, is not to lessen their fault, but to shew how odious and hatefull their sinne is: for men would neuer become so senseless, vnlesse God in his iust iudgement had giuen them vp into a reprobate sense. Some supplie God heere: others, the false Prophets: affirming that the people were *blinded*, because they were seduced by their impostures; otherwise they had neuer bin plunged into such grosse errors: for false doctrines blind the eies. There are others who take it in another sense, and they refer it to Satan. But because the first exposition is most vsed in the Scriptures, I rather allow of that; to wit, that *God* blinded them iustly. Vnlesse any had rather referre it to the Idolaters themselues, who wittingly are wont to put out the eies of their owne reason: and in this sense there must bee a change of the number; to wit, *they*: a thing much frequented among the Hebrewes: But I haue set downe that which seemed fittest. You may also adde, that it is verie vsuall in the Hebrew tongue, to conceale the name of God, when it mentions him.

1 2

False doctrines blinde the eies.

Now it appeares by many places of Scripture, in what sense God is said to blind the eies, and to harden the hearts; to wit, when he takes away the light of his holy Spirit, and

How God is said to blinde and harden.

and giues men vp to their owne luſts: ſo as they can no more be reclaimed by any perſwaſion. He alſo armes Satan with the efficacie of error, by cauſing him to lay ſuch ſnares in the way of thoſe that receiue not the truth in loue, as they can neuer wind themſelues out, but muſt ſtill be ſubiect to his illuſions and bewitchings. What remaines then but groſſe darkneſſe and blockiſh ignorance, through which this tyrant, the father of lies and of darkneſſe, gets free egreſſe and regreſſe. For there is not left vs ſo much as one ſparkle of light to ſcatter theſe miſts of error: but wee ſhall be driuen on with the Spirit of giddineſſe, wherewith the Lord ſmites the reprobates, ſo as we ſhall be ſtrangely haled to and fro at Satans pleaſure.

The blame of blinding not to be laid vpon God.

And yet we muſt not lay the blame of this blinding vpon God, for hee alwaies findes iuſt cauſe ſo to doe, though many times it be hid and concealed from vs. Neither is it fit we ſhould curiouſly prie into this ſecret, nor to enter into his hidden counſell, vnleſſe we meane withall to beare away the puniſhment of our owne preſumption. I grant the cauſes for the moſt part are moſt apparant, as mens vnthankfulneſſe and rebellion againſt God: as Saint *Paul* deſcribes it at large in the Epiſtle to the Romans, Chap. 1. 28. for their blinding is the iuſt fruit of their deſerts. Howſoeuer men excuſe themſelues then through ignorance, yet this will be no ſufficient plea: for they had neuer heen wrapped in ſuch errors, if the Lord had not done it for their wickedneſſe ſake.

Now from the iuſt iudgements of the one, we may draw ſound and infallible arguments from the iniquities of the other: for God is iuſt, and therefore neuer puniſheth any man vniuſtly; he blindes no man till himſelfe hath deſerued it, and hath wittingly ſhut his owne eies: let the fault therefore reſt wholly in men, who of ſet purpoſe ſeeke their owne blinding and hardening. The Prophets meaning then doubtleſſe is, that men who ought to ſuffer themſelues to bee gouerned by diuine inſtincts, being naturally indued with ſome light of reaſon, were worthily reiected of the father of lights, to be the bondſlaues of Satan.

The fault muſt reſt on man.

Verſ. 19. * *And none conſidereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor vnderſtanding, to ſay, I haue burnt halfe of it euen in the fire, and haue baked bread alſo vpon the coales thereof: I haue roſted fleſh and eaten it; and ſhall I make the reſidue thereof an abomination? ſhall I bow to the ſtocke of a tree?*

*Or, he returnes not to his heart.

A confirmation.

THis is a confirmation of the former ſentence, whereby the Prophet labours to preuent all excuſes, becauſe vnbeleeuers delight to maintaine and vphold their owne ignorance. And whereas it commonly falles out that men haue ripe wits in deuiſing and foreſeeing things for their owne aduantage in the world, but are as blind as Moles or Backes, in things belonging to Gods worſhip and ſeruice; the chiefe cauſe is, that they are too eager in purſuing worldly profits and pleaſures, ſt are too ſlacke in ſeeking firſt the kingdome of God. In this ſentence therefore the Prophet reproues this contempt of pietie and religion, in that hauing fetched ſuch long circuits, yet theſe vnbeleeuers *conſider not* in themſelues whether they are in the right way or no, or whether they labour not in vaine in ſpending ſo much coſt and labour in the purſuit of their errors and ſuperſtitions.

He alſo proues that their ſottiſhneſſe is inexcuſable, in that they giue themſelues to ſuch new found ſeruices. For if they did but weigh all circumſtances a little in an equall ballance, they might eaſilie perceiue their owne groſſe folly: but ſeeing they be blind, it is a ſigne they meane to deceiue themſelues, and to pleaſe themſelues in their blindneſſe. And therefore there is no pretext of excuſe at all left them, which can ſtand them in any ſtead: ignorance they can pretend none, becauſe they will not apply their wits to ſearch out the truth. *Returning into the heart*, is taken heere for conſulting apart by a mans ſelfe: for there is ſcarce a child ſo rude, that may not bee a ſufficient Iudge to condemne ſo palpable a madneſſe. The ſuperſtitious therefore fauour themſelues too much; for they ſinne not altogether of ignorance: neither is this vice ſo much to be attributed to mans naturall corruption, as to his obſtinate and heady opinion.

Verſ. 20. *He feedeth of aſhes: a ſeduced heart hath deceiued him, that hee cannot deliuer his ſoule, and ſay; Is there not a lie in my right hand?*

Another confirmatiõ.

THis verſe againe confirmes the former ſentence. *To feede of aſhes*, ſignifies as much as to be repleat with aſhes: as, to feede vpon winde, Hoſ. 12. 1. ſignifies to bee filled with winde; for the ſame may be ſaid of the one, that is ſaid of the other. As on the contrary, Thou ſhalt feede the truth; Pſal. 37. 3. for thou ſhalt be ſaciate with truth: that is to ſay, filled. Others againe expound, Thou ſhalt adminiſter ſpirituall foode: others, Thou ſhalt feede faithfully. But I had rather follow the firſt interpretation. Heere his meaning is to ſay, that men are ſwollen indeed, but in the meane while they are windie and emptie: for they are onely ſtuffed with vanity, which hath no ſtedfaſtneſſe in it. And therefore they rather burſt with pride, then by being any way ſatisfied with good nouriſhment.

Afterwards he comprehends both the former points againe; to wit, that they *ſee nothing*, becauſe they are intangled with deceitfull baits; and yet that they wittingly and willinglie caſt themſelues into theſe ſnares of vanitie. The Prophet inſiſts long vpon this matter, to ſhew that nothing puſheth forward theſe Idolaters, and the ſuperſtitious ſort to commit theſe outrages, but their own

free will. What reason haue they then to lay the blame vpon others, seeing the cause of these euils proceedes altogether from *themselues?* which euils they will needes retaine and carefully nourish within them. They aduance themselues in wonderfull pride against God, they are replcat with a false opinion of their owne superstitions: in a word, all vnbeleeuers are readie to burst with pride. Let vs in the meane while *feed vpon* the solid meate of sincerittie and truth, and let vs beware we suffer not our selues to be misled by any such delusions.

Notwithstanding he taxeth them (iustly) you see, for pleasing themselues in so foule a vice: for who is it that wil pardon such a carelesnesse, as is ioined with the losse of mens soules? We see how busilie men bestir them, when the naturall life is in ieopardie: stands it not vs much more in hand then, to awaken men out of the slumber of their soules, which are in danger of eternall damnation; especially if wee may doe it by putting forth our hand in pulling them out?

Men busie themselues tooth and naile for the matters of this naturall life.

Moreouer, it is said that he *deliuers his soule*, which by repentance escapes out of Satans nets. And in that sense we are said to saue one another, when we bring men that haue erred into the right way by our holy admonitions. Whence comes it then that Idolaters runne headlong into perdition? Because they take the bridle in their teeth, and wilfully rush into the same, euen as the horse rusheth into the battell.

The cause that plungeth Idolaters into perdition.

Lastly, in the end of the verse hee shortly shewes, the meane whereby men may recouer themselues out of this danger; to wit, in *considering their owne workes*, without flattering of themselues: for he that pleaseth himselfe in his error, and inquires not whether he doth well or no, such a one shall neuer be able to *deliuer his owne soule*. As for example, our Papists will not examine vpon what reason their diuine seruice is grounded, but content themselues to couer such a beastlinesse vnder the cloake of simplicitie; as if God meant to haue a Church of rude asses, or as if hee had not commanded vs to distinguish betweene that seruice hee accepts, and that which he reiects: or as if hee had not commanded vs diligently to search what his good and acceptable will is, lest we should indifferently allow darknesse for light, and sower for sweete. For these things must bee examined by the touchstone of his written word: which if we shall doe, it shall be easie for vs to escape out of the dangers; if not, then let vs lay the cause of our ruine vpon our selues. Why so? Because our meaning is to perish wilfully, in regard wee will not suffer our selues to be brought into the right way, or will not beare the words of exhortation.

Note.

To the law and to the testimonie. Chap. 8.

Vers. 21. *Remember these (O Iakob and Israel) for thou art my seruant: I haue formed thee: thou art my seruant; O Israel forget me not.*

Application.

NOw hee applies that to the peoples vse, which he hath so long insisted vpon before, touching the lies and superstitions of the Gentiles; wherein the ignorant deceiued themselues, especially in the matters belonging to Gods worship and seruice. Now hee writ not this so much for them of his owne time, as for their sakes principally which were to succeede, and should afterward remaine captiues in Babylon. In which regard, they by their long abode among the Idols, were in danger to be corrupted, & declined from the true seruice of God, if they had not been restrained by such bridles. The Prophet therfore admonisheth them, that howsoeuer they should be detained seuenty yeeres in captiuitie, yet they should call these exhortations vnto mind, thereby to sustaine their hearts in their greatest temptations.

Thou art my seruant.] Hee addes this as the reason why they should remember these promises; euen to keepe themselues from this common contagion. For it had been a thing insupportable for the elect people, whom God had incloſed within the limits of his law, thereby to separate them from others, if they confusedly and indifferently should haue mingled themselues among the pollutions of the Gentiles. As if he should say; Wonder not you that the Caldeans are so rife in their errors, neither follow their example: because I haue *formed thee to serue mee*: that is to say, I haue reformed and regenerated thee, that thou mightest be heire of eternall life. Of this *creation* we haue amply spoken heretofore; to wit, that it appertaines to the renewing of the inward man. Now the Scripture is often wont to vse this argumẽt, to wit, You are called to holinesse, and not to vncleanesse: 1. Thes. 4. 7. Also Phil. 2. 15. Walke as children of the light, in the midst of a peruerse and froward nation. With many the like places.

Hence wee gather that wee are worthy of many stripes, if by our careleſnesse and negligence, wee suffer that light of Gods grace wherewith he hath inlightened vs, to go out; because our fault will be much greater then theirs who haue not tasted of the like fauour. I grant the prophane are worthily punished; neither shall the excuse of ignorance be able to serue their turnes: but those that haue receiued grace, and haue abused it, shall bee worthy to be the more seuerely chastised.

Forget me not.] His meaning is, that it is vnpossible for those which were once entred into the good way, to turne aside; vnlesse it bee by forgetting of God. For as long as the remembrance of his Maiestie remaines imprinted in the tables of our hearts, neither errors nor impostures shall euer bee able to take place. Is any reuolted from God then to turne to superstition and impietie? Let him impute it to his owne malice.

Errors will neuer take place in vs, if the remembrance of Gods name bee thorowlie imprinted in vs.

What is the cause of apostasie then? The *forgetfulnesse* of God: for that by little and little drawes vs out of the right way, till at the length we be wholly reuolted. But by the remedie heere prescribed, he assures them that they shall be out of danger to reuolt, namely, if they exercise themselues in continuall meditation: for if our minds grow once careleſse heerein, they gather rust (as it were) which

which infects and corrupts all knowledge of God, till it be cleane eaten out.

Verſ. 22. *I haue put away thy tranſgreſſions like a cloud, and thy ſinnes as a miſt: turne vnto me, for I haue redeemed thee.*

A conſolatorie promiſe.

THe Lord promiſeth deliuerance to his people: for the truth is, that our mindes cannot be raiſed vp to *remember* him as wee ought, vnleſſe we firſt feele him gracious and *fauourable* vnto vs. That hee might preſerue his people which he had *formed* for himſelfe from reuolting then, he addes now *a promiſe of conſolation*; to perſwade with them, that this their baniſhment ſhould not indure for euer: for God (as hee is a moſt patient and louing Father) ſo mitigates their corrections, that hee alwaies forgiues the faults of his children.

When God forgiues the ſinne, he alſo remits the puniſhment.

As touching the *putting away* of their iniquities, it properly belonged to the captiues, which for their *iniquities ſake* ſuffered that puniſhment. Hence it followed therefore that God being appeaſed, their deliuerance was at hand: for it is an argument taken from the cauſe to the effect. If the fault be remitted, ſo is the puniſhment. For the Iewes were no ſooner reconciled with God, but the puniſhment which they ſuffered for their *tranſgreſſions* ceaſed.

An argument taken from the cauſe to the effect.

Now in theſe words there is hid a cloſe exhortation to repentance, not onely to moue them *to ſigh vnder the burthen of their afflictions*, but to acknowledge them as *iuſt recompences of their iniquities*, whereby they had prouoked God vnto wrath. As oft then as he handles vs roughly, wee muſt not craue ſo much to be diſburthened of this our ſorrow and miſerie, as rather to beginne at the forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes, that God would not impute them vnto vs. And heere wee haue cauſe giuen vs againe to meet with that fond diſtinction of the Papiſts, who confeſſe that the *fault* indeed *is forgiuen*, but not the *puniſhment*.

1 2

We ſhould not deſire ſo much the remouall of our puniſhments, as the blotting out of our ſins. The fond diſtinction of the Sophiſters met withall againe, touching the remitting of the fault, and retaining of the puniſhment.

By the ſimilitude of the *cloud*, hee meanes that the Lord would no longer continue to purſue them in his wrath, nor to correct them in his diſpleaſure; becauſe their ſinnes being put out of his ſight, the puniſhment was therewithall alſo aboliſhed. For you ſee that in a faire day, the *clouds* which before darkened the light of the Sunne from vs, are *vaniſhed* and gone. Let vs therefore reiect theſe diueliſh inuentions of men, whereby they labour to ouerthrow this comfortable doctrine of the free remiſſion of ſinnes, ſeeing it flatly croſſeth the doctrine of the holy Prophets.

Simile.

This clauſe which is added, *returne to mee*, may be taken two waies: either that the Lord thereby exhorts them to repentance: or that therein he giues them hope of deliuerance: but both expoſitions may ſute well. We haue told you that it is vſuall in the Scriptures to exhort to repentance, as oft as it mentions our deliuerance: for the Lord purpoſeth by this meanes to draw vs to himſelfe, that hee might thereby fit vs for the receiuing of his benefits. But becauſe the people were in a manner paſt hope of their deliuerance, in reſpect of their owne infidelitie, wee may take theſe words as a confirmation, that from thence the people might vndoubtedly conclude in themſelues, that they ſhould *returne*. As if the Lord ſhould haue ſaid; I know you thinke me to be far from you in this your diſtreſſe, yet be of good cheere, for I am mindfull of you ſtill. Now this latter expoſition pleaſeth me beſt, becauſe as I thinke it ſutes beſt with the text. For the Prophet aboue all things ſtudies how to confirme theſe poore captiues in the promiſes: yea, and if it were poſſible, to ingraue them in their hearts. Well, he commands the Iewes to *turne* vnto the Lord, howſoeuer their long exile hindered them from hoping that he would be their *redeemer*. As if he ſhould haue ſaid; Though I ſeeme to be far from you, and to neglect you, yet be not diſcouraged, for I am reſolued to *redeeme* you.

1 2

Verſ. 23. *Reioice yee heauens, for the Lord hath done it: ſhout yee lower parts of the earth: braſt forth into praiſes, yee mountaines; O forreſt and euery tree therein, for the Lord hath redeemed Iakob, and will be glorified in Iſrael.*

An exhortation to thankſgiuing.

HEe now exhorts the Iewes to *giuing of thanks*, not onely as a teſtimonie of their dutie, but alſo to aſſure them the more fully of their deliuerance. And thus he brings the people as it were to the thing done, no leſſe then if they had ſeene their deliuerance before their eies. For ſuch maner of ſpeeches doe affect vs much more then if the promiſes were deliuered in naked and bare termes. Seeing then the people might ſtand in ſome doubt of their returne, becauſe they languiſhed long in their miſeries, and were almoſt conſumed in them: the Prophet awakens them, and not onely frames them *a ſong* fit for the paying of their vowes, but alſo ſhews that this worke of God ſhall bee ſo glorious, that the very *heauens* and the *earth*, with all the *inſenſible creatures* ſhall admire the greatneſſe and nouelty of it.

Ye mountaines ſound forth praiſes.] We may well interpret, *yee high heauens, and thou earth below, ſing praiſes:* but becauſe he makes mention of the *mountaines*, he cals thoſe the lower parts of the earth which are euen, as the plaines and vallies, to the end that all Countries on which ſide ſoeuer, might be incited to celebrate and magnifie the name of the Lord.

He addes afterwards, that this work which all the creatures are called to behold and admire, is the *redemption of his Church*: (for that is comprehended vnder *Iakob* and *Iſrael*) and ſignifies that Gods *glory* ſhall wonderfullie ſhine therein. Beſides, we are to conſider that which I haue ſaid elſewhere; to wit, that their returne is not ſimply ſet out heere, but the

end thereof also is comprehended vnder it: for they were redeemed out of their captiuitie, vpon condition that God in the end might gather vnder one head (to wit, Christ) a Church composed of all nations vnder heauen.

Vers. 24. *Thus saith the Lord thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the wombe; I am the Lord that made all things, that spread out the heauens alone, and stretched out the earth by my selfe.*

A description of Gods power.

NOw the Prophet will forthwith according to his custome, fall into a description of Gods power; because the promises would little moue vs, vnlesse the doctrine of Gods power were also added, to remoue all doubts and scruples out of our hearts. For it often falles out that by our obstinacie and distrust, wee diminish both the goodnesse and power of God, in attributing lesse vnto the same then we ought: for which respect the Prophet heartens on the faithfull by the excellent titles afterwards mentioned, to the end they might hope aboue hope. And yet he begins with the commendation of the goodnes and fatherly affection which God beares his Church to the very end: for the setting forth of Gods force and power would moue vs but little, if himselfe should not therewithal draw neere to confirme vs in the assurance of his goodnesse. Wee must not begin at his Maiestie then, nor mount so high, for feare of being ouerwhelmed: but this loue of his, by which he graciously drawes vs vnto him, must be imbraced of vs also.

The title of *redeemer* in this place, is referred to the time past, in regard that the Iewes, who were once *redeemed* out of Egypt (as out of a bottomlesse gulph, and that by a miracle almost incredible) ought from the remembrance thereof to be confirmed, in hope of the euerlasting continuance of it from age to age. Hee calles himselfe their *former*, in the same sense which we haue often expounded it before; to wit, because in regenerating those by his Spirit whom he adopts, he makes them new creatures. And thus by the way he puts them in mind of the benefits they had already receiued; that from thence they might conclude, that God would be sure in his promises concerning their deliuerance for the time to come.

Regeneratiõ.

From the vvombe.] Hee addes this also, to teach them to acknowledge that all the benefits they had receiued from God, were vndeserued: for he had *preuented* them by his mercy, euen before they were able to open their mouthes to aske any benefits of him. And by this consideration *Dauid* cheereth vp his spirits in his extreme distresses: It is thou O Lord, saith he, that hast drawne me out of my mothers wombe: thou gauest me hope whilest I sucked my mothers breasts. I was cast vpon thee euen from the *vvombe*: thou art my God from my *mothers belly*: Psal. 22.9,10. But our Prophet speakes not heere of that generall fauour which is common to all men as soone as they are come into the world; but he magnifies that *couenant* whereby God had adopted the posterity of *Abraham*, euen to a thousand generations: for doubtlesse he which hath begun so good a worke, would finish the same vnto the end.

In the next place followes the titles concerning his *power*; to wit, that it is he which of his owne good pleasure did *spread out* both the *heauens* and the *earth*. By the word *spreading out*, his meaning is, that the absolute gouernment of the whole world is in his hands, and that all creatures are subiect vnto him: for Gods *vvord* and *power* ought so to be ioined together, that they must neuer bee separated.

Vers. 25. *Idestroy the tokens of the soothsaiers, and make them that coniecture fooles, and turne the wise men backward, and make their knowledge foolishnesse.*

THe Prophet expresly addes this, because Babylon not onely surpassed all other nations in riches, men, and munitions: but also in a wonderfull measure of *vvisdome*, and that in such wise, as they seemed to pierce euen the very skies. For what inconuenience could befall them which foresaw things to come a farre off, and could preuent imminent dangers, as they imagined? Astrologers, which then were in great request among them, foretold of great matters, and thence came that bastard Astrologie which we forsooth call Iudiciall, wherewith many good and toward wits at this day are corrupted. They vsurp the name also of Mathematicians, that they may get them the more credit among the common people. But the Egyptians gloried as the only authors of this science, because they held themselues to be of greatest antiquitie, and were the instructers of others. But this contention we leaue to them. Sure it is, that the Chaldeans were practitioners of it from the beginning, and so highly esteemed of it, that both Greekes and Latins haue giuen the name of Chaldeans to the Astrologians. For as much then as they trusted very much in this science, the Lord auoucheth that *he vvill scatter all things belonging thereunto.*

Bastard Astrologie, which is called Iudiciall.

Mathematicians.

Now by the word *tokens*, or signes, he vnderstands the situation, concurrence, and diuers aspects of the starres, from whence the Astrologers draw their *coniectures*. In the next place he saith he will make them *fooles*. Some take the word *Baddim*, for lies: as if he should say, The diuinations of Astrologers are but impostures, and meere illusions: but I had rather take it for *soothsayers*, it being often elsewhere taken in this signification.

But it may be demanded whether he vtterly condemnes the Astrologie of the Chaldeans, or only the abuse and corruption of it. Quest.

I answere, he heere only condemnes the *signes* whereby the Chaldeans *coniectured*, as if they Ans.

Whether Aſtrologie be vtterlie condemned or no.

they could iudge of things to come: for the Lord pronounceth that all ſuch things are meerely vaine. It is not without cauſe then that he forbids his people to aske counſell of Aſtrologers, Southſayers, Prognoſticators, & ſuch like Magicians, and that no man ſhould haue to deale with men of ſuch profeſſions vnder paine of death, Deut.18.10.11. But if any could haue gathered certaine coniectures from the ſituation and aſpect of the ſtarres, no doubt the Lord would neuer haue condemned ſuch ſciences. Seeing then without exception he forbids them, it clearly ſhewes they conteine nothing but meere illuſions, and therefore that all his people ſhould eſteeme thē as *abominations*. But thoſe that pleade for this vanitie, alledge, that the Lord hath giuen the planets and ſtarres for ſignes, Gen.1.14. Be it that I grant them this principle, yet we muſt conſider *vvhereof they be ſignes*. For we condemne not that Aſtrologie which contemplates the courſe of the ſtarres, wherein Gods wonderfull Maieſtie is to be ſeene: but we reiect as vaine ſuch curious heads as will thence conclude *how long kingdomes and common-wealths ſhal ſtand; vvhat accidents ſhall befall this Citie, or nation: that man, or ſuch a vvoman*, for herein they paſſe their bounds, and abuſe theſe *ſignes*, which were neuer ordeined to foretell things to come. I confeſſe indeed that ſometimes we are admoniſhed by theſe celeſtiall ſignes to behold Gods wrath, which we haue iuſtlie enflamed, and alſo the plagues which hang ouer our heads, *but not to make vs ſo foole-hardie as thence to conclude of euery particular accident, much leſſe to ſearch out things hidden and vnreuealed*, which it is not lawfull for vs once to enquire after. But aboue all things we are to finde out the cauſe and ſpring of this myſterie of iniquitie which is in it: for a man no ſooner receiues this error, to wit, that mans life is gouerned by the *ſtarres*, but Gods prouidence is by and by ouerthrowne, and he turned out of his iudgement ſeate: or thus, that they may take from him the authoritie of puniſhing the wicked any more, or, in his mercie to giue life to thoſe that were loſt. For ſuch as thinke that the *ſtarres* gouerne and rule mens liues by their irreuocable mouings, doe forthwith harden their owne hearts with this imagination of fatall deſtinie, and ſo they leaue nothing at all vnto God: thus then his iudgements are concealed, pietie nipt in the head, and prayer vtterly aboliſhed.

Obiect.

Anſ.

The courſe of the ſtarres.

What is to be condemned in Aſtrology.

Planets neuer ordained to tell things to come.

Wherein the myſterie of this iniquitie conſiſts.

Fatall deſtinie.

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He calles them *vviſe*, and attributes *knowledge* vnto them by way of granting them ſo much, for ſuch kind of men are wont to glorie much in the titles of *vviſe men*, and in making ſhew what *knowledge* they haue in the ſtarres, as if God had called them to be of his priuie Counſell. Thus then in a word he concludes, that none of theſe vaine maskes of *vviſdome*, nor *knowledge*, ſhall be able to hinder the Lord from ouerturning of their eſtate, becauſe he will bring all their iuggling tricks to nothing.

Wiſe men.

* Or, raiſeth vp.

Verſ. 26. *He* confirmeth the word of his ſeruant, and performeth the counſell of his meſſengers, ſaying to Ieruſalem, thou ſhalt be inhabited: and to the cities of Iudah, ye ſhall be built vp, and I will repaire the decayed places thereof.*

NOw the Prophet applies that which he ſaid before to his purpoſe: for albeit he hath ſpoken generallie, yet he reſpected a certaine end, that ſo he might fit his ſpeech to the purpoſe in hand, leſt the Iewes ſhould be troubled with this fained *vviſdome* of the Chaldeans, and ſo be brought to doubt whether God would at any time deliuer them or no. He oppoſeth their vaine *predictions* then to Gods *promiſes*, that no man ſhould thinke this Monarchie was vtterlie exempt frō danger. Now the promiſe was this, *Babylon ſhall fall*, Chap.21.9. *But my people ſhall be ſet at libertie.*

Gods promiſes, oppoſed to vaine predictions.

The Chaldeans derided theſe promiſes, as if they ſhould thus haue ſaid, Muſt wee needs fall? A ſort of wiſe men no doubt: as if we could not foreſee that by the ſtarres if any ſuch thing ſhould happen. The Lord therefore ſaith, that he will *raiſe vp*, that is to ſay, will accompliſh that which he hath promiſed, and will bring ſuch things to paſſe, as the wiſe men neither yet had, nor were able to coniecture. For the ſcorners eſteemed no better of theſe propheſies then of an vnprofitable ſound which ſhould forthwith vaniſh. Againſt ſuch an opinion hee oppoſeth the word *to raiſe*, therby ſhewing that God would cauſe his word to be beleeued.

The name *ſeruant*, may be vnderſtood of all the Prophets, vnleſſe we had rather ſay, that *Iſaiah* is chieflie heere ſpecified, as the moſt apparent witnes and *meſſenger* of this deliuerance. But there is no neede why we ſhould reſtraine this to one in particular, ſeeing it is a thing common to them all, being all called by one and the ſame name of Ambaſſadors or meſſengers of God: for he had ſent many vnto them, that by a mutuall conſent they might the better vphold the faith of the people.

Vnder the word *counſell*, he comprehends Gods decrees, but not all: for it is vnlawfull to ſound the depth of thoſe ſecrets which he hath not reuealed to his *ſeruants*: but when he diſcouers that which he hath purpoſed to doe, wee ought to receiue the ſame with as great reuerence as if God himſelfe had opened his moſt ſecret *counſels* from heauen. Let men beware then how they giue ſcope to their appetites, to enquire further of things then God hath reuealed by the mouth of his Prophets. To be ſhort, his meaning is to commend the authoritie of his word which is vttered by the miniſtrie of men, and that no leſſe then if they reuealed to vs the eternall counſels of God.

See Deut.29.29.

What authoritie God giues to his Miniſters.

Which ſaith to Ieruſalem.] After the Prophet hath ſpoken generallie, he fits his ſpeech in as particular a ſort as he can to the preſent purpoſe touching Gods promiſes, for otherwiſe the people could haue reaped little fruit by them. He names *Ieruſalem* therefore expreſſlie, to giue them to vnderſtand that it

should be restored. In this therefore we are especially to obserue Gods power, in that he is able as oft as need is, miraculously to defend, yea and raise vp his Church euen from the gates of death. Doe we beleeue that he is true and almightie? Then may we be assured that there shall alwaies bee a Church: and when sorrowfull times approch towards vs, let vs hope that hee will speedily redresse all disorders; for that which is heere said to *Ierusalem*, appertaines to the whole Church. If we be inforced at this day then to see her lie in the dust, and her towers cast to the ground, so as nothing but pitifull desolations euerie where appeare; let vs build vpon this promise, that God in his time will *build* and *repaire* the *decaied places* thereof, and bring her to her perfect hue.

The Church shall alwaies continue.

Vers. 27. *He saith to the deepe, Be dry, and I will dry vp thy floods.*

SOme thinke the Prophet describes Babylon here vnder a figure; neither doe I denie but it may be heere comprehended: yet I cannot allow that it should be onely restrained to her. For I had rather take it for some vnexpected mutation; because hee shewes there will be a necessitie of such a rare chãge, as if the people were to be drawne out of the *bottome of the sea*: but he resolues them, that God will be omnisufficient to ouercome all lets and impediments. As I thinke therefore, *Isaiah* rather alludes to that first deliuerance, at what time God brought the people *out of Egypt through the midst of the sea*: as if he should say; I haue done this for your fathers, hope for the like at my hands now, and thinke not that the waies through which you are to passe homeward, shall be stopped vp against you.

Experience should breed hope in vs.

Vers. 28. *He saith to Cyrus*, Thou art *my shepheard: and hee shall performe all my desire: saying also to Ierusalem; Thou shalt bee built; and to the Temple, Thy foundations shall surelie bee laid.*

THis is an excellent place. In which wee may consider, not onely the admirable prouidẽce of God, but also a worthy testimonie of the truth and authoritie of his promises: for *Cyrus* was named here a long time before he was borne. How may that be proued? There was betweene the death of *Manasses*, who put *Isaiah* to death, and the birth of *Cyrus*, more then an hundred yeeres. But say he had now been borne, who could haue foretold that hee should haue come to Babylon, frõ the furthest mountaines in Persia? These things are worthy our obseruation then; for they shew that *Isaiah* spake not by the will of man: for who would euer haue thought that one called *Cyrus*, should come with maruellous swiftnesse from the remotest and most barbarous parts of the world, to deliuer Gods people? Whereas scoffers obiect, that the Iewes might forge this after all was come to passe: it is so sottish and absurd a cauill, that it needes no refutation. For during the captiuitie, the Iewes turned ouer these bookes, to confirme their hope touching their deliuerance: who doubtlesse had been put cleane out of heart, if the Lord had not comforted them by these & such liuely promises, which were as goodly monuments left to strẽgthen the minds of the faithfull in faith and hope. Neither doe I doubt but *Cyrus* himselfe was much amazed, when he vnderstood that God had appointed him to be the *shepheard* and leader of his people Israel: yea, it is verie likely also that it greatly inflamed his heart with such a loue towards the Iewes, that it framed him with readinesse of mind to furnish the Iewes with victuals and other necessaries for their iourney. Thus the Lord points him out with his finger, by whose hand he determined to redeeme his people; that so they might not gaze here and there for help in their perplexities.

The certaintie of the prophecies.

Cyrus.

2. *Pet.* 1.21.

Obiect.

Ans.

And saith to Ierusalem.] This is the conclusion which confirmes the former things; and all to assure them that Ierusalem should vndoubtedly be *built* againe. As also, that hereby they might conceiue in what deare and precious account God had them, when they should see the Monarchy of the East giuen vp to the Persians. And therewithall he shewes for what cause Ierusalem shall bee restored: euen that Gods pure *worship* and seruice might be there againe *erected*. For hee promiseth not this restauration to the end men should seeke their owne ease or preferment, but that the Lord may be called vpon of his seruants, in peace, in puritie, and in sincerite of heart: which it stands vs in hand to obserue diligently, because many prefer their temporary pleasures and profits, before the honour and worshippe of God. In regard whereof, *Haggai* takes vp a bitter complaint against those of his time; *Is it time for your selues to dwell in your ſeiled houſes, & this houſe to lie waſte?* Againe, *You ſuffer this houſe to lie waſte, and yet runne euery man vnto his owne houſe*: Haggai 1.4.9. and yet it was the Lords pleasure they should chiefly haue regarded *his house*. To this appertaines that which the Prophet addes, *And to the Temple; Thy foundations shall be laid.* Indeed we at this day haue no *Temple* of wood and stone which we are commanded to build, but the liuing Temples of the holy Ghost: 1.Cor.6. to wit, our selues, because he hath chosen vs for his habitation. These are the Temples which wee must build vp by the wholsome doctrine of Gods word, that we may be framed to an holy and an vpright conuersation, and to render him the seruice due vnto him. For this is the very cause why God will haue a Church in the world; namely, lest the memory of his blessed name should bee cleane abolished from among vs.

What Temples God would haue built him now.

Why God will haue a Church still in the world.

CHAP.

THE XLV. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Thus ſaith the Lord vnto Cyrus his anoynted, whoſe right hand I haue holden to ſubdue nations before him: therefore will I weaken the loines of Kings, and open the doores before him, and the gates ſhall not be ſhut.*

*Or, vngird.

When God is determined to redeeme his Church, no impediments can hinder the effecting of it.

Iſaiah continues forth the matter which he beganne to hande in the latter end of the former Chapter. For hee ſhewes that God hath not promiſed deliuerãce to his people in vaine; becauſe hee had before ordained and decreed the meanes how to bring it to paſſe, according to his owne purpoſe. When there is queſtion made touching our deliuerance out of anie danger, we forthwith inquire by what means it may be effected; and alſo the reaſon of it. Now albeit God had rather hold vs in ſuſpence, and ſo to conceale from vs the meanes he hath already in his hand: notwithſtanding in this place he applies himſelfe to the weakneſſe of their mindes, and is contented *to name* the partie vnder whoſe conduct he purpoſeth to bring them home into their Country. For in regard their faith was to be ſharplie aſſailed by diuers temptations of other kindes; hee was willing heere to preuent this particular doubt, that ſo other troubles which befell them, might not vtterly cruſh them. To giue the more efficacie then vnto his word, he turnes him to *Cyrus*, ſaying; *I haue choſen thee to be my King, I will take thee by the hand, and will ſubdue nations before thee; ſo as they ſhall make paſſage for thee*, and ſhall willingly yeeld themſelues vaſſals vnto thee. For this turning of his ſpeech to *Cyrus*, was much more effectuall, then if the Lord had ſpoken onely to his people.

Obiect.

But ſome may thinke it ſtrange that hee calles him his *anointed*, ſeeing this title onely appertained to the Kings of Iudah and Iſrael, in regard that they repreſented Chriſts perſon. For to ſpeake properly there is but one *anointed* of the Lord: according to which *Habacuk* ſaith; Thou wenteſt forth with *thine anoynted*, for the ſaluation of thy people: Hab. 3.13. For the kingdome was ſet vp in the perſon of *Dauid*, which was the image of Chriſt; who for this cauſe among the Prophets, is called *Dauid*, & the ſon of *Dauid*, in many places: Ezech.37.24. Hoſe.3.5. I grant that the anointing which diſtinguiſhed this prieſtlie kingdome from other prophane gouernements was the ſpeciall: ſeeing then that this title appertaines onely to the Kings of Iudea, it might ſeeme ſtrange that it ſhould heere be attributed to an idolatrous Pagan. For though *Cyrus* was inſtructed by *Daniel*, yet we reade not that he changed his religion: hee reuerenced indeede the God of Iſrael, and held him the ſoueraigne God aboue all creatures; but he was neuer drawne by this means to ſerue him in any ſinceritie, neither was he euer brought to forſake his idolatries and ſuperſtitions. God honours him thus far then, as to call him his *anoynted*; not with a perpetuall ſtile, but during the time he held the office of a deliuerer, and in reſpect he ſuſtained the perſon of God, both to reuenge the cauſe of the Church, and to redeeme the ſame out of the Aſſyrians hands: which office indeed, properly appertained to Ieſus Chriſt. This ordinary title then giuen vnto Kings, muſt be reſtrained to this circumſtance, to wit, as he was the redeemer of Gods choſen in ſetting them at libertie. Whence wee may ſee how greatly God eſteemes the ſaluation of his Church, when in regard of one particular benefite, *Cyrus* an idolater is called his *anoynted*.

Why Cyrus is called Gods anoynted.

Anſ.

I haue holden thy right hand.] By this phraſe of ſpeech he ſignifies that *Cyrus* ſhall proſper in all his enterpriſes; becauſe hee ſhall fight vnder God as his Generall. *Iſaiah* affirmes then that *Cyrus* ſhall haue good ſucceſſe for the Churches ſake, that he may be fit to deliuer her. And in this he againe magnifies Gods prouidence, who in the midſt of ſuch troubles, aſſured the Iewes that he would ſo diſpoſe of things from heauen, that all ſhould worke together for the ſaluation of his elect. Now in reſpect that *Cyrus* could not well goe into Babylon, becauſe al Aſia bent their force to diſappoint him of his purpoſe; the Prophet in theſe words ſhewes, *that God will ouerthrow all contrary power*, that ſhall ſet it ſelfe againſt him. And becauſe mans chiefe ſtrength conſiſts in his *loines*, or reines, the Hebrewes take the *weakning of the loines*, for the diſſoluing or weakening of the ſtrength. We may alſo expound it a little otherwiſe, to wit, that the Lord will ſpoile or vngird them; according to the common phraſe of the Scripture: for Kings at their coronation, are girt wit a girdle, it being a part of their royall furniture: Iob 12.18. In which ſenſe God ſaith in the fift verſe following, that he would *gird Cyrus*. I therefore reſt my ſelfe rather in this latter expoſition, that ſo the oppoſition may ſute the better. Hence it appeares thẽ that Kings haue no more power then the Lord giues them, neither can they vſe it in the defence either of themſelues, or their people, but by his commiſſion. For if he be pleaſed to diſpoile them of their principalities, they cannot defend the ſame againſt him, neither by force, nor by any meanes elſe whatſoeuer.

Kings haue no more power then God giues them.

And I will open the doores before him.] By this phraſe, the Prophet meanes, that *forreſters* cannot reſiſt God, which (in generall termes)

all will confeſſe: but yet they ceaſe not for all that to truſt in their towers of defence. For when Cities are enuironed with thick walles, and that the gates are faſt ſhut, euery one thinks himſelfe in ſafetie: contrarywiſe the Prophet ſhewes, that all *fortifications* are vnprofitable, and that the *ſtopping vp of paſſages* are but in vaine when the Lord will *open the way* to their enemies. Now howſoeuer it is not to be doubted but the *gates* were ſhut and ſurely barred: yet becauſe *Cyrus* marched with an incredible ſwiftnes through all places where he came, as if all Cities had giuen him way, the Prophet rightly affirmes, that all impediments ſhall be remoued.

The ſtrongeſt Fortifications too weake, when the ſtrong God minds to redeeme his choſen.

Verſ. 2. *I will goe before thee and make the crooked ſtraight: I will breake the braſen doores, and burſt the yron barres.*

3. *And I will giue thee the treaſures of darknes, and the things hid in ſecret places, that thou mayſt know that I am the Lord which call thee by name, and name thee, though thou haſt not knowne mee.*

These two verſes depēds on the former.

THeſe two verſes depend vpon the former: but in a word they ſhew, that *Cyrus* ſhall eaſily ouercome, and that in ſhort time, becauſe the Lord ſhall *prepare* the way for him; for this cauſe he promiſeth that the *crooked* way ſhall be made *ſtraight*, in reſpect that God will take away all obſtacles. Now becauſe *money* is the ſinew of warre, and that *Cyrus* was to paſſe ouer the poore & barren mountaines of Perſia, *Iſaiah* tels him, that the *treaſures* which before were *hid*, ſhould fall into his hands, that being enriched with ỹ ſpoile, he might furniſh himſelfe with all neceſſaries, for by *treaſures of darknes*, he meanes treaſures hidden and buried deeply in the earth. Now it appeares plainly by the hiſtories how theſe things came to paſſe: for after *Creſus* king of Lydia was taken, who was the richeſt king in the world, *Cyrus* recouered great treaſures. A man would neuer haue ſuppoſed then that he could haue made ſuch a generall Conqueſt, had not the cauſe of ſo good ſucceſſe been heere expreſſed: to wit, that the Lord *called* him forth, and *guided* him in his iourney, that in him he might manifeſt a notable ſigne of his power: for ſo much, *that thou mayſt know*, imports.

Money the ſinew of warre.

Creſſus king of Lydia.

I grant that *Cyrus knew* (as we haue ſaid) that God was ỹ God of Iſrael, and did greatly reuerence him: yet he became no true Conuert for all that, neither did he imbrace the true worſhip according to the ordinances of Gods law. This therefore was a *particular knowledge*, to wit, ſo farre forth as he aſſiſted the Church, for whoſe deliuerance he was ordeined. It was needful then that he ſhould be in ſome meaſure touched with this *knowledge*, in regard of this worke of God which he had to performe. He ſpeakes not of that *knowledge* then by which we are enlightened, or of the ſpirit of regeneration, but of a particular knowledge, ſuch as the prophane and vnbeleeuers haue.

Cyrus no true conuert.

Cyrus was not indued with a ſauing knowledge.

Which call thee by thy name.] Some barely expound this phraſe of ſpeech, that *Cyrus* was thus called of God before he was borne. But we haue ſaid heretofore, Chap. 43. 1. that by theſe words ỹ Prophet meant another thing, namely, that God calles thoſe *by name* whom he chuſeth and ordeineth to execute ſome ſpeciall worke, in which reſpect he ſeparates them from the common multitude, for this ſignifies a neerer and a more familiar *calling*. And in this ſenſe it is ſaid, that the good ſhepheard *calles* his ſheepe *by name*, Iohn 10. 3. becauſe he knowes them diſtinctlie. But aboue all, this agrees to the faithfull, whom God accounts his flock, and of his familie, which grace he neuer vouchſafed to *Cyrus*. But in as much as he appointed him to be a ſpeciall Leader in ſuch a ſpeciall ſeruice, he ſtamped him as it were with rare and ſingular notes of his power. And thus much touching the cauſe why this title of *Calling* is giuen vnto him.

Theſe words, *The God of Iſrael*, muſt be well obſerued, becauſe the ſuperſtitious are wont to attribute their victories to their Idols. And in that ſenſe *Abacuk* ſaith, That euery one ſacrificed to his god, Aba. 1. 16. They runne riot then in their talke, and forge ſuch a diuinitie as it pleaſeth them to conceiue of, in ſtead of acknowledging the only and true God. Now all that which is heere ſaid of *Cyrus*, may be applied vnto vs in a farre better ſenſe, to wit, that we frame not to our ſelues ſuch a knowledge of God as fits our owne appetites, but that we ſeparate him ſo from Idols, that he may only be rereceiued and acknowledged of vs in one Ieſus Chriſt, out of whom we can worſhip nought but an Idoll, nay the very Diuell himſelfe. In this reſpect then let our *knowledge* ſurpaſſe that which *Cyrus* had, to wit, let vs reiect all ſuperſtitions and idolatries, that wee may ſerue him in holines and righteouſnes (all the dayes of our life.)

Out of Chriſt we can worſhip nothing but an Idoll, nay, the Deuill himſelfe.

Verſ. 4. *For Iaakob my ſeruants ſake and Iſrael mine elect, I will euen call thee by thy name, though thou knowest not mee.*

HE ſhewes the reaſon why *Cyrus* ſhall proſper thus happily in all his enterpriſes, euen for the conſeruation of Gods people. As if the Lord ſhould haue ſaid, Thou ſhalt obteine a glorious victorie, but it ſhall be more in reſpect of mine *elect*, then of thee: for, for their ſakes it is that I haue ſubdued kings and nations vnder thine obedience. By theſe propheſies then the Prophet meant to comfort the Iewes, leſt they ſhould deſpaire in the middes of ſo many calamities: and yet no doubt he alſo meant to teach *Cyrus* that hee was beholding to the Iewes for all his conqueſts, that by meanes hereof he might be enclined to vſe them with the better reſpect.

In the ſecond part of the verſe there is a repetition which amplifies the reaſon very much:

much: and on the other ſide the Prophet ſhewes by what right the Iſraelites came to be Gods ſeruants, euen becauſe it pleaſed him freely to *elect* them. For it is not in the power of man to make himſelfe the *ſeruant* of God, or to obteine ſuch an honour by his owne free will. This word *elect* therefore is added as an expoſition of the former member, and yet the end of our election is therewithall ſet downe. For God finding vs the very bond-ſlaues of Satan by nature, *calles* vs by his free grace, that we being ſet at libertie, ſhould become his *ſeruants*: notwithſtanding he ſhews, that no man is worthie in himſelfe of this fauour, but he which is *elect*. For who dares brag that he hath merited ſo great a benefit? Or what can we doe, or offer vnto God? We are not ſufficient of our ſelues, but the Lord makes vs ſufficient, as S. *Paul* ſaith, 2.Cor.3.5. His free election therefore is free, and is the very foundation of our ſaluation: and the *ſeruice* is but the end, which we of dutie owe vnto him.

It is not in the power of man to make himſelfe Gods ſeruant.

The end of election.

Gods free election the foundation of our ſaluation.

Now, howſoeuer this be reſtrained to the hiſtorie of *Cyrus*, yet thence we may gather a generall doctrine. For when God cauſeth ſuch diuerſities of changes in the world, he therby procures the ſaluation of his Church, and wonderfullie conſerues it, euen in the middeſt of theſe tempeſts. We (for the moſt part) are as blind as beetles in viewing the works of God: but yet wee muſt hold it for a ſure principle, that he neuer forgets his Church, no not then when a man would thinke heauen and earth would goe togeather: nay then by ſecret meanes he brings forth her light as the noone day, that all in concluſion may indeed confeſſe that himſelfe is the protector and defender of the ſame.

A ſure principle: God neuer forgets his Church.

Lib.11. Chap.8. Ioſephus. Alexander the Great. Iaddus the hie Prieſt.

Ioſephus recites a memorable hiſtorie of *Alexander* the Great, who hauing beſieged Tyre, ſent Ambaſſadors to Ieruſalem to aske the tribute which the Iewes payed to *Darius*. *Jaddus* the high Prieſt who had ſworne to pay this tribute, would in no wiſe obey *Alexander*, but refuſed to pay it him: this tyrant ſcorning ſuch a refuſall, and in a maner being readie to burſt with pride, determined the deſtruction of Ieruſalem; and indeed hauing ouercome *Darius*, he fits himſelfe for the execution of his deliberation. The hie Prieſt *Iaddus* comes forth clothed with the Prieſtly robes, and with other Prieſts met *Alexander*. *Alexander* no ſooner beheld them, but he alights from his horſe, and fell downe at the hie Prieſts feet in ſigne of reuerence. As all ſtood amazed at this, as at a thing extraordinarie, and cleane contrarie to his purpoſe, thinking he had bin beſides himſelfe; *Alexander* anſwered *Parmenion*, (who only amongſt the reſt asked him what he meant) that he worſhipped not this man, but God, whoſe office *Iaddus* ſuſteined. As alſo, that whileſt he remained at Dion a Citie of Macedonia, he had ſeene in a dreame a man ſo apparelled, which preſented himſelfe vnto him in the perſon of God, willing him to take Aſia: alſo, promiſing to be the conductor of his armie, that he might not doubt of the victorie, and for this cauſe he ſaid he could not content himſelfe with ſufficient admirations in beholding this hie Prieſt. Thus Ieruſalem was deliuered, the mouth of the Lyon ſtopped, who thought of nothing but gorging himſelfe with the pray; nay, ſhe gat greater libertie of him then ſhe inioyed before, beſides great gifts and large priuiledges.

Parmenion.

Dion, a Citie in Macedonia.

Why this hiſtorie is alledged.

Now I haue alledged this hiſtorie to ſhew that the Church of God is preſerued in the middes of all dangers by ſtrange and vnexpected meanes, for the times were then very troubleſome, and no one corner in the world almoſt remained in quiet. But aboue all, Iudeah ſeemed to be appointed vnto robberies and ſpoilings; and yet behold the Church deliuered as it were by a miracle, whileſt other countries were waſted, and the forme of them vtterlie changed.

That which is added in the end of the verſe, *though thou haſt not knowne me*, ſerues for the greater amplification, not only to teach *Cyrus* that theſe his endowments were no parts of his merits, but that he ſhould not deſpiſe the God of Iſrael, albeit *he knew him not*. The Lord often aduertiſeth vs that he preuents mens induſtries, that he might vtterlie caſt downe all high conceits of fleſh and blood. But he had another end in preuenting of *Cyrus*, for if he had thought that God had giuen theſe victories vnto him for his owne ſake, then would he like enough haue ſcorned the Iewes, yea and would haue vſed them but as his vaſſals and ſlaues. The Prophet ſhewes therefore that *Cyrus* his deſerts were no cauſe of this, but that he deliuered the people out of their enemies hands, becauſe God fauored them: for this poore blind Infidell would haue bin readie to haue tranſported that ouer vnto his Idols, which was due to the liuing God; becauſe being beſotted in his ſuperſtitions, he would neuer haue giuen obedience to that God willinglie who was a ſtranger and vnknowne vnto him, vnleſſe he had firſt of all bin inſtructed by this propheſie.

Verſ.5. *I am the Lord and there is none other: there is no God beſides me: I* girded thee though thou haſt not knowen me.*

* Or, apparelled.

A confirmation of the former ſentence.

HE confirmes the former ſentence: for it is no ſuperfluous repetition. Truly it was neceſſarie that *Cyrus* ſhould be often vrged with this point, that there was but *one God*, vnder whoſe power all potentates and nations are tributaries, that being rid by this meanes from all impoſtures, he might be whollie turned to the God of Iſrael. Moreouer, the Prophet more expreſſie ſhewes, that *no diuinitie* is to be ſought out of him: as if he ſhould ſay, Looke that thou attributeſt not this victorie to thine Idols, neither conceiue thou any confuſed god in thine owne braine, as fooliſh men are wont to doe: but be thou aduertiſed that it is the God of Iſrael only that is the author of this conqueſt. It is like enough that *Cyrus* made no great vſe of this ſermon, neither that he *forſooke his Idols* to cleaue

No diuinitie to be ſought out of God.

cleaue to *this true God*; yet no doubt he had many flashings in his mind, which made him after a sort to acknowledge a Godhead, and that this God had the whole world at his becke. But howsoeuer *Cyrus* neglected this doctrine, yet the members of the Church ought to imbrace it, that they may boldly reiect all false gods.

I haue apparelled, or *girded thee*. This *apparelling* answers to the nakednesse whereof he spake before, saying; The loines of Kings shall be vngirt: for he is said to apparell such as he furnisheth with strength to the battell:
1 Ps.18.32. to make them conquerors. Whence we may gather, first that men haue no more courage then that which God inspireth them
2 withall by the power of his Spirit. Secondly, that neither armor nor armies serues to any
3 purpose, if God be not for vs. Thirdly, that it is he onely who gouernes all hurly burlies, and giues the victory to whom it pleaseth him, lest any should thinke that things fall out by chance.

Hee repeates againe, *though thou hast not knowne me*, to confirme this point the better; to wit, that *Cyrus* obtained nothing of God,
1 but for *Iacobs sake*: vers.4. first, that he might thankfully acknowledge so great a benefit:
2 and as a testimonie of his thankfulnesse, hee might indeuor to shew kindnes to the people of God.

Vers. 6. *That they may know from the rising of the Sunne, and from the West, that there is none besides me. I am the Lord, and there is none other.*

God would haue the memory of his mercies retained in his Church.

THe Prophets meaning is, that this worke should bee so excellent, that all nations should extol and magnifie Gods name therein; yet was it not forthwith accomplished. For albeit the fame of this victory was spread far and neere, yet few perceiued that the God of Israel was the author of it. But after it was manifested to those that dwelt *neere*, it was diuulged also *to others*, till at last the newes thereof came to the *whole world*. Neither doth hee foretell what should by and by fall out; but that which was afterwards to be accomplished, notwithstanding these things were a long time concealed. The Lord then would not suffer the remembrance of such a deliuerance to vanish, but would haue the same to be called to mind by continuall admonitions, to the end the nations furthest remote, might celebrate the memorie of this deliuerance from generation to generation, euen to the worlds end.

Wee ought likewise to obserue that which I haue touched before, to wit, that the Prophet ioines the first prophecies with the last, because the returne of the people was as a beginning and forerunner of the generall deliuerance to come. And thus he speakes of the true and perfect restauration of the Church. Adde also, that although men by their malice and vnthankfulnesse should burie these glorious works in obliuion; yet it followes not thereupon, that the same should not cleerely shine in the view of the whole world; for they cease not to retaine their glorie still, though the blind (worldlings) haue no eies to behold them.

See the first section after the seuenth verse, for the further exposition of this first verse.

Vers. 7. *I forme the light, and create darknesse: I make peace, and create euill: I the Lord doe all these things.*

AS if he should say; Those who were wont to attribute all things to fortune, or to *Idols*, shall now know the true God: so as they shall attribute all power and glory, yea and the administration of all things to him only. He speakes not of a perfect *knowledge*; albeit the same be required to attaine vnto the vnderstanding of former things. Now seeing the Prophet affirmes, that the very Pagans shall vnderstand, that this whole action is ordered and gouerned by the prouidence of God; it ought to make those that beare the name of Christians to blush, when they rob him of his power, to giue it to diuers sorts of gouernours, forged in the shop of their owne braines; as they doe in the Papacie. For what an *acknowledging* of God call you that, to giue him onely bare and naked titles? For as he is the true and onely God, so must wee ascribe vnto him his absolute and full authoritie, which hee hath in ordering & disposing of all things at his pleasure, both in heauen and in earth.

As I thinke, this whole section belongs to the first verse.

By these words of *light* and *darknes*, vnder a figure he vnderstands as well peace and war, as prosperite and aduersitie. Afterwards, according to the phrase of the Hebrewes, he extends the word *peace*, to all good successes; which plainly appeares by the opposition: for he not onely opposeth peace to war, but to all other mishaps. Some giddy heads wrest this word *euill*, as if God were the author of it: but it is euident enough to him that hath eies to see, how shamefully they abuse our Prophets testimony. For that which is plainly opposed, expounds the signification of the word: adde if you will, that the members ought to be referred one to another: for he opposeth *peace* to *euill*; that is to say, to warr, calamities, and other aduersities. If he had opposed *righteousnesse* to *euill*, they might haue had some pretext: but this opposition of things so directly contrary, is easilie vnderstood. And yet the common distinction is not to be reiected; to wit, that God is the author of the euill of punishment, but not of the fault. But the Sophisters doe expound it amisse: for although they confesse that famine, plague, warre, vnfruitfull seasons, and such like scourges doe come of God, yet they denie him to be the author thereof when they befall vs, by reason of men. Which is a false doctrine, and vtterly crosseth the Prophets words: for the Lord often raiseth vp the wicked to correct vs by their hand; as it appeares by many testimonies of the Scripture. I grant the Lord inspires not euill into them, but he vseth it as a meanes to chastise vs, and therein perfotmes the office of a iust Iudge. Did he not so serue himselfe of *Pharaohs* hardnesse

Light and darknesse taken for prosperitie and aduersitie. Obiect. Ans.

God is not the author of euill, as some would haue him. A common distinction. God the author of the euill of punishment, not of the fault. A false doctrine of the Sophisters. 1. *King.* 22. 14 23.

of

Exod.2.23. & 4.11. of heart, and others, to afflict his people? Let vs therefore hold faſt this doctrine, to wit, that God onely is the author of all things: that is to ſay, he ſends aduerſitie and proſperitie, howſoeuer hee vſeth mens induſtries therein; that ſo nothing may bee attributed to fortune, or to anie other cauſe whatſoeuer.

God the author of all things, and how.

Verſ. 8. *Ye heauens ſend downe dew from aboue, and let the clowdes droppe downe righteouſneſſe: let the earth open, and let ſaluation and iuſtice grow forth; let it bring them forth together: I the Lord haue created him.*

The doctrine of this verſe was very effectuall to confirme the faithfull in the expectation of their deliuerance to come.

SOme thinke this ſhould be a forme of praier, which the faithfull were to vſe in waiting for that deliuerance whereof the Prophet ſpeakes. And thus they ioine this verſe to the former; The Lord will not deliuer you by and by, it ſhall be your duties therefore to ſolicit him by your praiers. But I expound it otherwiſe, to wit, that the Prophet ſpeakes ſtill in the name of the Lord, who in regard of his abſolute power, hath *heauen* and *earth* at his becke; and heere commands them in his name to apply themſelues to further the reſtauration of the Church. This verſe therefore hath great force in it to confirme the faithfull in the hope of their redemption to come: for which way ſoeuer the Iewes turned their eies, they ſaw nothing but matter of deſpaire. If they looked towards *heauen*, behold God an angry Iudge: if they looked towards the *earth*, they ſaw nothing but tokens of his wrath to preſent themſelues about them on euery ſide, ſo as they could hope for nothing that was good. *Iſaiah* therefore confirmes their faith, and commands *heauen* and *earth*, which promiſed nothing but threats and terrors, to *bring forth iuſtice* and *ſaluation*: which kind of ſpeech hath greater weight in it, then if God himſelfe had promiſed that this ſhould haue come to paſſe. For the elements, who are ready preſt at Gods commandement, are in this ſenſe ſaid to receiue and vnderſtand the charge inioined them of God. Thus then the ſentence runnes all with a breath, which would be but abrupt, if this verſe were to be vnderſtood of praier.

Now this phraſe of ſpeech is vſuall in the holy Scripture: as in the Pſalmes; The *mountaines* ſhall bring peace to the people by Iuſtice: Pſal.72.3. Truth ſhall bud *out of the earth*, and righteouſneſſe hath looked downe *from heauen*: Pſal.85.11. Alſo, *mercy and truth* are met together, *righteouſneſſe and peace* haue kiſſed each other. In thſe places *Dauid* deſcribes the kingdome of Chriſt, and the felicitie thereof, ſhewing that *righteouſneſſe and peace, mercy and truth*, ſhall raigne therein together. And the very ſame thing the Prophet toucheth in this place.

Now he alludes to thoſe meanes that ſerue for our ordinarie food; for our naturall life is ſuſtained and maintained by bread, and the fruits of the earth, in regard we ſtand in need of ſuch helpes. But the earth will not be fit to bring forth theſe fruits, vnleſſe the heauens doe refreſh the ſame by often raining downe vpon it out of the cloudes, that afterwards it may become fertile, and bring forth fit nouriſhment both for man and beaſt.

By the word *iuſtice* he meanes nothing elſe but the faithfulneſſe of the Lord, whereby he defends and conſerues his Church, in as much as he cauſeth *iuſtice* to diſtill from the heauens; that is to ſay, a right order of gouernment, the fruit whereof is *ſaluation*. For he ſpeakes heere of the deliuerance of the people out of Babylon; in which deliuerance the Lord ſhewed himſelfe to be the protector of his Church. Now hauing attained the naturall meaning of the words, we muſt thence deſcend to Chriſts kingdome, whereunto theſe words ought indeed to be referred: for God hath not limitted theſe promiſes within the compaſſe of a few yeeres; but continued on his benefits euen to the very comming of Chriſt, in whom all theſe things were abſolutely fulfilled: no doubt then but the eternall *iuſtice* and *ſaluation* brought by Chriſt, is heere ſet before vs: but wee muſt firſt reſtraine this expoſition, to the returne of the people out of captiuitie.

Iuſtice.

Saluation a fruit of Iuſtice.

The Kingdome of Chriſt.

Verſ. 9. *Woe bee to him that ſtriueth with his maker, * the potſhard with the potſhardes of the earth: ſhall the clay ſay to him that faſhioneth it, What makeſt thou? or thy worke, it hath none hands?*

*Or, Let the pot contend againſt the pots.

10. *Woe vnto him that ſaith to* his *father; What haſt thou begotten? or to* his *mother; What haſt thou brought forth?*

THis place is diuerſly expounded: for ſome vnderſtand it of *Balthazar*, who (as we ſee in Daniel) lifted vp himſelfe proudly againſt God, in prophaning the holie veſſels of the Temple: but this is too conſtrained an expoſition. The ſecond may ſeeme more probable; to wit, that the Lord giues and grants more to his choſen, then a father will doe to his children, or a workman to his worke: for thoſe who expound the words thus, thinke that the Prophet ſpeakes heere by way of compariſon in this ſenſe: If a *ſonne* ſhould riſe vp againſt his father, and contend with him, ſhould he get any audience? No: for a *father* will keepe and retaine his owne authoritie, and in this behalfe would iuſtly reiect his ſonne. The like would alſo fall out, if the *clay* ſhould riſe vp againſt the *Potter*. Yet God permits vs to contend with him, and offers himſelfe freely to ſatisfie any of our demands: and thus they ioine the tenth and eleuenth verſe together, thinking that the patience of God appeares, in that he deales thus fauourably with vs, and humbles himſelfe more then morrall men are commonly wont to doe towards their children. I grant that this

The firſt expoſition of this place.

The ſecond expoſition.

expoſition

exposition hath more colour then the former, but both of them are farre wide from the Prophets intention.

The third and most naturall exposition.

The simple and plaine meaning of the Prophet therefore as I thinke is this, that *Isaiah* here represseth mens complaints, who murmure and pleade against God in the time of aduersitie. This admonition therefore came in due place, to teach the Iewes willinglie to receiue the consolation offred, that they might be fitted to beare the crosse patientlie and with a setled mind: for as oft as God holds vs in suspence, the flesh solicits vs to grudge on this maner: Wherefore doth he not rather that which we would haue him to do? What meanes he to vex vs thus in deferring his help so long? Now, that the Lord might beate back such a presumption, he saith, *Shall the pot contend with the potter?* Shall a *sonne* pleade with his *father?* And shall not I then much more deale with you as it pleaseth me? What remaines then but to beare his stripes patientlie? For it is our duties to let him freely execute his office, and by no meanes to withstand his soueraigne power and authoritie. As touching the word *Wo*, I take it for a particle of expressing him that rebukes and corrects.

Murmurings arising from flesh and blood.

Let the pot striue vvith the pots. That is to say, let euery one striue with his equall, as we vse to say in our common prouerb, *Let the pot cleane the pots of the earth.* For in sending men to their like, he taxeth their boldnes and presumption, for not considering that *in contending vvith God*, they sought nothing else but how to plunge themselues into their owne ruin. As if he should say, Doe yee know with whom yee haue to doe? Let them know that God will euer be stronger then man, and they shall be constrained in the end to giue place. But if they so farre forget their owne brittlenes, that like Giants they dare scale the heauens, then shall they proue by experience (it may be when it is too late) that they medled with their match, and that they haue contended with their *Maker*, who can easily dash his vessels in pieces one against another, yea and beate them to pouder, as the potter doth the vessels which he hath formed.

Prouerb.

Some expound the word *Kerasim* workemen, or potters, and vnderstand it thus, Shall the pot rise vp against the potter? But they take one letter for another, to wit, *shin* for *sin*, which they might easily doe. I had rather therefore follow the common reading, and content my selfe with this sense, *Shall the clay say to him that formed it?* The *Potter* as we know hath power to make what *vessell* he will: the *Father* hath authoritie to command his *children*; and shall God haue lesse power and authoritie? The Prophet therefore reproues those which contend with God in aduersitie, in that they can not beare their afflictions patientlie. Such must learne to giue eare to the admonition of S. *Peter*; Submit your selues vnder God, saith he; and humble your soules vnder his hand: Bow your necks to his yoke, 1. Pet. 5. 6. Striue not with him that is stronger then thy selfe, if he exercise thee with diuers calamities, for power belongs vnto him to gouerne vs according to his good pleasure. If we stand *to dispute* with him, he wil vse such inuincible arguments against vs, that being conuinced, we shal be inforced to giue place. But if it so fall out that he doth not by and by represse our pride, it is not because he is destitute of reason, but because in equitie we should leaue vnto him the right to dispose of vs after his will: an honor, which he iustlie reserues to himselfe, that his creatures presume not in the pride of their hearts to aske a reason of his doings. Is there any thing more dishonorable then to reiect his iudgements, when we list not to approue of them?

No disputing with God.

S. *Paul* vseth the same similitude, but it is in a matter of an higher nature, for he disputes about the point of Gods eternall predestination, and manifests mens blind conceits, who reason with God why he hath chosen some, and reiected others. Then he shewes, that men at the least should giue God as much priuiledge as to a *Potter* or workeman, and cries out, O man, who art thou that pleadest with God! *Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, vvhy hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power ouer the clay? &c.* Rom. 9. 20. 21. Who shall dare to oppose himselfe against God? The Apostle then accords with our Prophet, though S. *Paul* vseth the similitude in a different matter and of greater consequence: and yet both affirme that God hath an absolute power ouer men, to the end they should suffer themselues to be ordered and gouerned by him, patientlie bearing all his corrections: the only difference is, that *Isaiah* speakes of things which concerne this present life; and *Paul*, of those that concerne life euerlasting.

Iob. 9. 4.

S. Paul and Isaiah accords together though with some difference.

Or thy vvorke is hath no hands.] The Prophet obserues mens vsuall formes of speaking, as when we say, Set to the last hand, when a piece of worke is vpon finishing, and that mens hands wax feeble whilest the work is rough and vnpolished. So, as oft as men murmure against God for not applying himselfe to their desires, they therein accuse him either of sloth, or of ignorance.

Mettre la dernier main.

Vers. 11. *Thus saith the Lord, the holy one of Israel, and his maker, Aske me of things to come cõcerning my sonnes, and concerning the works of mine hands: command you me.*

I Haue told you alreadie that I like not of their iudgements who knit this verse so with the former, as if God giuing ouer his right, should giue the Iewes free leaue to enquire more of him then a child of his father. The other exposition differs not much from this, to wit, that the Israelites are miserable in that they vnderstood not Gods will; yea, in that they refused to know it, and would not seeke for comfort, but reiected it when it was offred: in a word, that their owne follie was the cause why their afflictions ouercharged them, and that they could finde no consolation

lation vnder them; becauſe they would not enquire at the mouth of the Lord. If we receiue this expoſition, we muſt preſuppoſe that he ſpeakes of another kinde of inquiſition. For though it be a thing vnlawfull to enter into Gods ſecrets, yet of his goodneſſe hee vouchſafes to diſcouer to his Children ſo much thereof as is expedient for them to know. And, it is alſo good reaſon that as oft as he opens his ſacred mouth, we ſhould carefully lend our eare to all that which he manifeſts vnto vs. Now we may alſo ſee the ſelfe ſame fault at this day in our ſelues; wherewith Iſaiah reprocheth the auncient people the Iewes.

But it is more likely this ſentence depends vpon the former, ſo as it is an application of the ſimilitude, in this ſenſe; It is not lawfull for the ſonne to conteſt with his father, nor the clay to ſtriue with the Potter; how much leſſe ſupportable is that libertie, which mortall men take vnto themſelues, when they will preſcribe rules vnto God, how hee is to order his children? for otherwiſe the ſentence ſhould be both doubtfull and diſmembred. But theſe two members ſute very well together; the pot ſuffers his Potter to doe what him liſteth; and he which is begotten of a mortall man, dares not contend with his father: ſhall not I then, who am the *Creator* and ſoueraigne Father of all, haue as much power ouer my creatures & children? If any like the firſt expoſition better, then *Iſaiah* blames mens folly, in that they neglect to aske of God, or to learne from his mouth, the things that may comfort them: for they might eaſilie haue perceiued by the propheties, what care God had of them, and thereby might haue come to the knowledge of the end of their miſeries.

The beſt remedie wee can vſe for our ſuccour in aduerſities.

And queſtionleſſe the onely remedie in aduerſitie is, to goe and aske counſell at the mouth of the Lord, and not to fix our eies vpon the outward eſtate of things preſent; but in our ſpirits to comprehend the ſaluation to come, which the Lord hath promiſed vs. For he is faithfull (as the Apoſtle ſaith) and will not ſuffer vs to be tempted aboue that we be able to beare, but will giue an happy iſſue with the temptation, and will augment his graces in vs: 1. Cor. 10. 13.

As touching that which is by and by added, *command you me*: it is not to be taken by way of an impetious authority; for what haue we to *command* God, or vrge him contrary to his will? No, wee are to be commanded and vrged by him: for none can profit in Gods word, vnleſſe hee bring a modeſt and meeke ſpirit. In theſe words the Lord offers himſelfe *ready to teach vs, to the end we might bee bold to aske of him concerning ſuch things as are expedient for vs to know.* As if he ſhould ſay; Aske *of mee*, I am ready to inſtruct you in things needfull for your comfort. And yet becauſe this manner of ſpeech ſhould be ſomewhat improper, me thinks that the complaint whereof I ſpake before, is the fitteſt, to wit, that God is ſtripped as it were of his fatherly authoritie, if he be denied liberty to hold his Church vnder a profitable diſcipline.

And thus this word Command, is to be taken in euill part, when men hauing ſhaken off all modeſtie, ſhall make no bones to ſummon God before them, and to *queſtion* with him of whatſoeuer comes in their braine, as if he were their ſeruant. Which yet appeares better by the word *aske*: as if he ſhould ſay; *You ſhall doe well to teach mee how to forme and frame my worke.* In a word, the Prophets meaning is, to exhort men to modeſtie and patience: for they no ſooner begin to fall a diſputing with God, but it is all one as if they went about to pull him out of his high and heauenly throne. Now in this, he ſpeakes not onely to the Iewes; but as was alſo needfull to repreſſe the blaſphemies which then walked apace through the mouthes of prophane Idolaters. It is as much to ſay thē, as if God in theſe words meaning to maintaine his owne right, ſhould refute the murmurings and repinings of all the world: and that in this manner, Whither will your pride and preſumption ſtretch at laſt, ſeeing you will not ſuffer me to be maſter in mine owne worke-houſe, and to gouerne my familie as I thinke good?

Verſ. 12. *I haue made the earth, and created man vpon it: I, whoſe hands haue ſpread out the heauens, I haue euen commanded all their armie.*

IT ſeemes as if the Prophet meant ſimply to defend and maintaine the power of the true God againſt the falſe, as hee hath done before: ſo as this ſentence ſhould containe in it a ſecret oppoſition between the true God, and the Idols whom the ſuperſtitious adore. Fooles are wont to inquire at their Idols, as if the world were by them ruled and gouerned. But God on the contrary calles vs to himſelfe, telling vs that it is hee onely who hath created heauen and earth, and hath placed man vpon it, and that he hath ſpread out the heauens, &c. Gen. 1. 1. 7. and 2. 15. But, as I thinke, it is better to apply this whole ſpeech to the circumſtance of this place. For can any thing be more prepoſterous, then to leaue men vnimpeached, whileſt they preſume to call Gods authority into queſtion, whoſe maieſtie ſurpaſſeth the very heauens? He couertlie taxeth then the rage of men, which dare inſolently aduance themſelues euen aboue the heauens themſelues: but therewithall he aduertiſeth them, that if God ſhould bee brought to make his iuſt defence, that hee would find ſufficient reaſons to maintaine his owne cauſe. For if he gouerne the whole world in generall, then muſt he needs haue a ſpeciall care of his choſen: neither reſpects he ſtrangers ſo farre, as to forget his owne houſhold ſeruants, now ſcattered here and there, and wandring to and fro. Thus I expound this verſe then, Muſt I, whoſe infinite and incomprehenſible wiſdome and power, ſhines in the *creation* & gouernmēt of *heauen* & *earth*, not only be tied to mens lawes, but be abaſed beneath their condition? But if any miſdoubt of mine equitie heerein, if I gouerne and or-

This verſe containes an argument taken from the leſſe to the greater.

der all things by my power; ſhall I not much more be carefull of thoſe, whom I haue adopted for my children? ſhall I not watch for their ſaluation? And thus it is an argument taken from the leſſe to the greater: in which ſenſe it agrees very well with the Scripture.

We know wee are adopted of God, vpon condition that being receiued into his protection, he ſhould keepe vs by his power, ſo as none can hurt vs without his leaue. If a poore ſparrow cannot fall to the ground without his will (as Ieſus Chriſt ſaith) Mat. 10. 29. will he vnaduiſedly expoſe vs to the rage and crueltie of our enemies? vs (I ſay) whom he priſeth aboue many ſparrowes? Seeing God then nouriſheth and vpholds all creatures by his prouidence, hee cannot forſake his Church, which hee prefers aboue the whole world. To this prouidence of God ought we to runne then, as oft as things are in a deſperate eſtate; that ſo wee may not ſinke vnder the temptations, by which Satan ſeekes to aſſaile vs on euery ſide.

Verſ. 13. *I haue raiſed him vp in righteouſneſſe, and I will direct all his waies: hee ſhall build my Citie, and hee ſhall let goe my captiues, not for price nor reward, ſaith the Lord of hoſtes.*

A proſecutiō of that argument the Prophet began to hādle in the beginning of this Chapter.

THe Prophet proſecutes that argument now, which he fell in hand withall in the beginning of the Chapter: for intending to aſſwage their afflictions, which were verie ſharpe and redious, he giues the Iewes hope of deliuerance, and beckening vnto them with his hand (as it were) wiſheth them to wait for an aſſured redemption. As if hee ſhould ſay; Albeit it ſeemes you be now forlorne, yet the Lord will deliuer you from death. From the very matter it ſelfe then, it is eaſie to collect for what cauſe *Iſaiah* intermingled the former reprehenſion: for had he not broken off his ſpeech, to fall into this digreſſion, the Iewes might haue been driuen into deſpaire through impaciencie.

In *righteouſneſſe*, ſignifies iuſtly and truly, and is taken relatiuely; becauſe he renders a reaſon why God was determined to raiſe vp *Cyrus*, to wit, in regard that himſelfe is that *faithfull* gardian of his Church, who neuer failes thoſe that ſerue him. Some expound; *in righteouſneſſe*: that is to ſay, that hee may puniſh the Chaldeans: others, that the iuſt may raigne more iuſtly. But the Prophet reſpected none of theſe things.

Gods iuſtice eſpecially ſhines in the ſaluation of his Church.

Iuſtice is often in the holy Scriptures taken for faithfulneſſe; for Gods righteouſneſſe ſhines eſpecially in defending of his Saints: in which hee ſhewes a ſingular token of his ſoueraigne and vnſpotted vprightneſſe: Pſal. 5. 9. and 7. 18. and 22. 32. For though there be not ſo much as one of Gods workes, in which there is not ingrauen a marke of his *righteouſneſſe*; yet the moſt ample and excellent teſtimonie thereof, appeares in the ſaluation of the Church. His meaning is then, that he *raiſed vp Cyrus* to manifeſt his *righteouſneſſe*, in that hee was ordained the Captaine to conduct the people home out of captiuitie.

By theſe wordes, *my Citie*, hee meanes Ieruſalem, which he calles *his*, becauſe hee would haue his name there to be praiſed, and to be particularly conſecrated vnto his honour: as himſelfe declares Exod. 20. 24. where he ſaith, In all places where I ſhall put the remembrāce of my name, there wil I come vnto thee and bleſſe thee. Now there was none other *Citie* appointed for *Sacrifices, vowes*, and prayer but this: which is the reaſō why it is called the Citie of God; The dwelling of the moſt high; becauſe God is in the midſt of it. And in an other place; This is my reſt for euer. But Cyrus *built not* this Citie with his owne hand: but only, by his decree forbad, that any ſhould hinder the reedifying of it. Beſides, he gaue to the people all things needefull for their returne. *Pſal. 46. 4. & 5. & 132. 14.* Reade Ezra 6. from verſe 3. to 15.

Not for price: that is to ſay, for nothing. It is no ordinarie matter for a Conqueror to let looſe his priſoners: For hee either puts them to their *Ranſome*, or impoſeth vpon them ſome very hard conditions. But Cyrus did none of theſe things: Whence it followed, that ſuch a deliuerance happened not by the will of man, but by the ſpeciall decree of God. The word *Captiuitie*, is heere taken for Captiues: becauſe it is a noune Collectiue.

Verſ. 14. *Thus ſaith the Lord; The labour of Egypt, and the merchandiſe of Ethiopia, and of the Sebeans, men of ſtature ſhall come vnto thee, and they ſhall bee thine: they ſhall follow thee,* and *ſhall goe in chaines: they ſhall fall downe before thee, and make ſupplication vnto thee,* ſaying; **Surely God is in thee, and there is none other God beſides.* *Or, onely.

A note of true conuerſion, when we worſhip that God which is acknowledged in the Church.

HEe ſpeakes againe of the reſtauration, which was afterwards effected by the permiſſion of *Cyrus*: but wee muſt remember what I haue ſaid often before; to wit, that theſe promiſes doe ſtretch themſelues further off: for they comprehend vnder them, all the time which ranne out betweene the returne, vntill Chriſts appearing. And if the readers doe ponder this well, and ſhall ſeriouſly weigh the Prophets forme of ſpeaking, heere will be found nothing ſuperfluous nor exceſſiue. Now *Iſaiah* alludes to that coſt and charges which *Cyrus* was at, in furniſhing the Iewes with neceſſaries to rebuild and adorne the Temple withall. For then was fulfilled that which hee ſaith touching the *labour of Egypt, and the merchandiſe of Ethiopia, which ſhould come vnto the Iewes*: for theſe two Countries were tributaries and ſubiect to the kings of Perſia. Of theſe tributes, the Temple of Ieruſalem was reſtored: which reſtauration was but a beginning of that which was accompliſhed by Chriſt. Neither was this ſeruice of ſtrāge nations to Gods people ought elſe, but a forerunner of that obedience which diuers Countries were afterward to yeeld to the Church of God, after Chriſt was manifeſted

ſled to the world. Moreouer, vnder the name of *Egypt*, and *Ethiopia*, and the *Sabeans* which now floriſhed, he alſo compriſeth all other nations: as if he ſhould ſay, You are now oppreſſed vnder the tyranny of ſtrangers, but the time ſhall come that they ſhall ſerue you. This promiſe was not fulfilled the firſt day it was made, but then only when Chriſt came into the world to ſubdue hautie and ſtubborne hearts vnder his obedience, which were incorrigible before, for afterwards they meekly gaue their necks to beare his ſweet yoke, and yet the Lord deliuered his people out of Babylon, that he might preſerue a Church vnto himſelfe till Chriſtes comming, vnder whoſe dominion all nations were to be ſubdued. It is no maruell then if the Prophet ſpeaking of the returne of the Iewes, bends his ſpeech towards the marke of the Lords decree, ſo making but one deliuerance (as it were) of both.

The Text.

They ſhall goe in chains and ſhall fall downe before thee.

Where he ſaith, that the Iſraelites ſhall get the *conqueſt ouer all nations*, it depends vpon that mutuall coniunction which is betweene the head and the members: for in regard the only Sonne of God hath ſo vnited the faithful vnto himſelfe that they and he make but *one*, therefore often that which belongs to him is attributed vnto the Church which is his body and his fulnes, Epheſ.1.23. In this ſenſe it is ſaid that the Church gouerns: not to darken the glorie of her head by an ambitious ſuperioritie: or to attribute vnto her ſelfe a proper empire, as if ſhe had ſomething ſeparate from her head: but in regard the preaching of the Goſpell which is committed vnto her, is the ſpirituall ſcepter by which Chriſt manifeſts his power. And in this ſort, none can humble himſelfe, *nor fall downe* before Chriſt, but he ſubmits himſelfe alſo to the Church, becauſe the obedience of faith, and the doctrine of the Church are things vnited, and yet ſo, that Chriſt notwithſtanding which is her head may reigne alone; and may exerciſe his power without the help of a ſecond.

The Church gouerns not to darken the glorie of her head by an hautie ſuperioritie.

Surely God is in thee.] The Prophet ſhewes what they ſhall ſay which by way of honor ſhall make *ſupplication* to the Church, to wit, they ſhall confeſſe that God is in her of a truth. Some tranſlate the word *Ak*, Only, which I reiect not, but confeſſe that it fitlie expreſſeth the Prophets meaning: yet it will not agree amiſſe to expound it affirmatiuely, *Surely God is in thee.* Now hee ſhewes, how ſtrange Nations ſhall be ſubiected to the Iewes, to wit, in acknowledging that there is *no other God* but him, whom the Iewes worſhip.

See 1. Cor. 14. 25.

Obiect.

If it be obiected that this appertaines not at all to the Iewes, who are now cut off from the Church: I anſwere, The Goſpell notwithſtanding came from them into all the world: and thus we acknowledge Ieruſalem to be the fountaine from whence this pure doctrine of life iſſued. In old time the Iewes only knew the true God, and none had the true worſhip but they: others being giuen to impoſtures worſhipped their owne inuentions: in which reſpect Chriſt ſpeaking to the woman of Samaria, ſaid, We know what we worſhip, Iohn 4. 22. It is rightly ſaid here then, that *God is in thee*, becauſe other nations knew not God. But becauſe there is heere a cloſe oppoſition, I willinglie receiue the particle Only, ſo as it ſerues as a teſtimonie of the ſound conuerſion of the Gentiles, who contenting themſelues with *one only God*, ſhall vtterlie forſake their Idols.

Anſ.

Iohn 4.22.

The ſumme of this verſe. 1

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The ſumme is, that thoſe who ſwelled with pride before, and deſpiſed the Church with a ſcornefull eie, ſhould now ſubiect themſelues vnto her after they were taught what Gods true ſanctuarie was, yet ſo (as hath bin ſaid) that God ſhall not therefore giue ouer his principalitie though he thus aduanceth his Church. And here we may behold a ſigne of true conuerſion, to wit, when we worſhip not a god of our owne forging, but ſuch a one as is acknowledged in the Church. This excellent title alſo which is giuen to the Church is not to be omitted, *God is in thee*, for God is in the middes of it, becauſe he hath choſen his dwelling there, as in Pſal.46. If wee bee Gods people and do ſubmit our ſelues to that doctrine of ſaluation which he ſets before vs, then may we reſolue vpon it that he will aſſiſt vs, becauſe he neuer failes thoſe that ſeeke him. This therefore is a perpetuall promiſe, and ought not to be reſtrained only to thoſe times.

Verſ. 15. *Verily thou, ô God, hideſt thy ſelfe: O God, the ſauiour of Iſrael.*

God will for a time hide himſelfe, before he manifeſts his glorie for his Churches deliuerance, thereby to make triall of her faith and patience.

NOw *Iſaiah* breakes forth into an exclamatiõ, ſhewing, that they muſt wait long for the inioying of Gods promiſes, for the people were in danger of declining, ſeeing the wicked had the world at will, and that all things went croſſe with them. I know well that many expound this place otherwiſe, for the Hebrues for the moſt part interpret it thus, That the Lord will hide himſelfe from the Gentiles, but will manifeſt himſelfe to his people. The Chriſtian Doctors bring another expoſition, but as far from the purpoſe. I grant that which they ſay ſauors of wit, whe they affirme that Chriſt is an hidden God, becauſe his diuinitie was hidden vnder the infirmitie of his fleſh. But this hath no affinitie with the Prophets intention, who ſaith, *God is hid*, becauſe he ſeemed as it were to *eſtrange himſelfe for a time*, whileſt he ſuffred his Church to languiſh vnder diuers oppreſſions and calamities, they were therefore to build vp one another by hope, which as *Paul* ſaith, is not of things ſeene, but of things *hidden*, Rom.8.24. And in this ſenſe *Iſaiah* ſaith that God was *hid*, becauſe they ſaw not the promiſes by & by performed: thus he meant to draw their minds from the conſideration of things preſent, and to rauiſh them aboue the heauens.

Wee haue neede of patience.

So alſo muſt we doe, if we meane to apprehend and imbrace his help. Wee haue neede of patience then you ſee, that when the promiſes are deferred, wee may alſo be able to hold our deſires in ſuſpence. He ſaid erewhile that the heathen ſhould feele Gods

preſence, notwithſtanding they were then blind and ſottiſh: but becauſe the time of the manifeſtation hereof was not yet come, it is not without cauſe that this exclamation is intermingled, to wit, that before God will manifeſt his glorie, he will hide his power for the triall of his ſeruants.

Beſides, from the epethite which is by and by added, where God is called the *ſauiour*, the Prophet ſpeakes not of the eſſence, but of the want of his ſuccor: for he ſhewes, that God *hid himſelfe* frō minding the deliuerance of his Church, in regard he withdrew his hand for a time, as if he had purpoſed whollie to forſake the ſame. Our God will haue *our ſaluation lie hidden* then as it were in darknes, to the end that if we wil haue any part therein, we may make our accounts to goe out of this world, becauſe this benefit will not by and by appeare vnto vs: we muſt therefore wait for this *ſaluation* with an inuincible conſtancie, for it is expedient, and for our great good, that God by this meanes ſhould examin and proue our faith, that ſo when afflictions do diuerſlie preſſe vs, we yet ceaſe not to reſt our ſelues vpon him, and vpon his promiſes.

We muſt be content to ſuffer our ſaluation to lie hid for a time, See Col. 3. 3. 4.

Yet we muſt wait for it with an inuincible conſtancie.

Verſ. 16. *All they ſhall be aſhamed and alſo confounded: they ſhall goe to confuſion together that are the makers of Images.*

17. *But Iſrael ſhall be ſaued in the Lord with an euerlaſting ſaluation: yee ſhall not be aſhamed nor confounded world without end.*

As God in the former verſes tooke order for the ſaluation of his Church, ſo here he decrees the deſtruction of his enemies.

THe Prophet heere compares the Iewes with the Gentiles, to preuent a difficult and dangerous temptation wherewith they might be ſhaken, by ſeeing the Gentiles to haue all things according to their wiſh. For they might well thinke in ſuch ſtreights that either God fauored the Gentiles, or, that he neglected his Church, or, that all things were hudled vp together at aduenture. The Prophet therefore aduertiſeth them, that howſoeuer the prophane nations floriſhed for a time, and ſeemed to be aduanced aboue the clouds, yet their *perdition* was decreed as well as the *ſaluation* of *Iſrael*. In a word, he admoniſheth them not to iudge of Gods power by the eſtate of things preſent, leſt they ſhould fix their thoughts vpon things of no continuance, but that they ſhould rather lift them vp to the eternal ſaluation, and in the meane while being ſtriken with Gods hand, patiently to beare their condition, without grudging at the proſperitie of the wicked, who were ſhortly to haue a *ſhamefull* fall, Pſal. 37. This ſentence then is knit to the former: for whoſoeuer ſhall be well inſtructed that God *hides* himſelfe whileſt he is a *ſauiour*, will not much be moued at the proſperitie of the wicked, nor at the miſerie of the faithfull that are deſpiſed, and exerciſed with ſundrie afflictions, becauſe the end of the one is *ſhame*, and the end of the other *glorie*.

Thus you ſee how the Lord prooues our faith and patience, and yet, that nothing of our eternall ſaluation which is prepared for vs ſhall fall to the ground: and that ſuch who ſeemed the only happie men, ſhall in the end periſh. All the good they now enioy ſhall turne to their extreame ruine, becauſe they abuſed the gifts of God, and like theeues, vſurp vpō that which is none of theirs, though they ſeeme to be the iuſt poſſeſſors of all things. As oft then as theſe thoughts ſhall trouble vs, to wit, that the wicked proſper, that God fauors them, and that the promiſes vpon which we reſt are vaine, let vs haue our recourſe to this ſentence of our Prophet, as to a ſafe citie of refuge, and let vs thus fortifie our ſelues; God will not diſappoint vs of our hope: in the end we ſhall be deliuered, though wee bee now expoſed to the reproches, iniuries, outrages, and cruelties of our enemies. 1 2 3

Verſ. 18. *For thus ſaith the Lord (that created heauen, God himſelfe that formed the earth, and made it: he that prepared it, he created it not in vaine: he formed it to be inhabited) I am the Lord, and there is none other.*

THis verſe ſerues to confirme that which was ſaid before, for the Prophet would haue the Iewes fullie reſolued, that the Lord at laſt would worke their deliuerance, albeit they were a long while oppreſſed vnder a miſerable ſeruitude; and therefore ſome by the *earth*, vnderſtand the land of Iudeah: but I rather take it to be an argument také from the leſſe to the greater, as we ſaid before in the 12. verſe; to wit, That ſeeing Gods prouidence reacheth generallie ouer all his creatures, by ſo much the more doth it extend it ſelfe to thoſe whom he hath adopted for his children, in regard he hath a ſpeciall care ouer them. Thus ſtands the Prophets argument then, Seeing *God hath created the earth that men ſhould inhabit it*, much more hath he made it a place of abode for his Church; which he eſteemeth more then of all creatures beſides: If he hath *ſeated the earth vpon her foundations*, in giuing it a certaine *forme*, and in ordeining it to a certaine vſe and end, *that men might be nouriſhed and ſuſteined with the fruites it bringeth forth*; no doubt but he hath giuē it to his childrē *in the firſt place*, and that in a ſoueraigne degree of honor aboue others. I grant wee ſee not this come alwaies thus to paſſe, and therefore our minds muſt be framed to be vpheld by hope, that ſo wee may ſtand firme and inuincible againſt all ſorts of temptations. In a word, the Church of God ſhall ſtand as long as the foundations of the earth remaine, for it ſhall be eſtabliſhed before God, as the Sunne and Moone in the firmament, Pſal. 89. 36. 37.

An argument taken againe from the leſſe to the greater, as in verſe 12.

The prophets Argument.

Gods children haue or ought to haue the firſt place in the earth.

Our minds muſt be vpheld by hope, by which we may manfully reſiſt temptations.

In Chap. 54. 9. he will vſe an argument of greater force, to wit, If the couenant which was made with *Noah* touching the conſtant eſtate of the world, be firme, much more ſhall his promiſe made to his Church be ſure and perma-

Gen. 9. 9.

permanent: for the world is corruptible and periſhable, but the Church, which is Chriſts kingdome, ſhall remaine for euer. The promiſes therefore which are made concerning her, muſt needes be more firme and ſtable then any thing beſides. Now becauſe the earths principall ornament ſtands in her being inhabited, the Prophet addes, that it was not *created to be vvaſte, but for men to converſe in.*

The Church remaines for euer.

If any ſhall obiect on the contrary, that the earth was without forme, and void euen after it was created, as it appeares in Geneſ.1.2. where *Moſes* vſeth the ſame word *Tohu*, that the Prophet heere doth, which ſignifies, without forme, and emptie; the ſolution is eaſie: for the Prophet ſpeakes not of the beginning of the creatiõ, but of Gods purpoſe: by which hee *ordained the earth for mens vſe and abode*. The Prophet then contradicts not *Moſes* at all, ſeeing he hath reſpect to the vſe and end.

Obiect.

Anſ.

As touching that which followes, *to be inhabited*: it extends it ſelfe to *all mankind in generall*; to wit, the earth is ordained for all men to dwell vpon. For whence comes it to paſſe that the Lord nouriſheth vs, prouides all neceſſaries for vs; yea and ſuſtaines the very wicked? Is it not that his decree might continue ſtedfaſt, becauſe hee hath appointed men to haue their dwelling in it? Otherwiſe, it were impoſſible that hee ſhould indure ſo many vices & wickednesſes to raigne, and not vtterly to deſtroy man from off the ſame: but hee reſpects his owne *holy ordinance*, and not our deſerts. Heere is the reaſon then why ſtates and kingdomes continue ſo long in the middeſt of Barbarians and Infidels; *The Lord vvill haue the earth inhabited*. And howſoeuer for the ſinnes of men, the Lord oftentimes brings ſome Countries into deſolation, and ſowes it as it were with ſalt, in regard they become barren, and are not able to ſuſtaine their inhabitants: yet, he euer ſo mitigates his ſtroke, that the earth is inhabited by ſome, becauſe God will haue his decree to ſtand inuiolable.

The reaſon why God continues ſinfull man vpon the earth.

But we muſt remember what I ſaid before, to wit, whileſt there is a world to bee inhabited of men, that God will haue a remnant reſerued, which ſhall call vpon his name. From hence then may all the faithfull gather great conſolation: for albeit the world contemnes them, and that they be few in number; and on the contrary, that the wicked ſurpaſſe them in multitude, riches, power, and authoritie; yet how little account ſoeuer bee made of them, and that they be eſteemed no better then abiects, and the off-ſcouring of al things, yet are they precious in the eies of the Lord, becauſe he acknowledgeth them for his children; and therefore will neuer ſuffer them to periſh.

God will alwaies haue a remnant to call vpon his name.

In that he repeates it againe, *I am the Lord*; it is not onely to iuſtifie his eternall eſſence; but to put a difference betweene his Maieſtie and Idols, that he might ſtill retaine the Iewes within the bounds of his pure worſhippe and ſeruice. The ſuperſtitious ſort will confeſſe indeed that there is one God, but they forge that one God in their owne braine: we muſt therefore know and acknowledge that God, which manifeſted himſelfe to the Patriarks and Prophets. Neither ſpeakes he heere of Gods eternall eſſence onely, as many thinke, but likewiſe of all the offices which peculiarlie belong vnto him, to the end none may dare to transfer that which is onely proper vnto him, and not vnto creatures.

Verſ. 19. *I haue not ſpoken in ſecret, neither in a place of darkneſſe in the earth: I ſaid not in vaine vnto the ſeede of Iakob, Seeke you mee. I the Lord doe ſpeake in righteouſneſſe, and declare righteous things.*

NOw he brings the people to the doctrine of the Law, becauſe God cannot be comprehended by the ſenſe of fleſh and blood. Howſoeuer then he be hid from carnall reaſon, yet he fully manifeſts himſelfe, and giues a remedy in his word, which ſupplies our want, to the end we ſhould ſeeke no further then it: were it not ſo, we ſhould be left as men without any hope at all, and ſhould vtterly quaile. He therefore proteſts, that hee called vs not vnto him *in vaine*, albeit his helpe be deferred; becauſe that which hee hath promiſed, is moſt ſure.

As hee hath ſhewed vs cleerly then whither we ought to flee, and vpon what to reſt, ſo will he let it be ſeene by the effects, that the hope of ſuch as haue ſtaied vpon his word, ſhall not be fruitleſſe. Hence wee may ſee how abominable their ſpeeches are, who affirme that a man can gather no particular aſſurance of his ſaluation from the word of God: they alſo make it no better then a noſe of wax, that they might diſcourage Gods people from medling with it. For theſe maſtiues barke thus, in regard they ſee it diſcouers their errors, and that the whole foundation of their rotten building, is ouerthrowne by the doctrine contained in that little volume.

An horrible blaſphemie to affirme that a man can gather no particular aſſurance to himſelfe of his owne ſaluation out of the Scriptures.

But with *Dauid* we anſwere; *Thy vvord, O Lord, is a lanterne to my feete, and a light vnto my path*: Pſal.119.105. With *Iſaiah* and the reſt of the holy Prophets we anſwer; that the Lord hath deliuered nothing that is obſcure, doubtfull, or deceiuing: and with Saint *Peter* we confeſſe, that *the vvord of the Prophets is moſt ſtable and ſure; to vvhich, as he ſaith, vve do vvell in giuing heede, as to a light that ſhines in a darke place*, vntill the day dawne, and the day ſtarre ariſe in our hearts: 2.Pet.1.19. And if this were ſaid of the *Law, and of the Prophets, vvhat ſhall vve ſay of the Goſpell*, by which this light is openly reuealed vnto vs? Shall we not affirme with Saint *Paul*; *If the Goſpell be yet hid, it is hid in them that are loſt*, whom (Satan) the God of this world hath blinded? 2.Cor.4.3. Let the blind world then accuſe it ſelfe, when it cannot indure the brightneſſe of this word: and as for vs, let vs ſtand faſt and abide by this heauenly light, which the faithleſſe labour to dimme and darken with

their mists and fogs of errors.

Moreouer, it seemes the Prophet alludes to the Oracles which were giuen out of caues and the three footed stoole of their Idols; for they were things vncertaine, and full of illusions. But Gods answers are free from such things: for he speakes not in *darknesse*, but in the highest places of the Citie; neither vtters he ought that can deceiue, or be turned two maner of waies.

Prou. 9.3.

Obiect. Ans.

But will some say, experience teacheth that the Scripture is both hard and obscure. It is very true; but this is to be attributed to the dulnesse & slownesse of our vnderstandings, and not to the Scriptures. For the blind, or such as are weake sighted, cannot accuse the Sunne, in that they are not able to behold it. The fault is in themselues. And yet this remaines sure, that as many as are teachable; and yeeld obedience vnto Gods ordinances, shall not lose their labour, because the Lord will shew himselfe a faithfull teacher towards the humble and meeke.

Simile.

Psal. 25.9.

The Scriptures easie to them that will vnderstand: Prou. 8 9.

Howsoeuer then all attaine not to a perfection of knowledge, yet the study of such as seeke vnto God vnfainedly, shall neuer returne without fruit. In this clause also the Prophet shewes, that the end and vse of the Law, serues to bring men to God: for it is the onely true happinesse of man, to be knit againe to his Sauiour: and the sacred bond of this coniunction, consists in faith and in true pietie.

The stedfastnesse and certaintie of Gods word.

Now in the second member hee not onely protests that he spake distinctly, and without ambiguitie; but also sets forth the stedfastnes and certaintie of his word: as if he should say; I make not these large promises to circumuent or beguile poore captiues withall, as if I meant to feed you onely with faire words; but I will also surely performe whatsoeuer I haue promised. And thus he conuinceth their ingratitude, who being called, answered not: for Gods meaning is to make vs partakers of all the good things which hee offers vs, whereof otherwise wee are vtterlie destitute.

Where it followes, that God *speakes in righteousnesse*, it serues as an exposition: as if hee should say; My word by which I seeke to draw the Saints vnto mee, was neuer yet tainted with any vntruth, but containes things that are altogether *righteous*: Psal. 19.9. The words of the Lord, saith *Dauid*, are pure words, as the siluer tried in a furnace of earth, fined seuenfold: Psal. 12.6. In Gods word then wee haue a cleere *righteousnesse* shining out vnto vs; which hauing scattered all our darknesse, will forthwith inlighten our mindes and vnderstandings.

Gods word neuer yet found deceitfull to any that rested vpon the truth of it.

Verse 20. *Assemble your selues and come: draw neere together, yee abiects of the Gentiles: * they haue no knowledge that set vp the wood of their Idoll, and pray to a god that cannot saue them.*

*Or, those which carry the wood of their Idol, and which pray vnto a God that cannot saue them, haue no knowledge.

HE bids defiance to all Idolaters, and summons them to appeare, that they might haue the matter taken vp, vpon some reasonable conditions; as we haue seene before in other places. But the issue will goe wrong on their sides, because all their reasons will bee easilie ouerthrowne. As if he should say; They now please themselues in their superstitions, but when their cause comes once to the trial, all pretexts shall by & by vanish like smoke; so as it will be no masterie to put them all to silence. Let them assemble then if they will by troopes, let them consult, conspire, and doe their vtmost by threats, fraudes, and terrors, yet must the truth needes preuaile at length against them.

All Idolaters summoned to appeare.

The Iewes had great neede of this confirmation, in regard they saw idolatries and superstitions to haue the full swinge on euerie side, and the true seruice of God vtterly to be extinct.

To this fortresse also must wee flee at this day, when wee consider our feeblenesse and weakenesse. The Turkes possesse a great part of the world. The Papists aduance themselues with their crests set vp on high in euerie place: and we in the meane while, which are but an handfull, are esteemed no better then the wormes of the earth: but yet in the end, truth which is great, will preuaile, and as a conquerresse, will pull downe all that state and pompe which now dazles our eyes.

The truth will at length preuaile.

Some translate the word *Pe'lit*, Reiected: others, Fugitiue, or, escaped; and thinke it is directed to the Iewes which were returned home. But this sense is too far fetched: it rather seemes that the Prophet vnderstands thereby, the reiected of the Gentiles; because the verbe *Palat*, signifies to reiect. And yet the Prophet speakes not heere of the common nor worst sort, but directs his speech to those that were the learnedst, richest, and of greatest renowne among the Gentiles. For he calles them *reiected*, in respect that they are nothing in the sight of the Lord. And yet if any had rather expound the word; a farre off; I hinder him not: for it is as if hee had said; Assemble you selues from all parts of the earth.

In adding, *those which carry the wood*: hee shewes with what furie Idolaters are carried away, who worshippe the Idols which themselues *carry* vpon their shoulders in processions: or, we may (if you will) take this word, *To beare, To lift*, or, *set vp* in some high place: for it is the policie of Satan, to erect and set vp Images vpon pillars and in high rood lofts, to strike men with an admiration of them, and to draw them by the onely view to proferre them some signe of reuerence and honour. And yet we may take it simply for the whole seruice which is performed to the Idols, that he might plainly shew how there was nothing but vanitie and folly in all that they did. For the superstitious sort cannot be ignorant, that their Idols haue more need of mens helpe, then men haue of theirs, that can neither goe, nor stand an end, vnlesse men lend them their hands. And to this appertaines that which is added, that they *pray vnto a God which cannot saue them*. For what follie

Idols haue more needs of mens help then they haue of theirs.

follie is it to pray and make vowes to a ſenſleſſe ſtocke or ſtone, that neither heares nor ſees? And yet the vnbeleeuers ride poſt (as it were) to dumbe and dead Idols for helpe.

Verſ. 21. *Tell yee and bring them, and let them take counſell together, who hath declared this frō the beginning? or, hath told it of old? Haue not I, the Lord? and there is none other God beſides mee, a iuſt God, a Sauiour: there is none beſides me.*

A compariſō betweene Gods predictions, and thoſe of the Idols.

AGaine hee proteſts againſt all ſuch as might trouble the Iewes or weaken their faith by their ſcornings. For the Prophet aimes alwaies at this marke; to wit, that hee may fortifie the peoples faith againſt the aſſaults of the Gentiles; becauſe the poore Iews, who were ſo extreamly handled, were in danger of ſtaggering in the midſt of ſo many great and violent temptations, had they not had ſome pregnant arguments ſet before them to hold them in their faith and obedience towards the true God. Thus then hee permits the prophane to bring in whatſoeuer they can for the maintenance of their cauſe.

Where he ſaith, *let them conſult together*: it is added in token of the greater boldneſſe and confidence: for the Prophets meaning is, that they ſhall gaine nothing (as wee haue ſaid before) albeit they conſpire neuer ſo much together. It may be alſo hee meant to ſhew how there was nought elſe but vanitie and deceit, in all that which the Idolaters dreame of, touching the excuſing of their errors. Make what pretences you will then, ſaith he, to colour your inuentions, yet ſhall Gods word be ſtrong enough to ſuſtaine the faith of his ſeruants. Hee calles them therefore to a right examination of things, that they may compare all the brags of the Infidels, touching the *predictions* of their Idols, with the Law and the propheeies.

I willingly receiue that which is affirmed by all; to wit, that the Prophet ſpeakes of the deliuerance of the people. But in regard the ouerthrow of the Babylonian Monarchy was ioined therewithall, therefore I thinke one of theſe things is compared with the other. And becauſe one ſentence is repeated twice, theſe two words, *Miktedem*, and *Meaz*, are as much in effect as if he had ſaid; *From the beginning, and from the times paſt*: for this prophecie was publiſhed long time before the things (propheeied) were accompliſhed: whereby the faithfull might euidently perceiue, that it was God which ſpake.

To preſcience he addes his *power*, as we haue often ſaid: and yet withall he ſhewes to what end God is powerfull; euen to *ſaue* his people.

Verſ. 22. *Looke vnto mee, and yee ſhall bee ſaued: all the ends of the earth ſhall be ſaued; for I am God, and there is none other.*

Now the Prophet turnes his ſpeech from the Iewes to the Gentiles.

HItherunto hee hath ſpoken onely to the Iewes, as if *ſaluation* appertained to none but them. Now he extends his ſpeech further off: for he cals a great audience to him, euen the *whole world*, to partake of the hope of ſaluation: and therewithall condemnes all nations of vnthankfulnes, if in giuing themſelues ſtill to be ſeduced with errors, they obſtinately ſhunned the cleere light which was offered. For can a man commit a greater ſinne, then directly to reiect his owne ſaluation?

God commands *all* then to looke vnto him: to which *Commendement* he addes a *Promiſe*: for this hath greater weight in it, and confirmes the matter much more, then if he had ſet it downe ſimply by way of a command. We haue in this text therefore an excellent teſtimony touching the vocation of the Gentiles: wherein wee ſee how the Lord indifferently calles *all ſorts* of men vnto him, the partition wall being broken downe, which ſeparated betweene the Iewes and the Gentiles. *Eph.* 2. 14.

Moreouer, wee are heere taught the true meanes how to obtaine ſaluation; euen to *looke vnto God*, and to turne vnto him with our whole heart. But we muſt *looke* vnto him with the eie of faith, that we may imbrace the *ſaluation* promiſed to *all*, in Ieſus Chriſt. For God ſo loued the world, that he gaue his onely begotten Sonne, that *whoſoeuer* beleeues in him, might not periſh, but haue euerlaſting life: Iohn 3. 16.

Now when hee exhorts all *the ends* of the earth, he ſhewes that *all men* haue hitherunto erred out of the right way, & haue had no reſpect vnto the true God: for where infidelitie raignes, there God cannot be diſcerned from Idols. In a word, he ſhewes that the condemnation of the whole world, ariſeth from doting vpon their owne inuentions, whereby they forſake the liuing God: for from the knowledge of him, flowes eternall and aſſured ſaluation. The Lord then reacheth out his hand to ſaue all nations, and ſhewes them what way they ſhould take to obtaine it. And thus it appeares it fel not out by chance, that the Goſpell was generally preached vnto all nations vnder heauen: but that it proceeded from Gods decree, who had ordained it ſo to come to paſſe long before. Yet hee accuſeth the Gentiles of blindneſſe, as I haue ſaid ere while, in that they turned their eies after vanities, and ranne which way ſoeuer their giddie ſpirits led them. For howſoeuer by nature they could not find out the true God, hauing from their infancie been trained vp in ſuperſtitions, and were bewitched with them; yet God had iuſt cauſe notwithſtanding to blame them for the prophane contempt of his grace. Hypocriſie, you know, is alwaies wrapped in ignorance, ſo as men had rather bee deceiued through vaine deceits, then to be led the ſtraight way vnto God.

All haue erred.

The way to ſaluation deſcribed.

Hypocriſie alwaies mixed with ignorance.

Verſ. 23. *I haue ſworne by my ſelfe:*

the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousnesse, and shall not returne, that euerie knee shall bow vnto mee, and euerie tongue shall sweare by me.

*Or, that is, euery knee, &c.

A confirmation of the former sentence.

HE addes a more manifest confirmation to the former sentence: for because this *calling* was extraordinary and vnheard of, hee therefore addes *an oath*, as men are wont to doe in things that are strange and hard to be credited. The Iewes might haue made replies, in regard they were then reputed the onely elect people. But in that he confirmes it with an *oath*, all contention is taken away. I grant the Prophet aimes againe at the same marke that he did in vers. 6. to wit, that Gods glory shall so shine in the restauration of the Church, that all the world, from the rising of the Sunne, to the West, shal admire the same: or, to tell it you in a word, that the signes of Gods power shal so shine in this deliuerance, that all nations shall bee confounded with feare and astonishment. In the meane while hence wee may gather that which I touched before; namely, the *Gentiles* are heere equalled with the *Iewes*, so as God shall be the *common father of all*, and *his name called vpon* in all places.

The cause of Gods oath.

Now God *sweares by himselfe*, because there is none more sufficient to be a witnesse of his truth: for he is the truth it selfe. Men sweare by greater then themselues, as the Apostle saith, Heb. 6. 16. but God hauing no superior, sweares heere by himselfe.

We must note the cause of this oath. It is euen to sustaine the infirmities of the Saints, lest they should float vp and downe in vncertainties. What a wonderfull goodnes of God is this, who to remedy our diffidence, disdains not to vse his owne name, as if hee laid it to pawne? On the other side, how grosse and vile is our incredulity, if this *oath* doe not satisfie and content vs?

Gods name not to bee mingled with creatures in our othes.

Now seeing God reserues to himselfe the confirmation of all truth, we must take good heed when wee are constrained to call him for a witnesse in othes, that wee mingle not his name with Saints, or any other creatures whatsoeuer: but vsing it with such reuerence as is meete, let vs reserue his honour full and whole vnto himselfe.

The vvord is gone forth.] The meaning is, that whatsoeuer the Prophet hath published at Gods commandement, is firme and sure. As if hee should say; This commandement passed not from me vnawares. In this sense the word *righteousnesse*, is often taken for a true speech, and such as shall alwaies bee found so: and therefore he saith, that his word *cannot be called backe*.

Men inconstant.

God vnchangeable.

To this appertaines the other member; *shall not returne*: that is to say, it shall still grow to perfection, vntil it appeares by the effects, that it came from a God most iust, true, and almightie: for man a will call backe his word when he meetes with any difficultie that may hinder him from keeping the same. But because nothing can let God from executing his determinations, the Prophet rightly concludes, that the course of this word cannot be stopped, nor broken off by any inconuenience at all. The particle, *That is*, must serue heere for an exposition; to wit, *Behold vvhat this vvord is*.

Euery knee shall bow vnto mee.] By this hee meanes that all nations shall bow before God; because the deliuerance of the Church shall terrifie the whole world. Yet withall it followes from hence, that his true worshippe shall also be receiued among all nations. For we cannot truely *bow the knee* before God, till he hath manifested himselfe vnto vs. Men may indeede present a kind of seruice to the one God, whom yet they know not: there is nothing but vanitie and illusions in all this. He speakes heere then of that true religious seruice, which proceedes from such a knowledge of God, as is rooted in the depth of the heart: for where no faith is, there can bee no sincere worshippe. True faith, as wee know, staies not her selfe vpon any vncertaine or vnknowne thing.

What it is to bow the knee to God.

The thing signified set forth by the signe.

He sets forth the thing signified therefore, by the signe; as the Scriptures are often wont to doe. Whence we gather, that God requireth *the outward seruice of the body*: for the Prophet separates not *the externall profession* of religion, from *the internall affection of the heart*. It is in vaine then for such inconstant spirits to brag, that they can honour and worshippe God in their hearts, though they *bow their knees* before Idols. It is in vaine for them (I say) to make so friuolous an excuse, seeing *the inward* beliefe of the heart cannot bee diuided from *the outward* confession of the mouth. For with the heart, man beleeues vnto righteousnesse, and with the mouth he confesseth vnto saluation: Rom. 10. 10. For this cause the Lord approoues of their integritie and vprightnesse in his seruice, that had not so much as *bowed a knee* to Baal: 1. King. 19. 18.

A friuolous excuse of temporisers.

Saint *Paul* applies this text to the last iudgement, where he saith, that all shall bee constrained to appeare before the iudgement seat of Christ. Although it is applied heere to the peoples deliuerance out of Babylon, to the spreading abroad of the Gospell, and to the establishing of the kingdome of Christ. But the Apostle holds it for granted, (which we also are not to bee ignorant of) that that which appertaines to Christs kingdome, ought not to be restrained to some parts of it onely, but to stretch it selfe throughout the whole course thereof, euen till the full and perfect accomplishment of the whole appeare. What is it then to bow the knee vnto Christ? It is *vvhen his doctrine is obeied, and the preaching of the Gospell receiued*.

What is meant by bowing of the knees to Christ.

But many still resist it, and boldly contemne it: Satan plots sundry mischiefes, and with open mouth rageth against it continually; so as the accomplishment of this prophecie seemes yet to be very farr off. The knee shall then truly be bowed to Christ, when he shall triumph, and hath put downe and destroied all his enemies, and when he shall appeare in maiestie and in glory to all, which Satan and his suppostes doe now seeke to abolish. And

therefore

therefore S. *Paul* teacheth, that when Chriſt ſhall aſcend vp into his Throne to iudge the world, then ſhall that be accompliſhed which began to take effect from the beginning of the Goſpell, which we alſo ſee to draw neere from day to day.

The verb to *sweare* is put for ſeruice, reuerence, or ſubiection, by the figure called Synecdoche, whē a part is taken for the whole. An oth alſo is part of the honor which is due vnto God, for by it we confeſſe and acknowledge that he is the author, father, and lawfull protector of all truth, and that all things are naked and bare before his eies, Heb. 4. 13. When this honor therefore is giuen to Idols, Gods Maieſtie is thereby violated with an execrable ſacrilege: thus then, thoſe which ſerue him purely, ſweare only by his name, and by nothing elſe. But we haue ſpoken of this matter in another place.

An oth, part of Gods honor.

See Chap. 19. 18.

Verſ. 24. *Surely he ſhall ſay, In the Lord haue I righteouſnes and ſtrength: he ſhall come vnto him, and all that prouoke him ſhall be aſhamed.*

HE ſhewes what true faith is, and what worſhip God approues of, to wit, when we haue not only a bare knowledge of him, or thinke in our hearts that there is one God, but when we alſo feele what a one he is to vs. Whoſoeuer he be then that contents himſelfe with a naked apprehenſion of God; is farre off from that faith which ſo knits vs vnto him, that we feele him dwelling in vs, according as S. *Paul* would haue vs not only to *know Chriſt*, but that he alſo ſhould *dwell in our hearts by faith*, Epheſ. 3. 17. For he that contemplates of an idle god in the heauens ſitting at his eaſe, will neuer *bow his knee* before him with a ſincere heart; neither will he euer make a franck and willing confeſſion vnto him.

We muſt proceed from faith to teching.

1
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Now becauſe *righteouſnes* and *ſtrength* are the two maine points of our ſaluation, the faithfull acknowledge God to be the author of both in them, and thus they whollie attribute the glorie of their happines vnto him: and in confeſſing that it proceeds from his free grace, it is to teſtifie to all that by nature they are depriued of ſuch gifts. They therefore confeſſe that they can finde neither *ſtrength* nor *righteouſnes* in themſelues, but do ſeeke the ſame only in God, that he may not be defrauded of his proper right.

God the author both of righteouſnes and ſtrength.

He ſhall come vnto him.] The expoſitors agree not touching the interpretatiō of theſe words: for mine owne part, I vnderſtand this place only of the *faithfull*, who ſubmit themſelues vnto God, that ſo wee might ſee the reaſon of the oppoſition which is betweene them, and thoſe rebels which ceaſe not obſtinately to reſiſt God. Thus I expound it then, *Thoſe who confeſſe their righteouſnes and ſtrength to be from God, ſhall come to him.* For his meaning is, that we haue acceſſe vnto God by faith, *ſo as all thoſe which confeſſe their ſaluation conſiſts in him, ſhall approue vnto him, and finde him profite vnto them.*

Truely, a man can neuer voluntarily draw neere vnto God, till he be reconciled with him: for the more we feele the terror of his Maieſtie, the further off wee flee from him. The Prophet in this place then magnifies this ioyfull fruit of Gods fauor, by meanes whereof, thoſe that were ſtrangers farre off before, ſhall now come and be made neere vnto him. To this agrees that in the 65. Pſal. Becauſe thou art a God that heareſt prayer, therefore ſhall all fleſh *come vnto thee*.

None comes willinglie to God, til they feele their reconciliatiō with him.

Col. 1. 22. *Eph.* 2. 13.

Now *Iſaiah* hauing ſhewed that God will gather in ſtrangers from their diſperſions, and entertaine them in his owne houſe, he denounceth an horrible iudgement againſt contemners and deſpiſers, who giue themſelues the raines, as if there were no God at all; and ſcorning all pietie: wallow themſelues in worldlie delights. For as faith only brings forth obedience, ſo the Prophet ſhews that it is infidelitie only which *prouokes* God to wrath and diſpleaſure. When he brands the vnbeleeuers with this marke, that they are rebels to God; yea, that they prouoke him to the combat: therewithall hee pronounceth that they ſhall be couered with *ſhame*, howſoeuer they make their triumphs in the ſight of the world.

Faith, the mother of obedience.

Infidelitie, the mother of rebellion.

Verſ. 25. *The whole ſeed of Iſrael ſhall bee iuſtified, and glorie in the Lord.*

HEe now preuents an obiection which might be made againſt this doctrine, to wit, it ſeemes ſtrange that the Lord ſhould call thoſe nations vnto him which were farre off before: as if they ſhould ſay, Hath God then choſen the poſteritie of *Abraham* in vaine? Shall his promiſes ſo often repeated Gen. 15. 5. and 17. 7. vaniſh into the aire? To this he anſwers, that the Lord will not ceaſe to be true in his promiſes ſtill, ſo that howſoeuer God hath made choiſe of the Gentiles, yet notwithſtanding the couenant contracted and made with their *fathers* ſhal ſtand ſtill inuiolable, becauſe the elect Iewes ſhall hold their ſouereigne prerogatiue. For hee ſpeakes not heere of their reiection as in many other places, but the Prophet only deliuers this point, that Gods grace which ſhall now be extended to all nations, ſhal ſtill flow from this fountaine, I am thy God, and the God of thy *ſeed* after thee, Gen. 17. 7. whereas the moſt part of the Iewes then were reiected; this ouerthrew not Gods couenant, becauſe the remnant that were adopted alwaies remained the true and lawfull *ſeed*: and albeit they were few in number, yet were they the firſt borne in the Church.

The preuention of an obiection.

Moreouer, all thoſe among the Gentiles which were grafted into this body, began now to be the *children of Abraham*, as in Chap. 44. 5. one ſhall ſay, I belong to *Iaakob*, another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand, and ſay, I am begotten of *Iſrael*. From this title it is that we at this day are reputed by good right *the Iſrael of God*, though *Iaakob* begat vs not. The Prophet addes this then, that they ſhould not thinke the couenant of God was abolished:

Gal. 6. 16.

shed: as also, that they were not so to glorie in their race and stock, that they should therfore vtterly despise the Gentiles.

The whole seed of Israel.] He stretcheth this *seed* further off, lest they should imagin it to be *wholly* restrained to the posteritie of *Abraham*. For the Lord gathers his people indifferentlie both out of *Iewes and Gentiles*. In this place then he speakes in generall of all mankinde.

Neither righteousnes nor glorie out of God.

We haue further to obserue, that the Prophet saith, we are *iustified*, and shall *glorie in the Lord*, for we must neither seeke *righteousnes*, nor *glorie* out of him. Now *glorie* is added, because it depends vpon righteousnes, and followes it. For which cause S. *Paul* saith, Where is thy *reioycing*? It is excluded. By what law? of works? nay, but by the law of faith, Rom.3.27. Also, if *Abraham* were *iustified* by works, he had wherein to *glorie*, but not with God, Rom.4.2. It followes then, that those shall iustlie *glorie*, who seeke their *iustification* in *God* only, acknowledging that in themselues there is no matter at all of reioycing.

Those iustly glorie that seeke their iustice in God only.

THE XLVI. CHAPTER.

* Or, quite ouerthrown.

* Or, Mares.

* Or, brown downe.

Vers. 1. *Bel* is bowed downe: Nebo is fallen: their Idols were vpon the beasts, and vpon the *Cattell: they which did beare you were *laden with a wearie burden.*

The coherence of the sentences rather to be considered now and then in this prophesie, then the diuision of the Chapters.



Isaiah continues forth his former argument; for wee must not stande ouer-strictlie vpon the diuiding of the Chapters, in regard they were not alwaies aptly obserued: but wee are rather to consider of the sentences which cohere very well, as I haue said; notwithstanding, if any had rather haue it the beginning of a new Sermon, in regard that he forthwith speaks of the ruine of Babylon, I do not much contradict him. *Bel* and *Nebo*, were Idols which the Chaldeans worshipped, and it is very likely they were their chiefe *patrons*, for Idolaters alwaies make choice of some principall gods, vnder whose protection they thinke to be safe. Wee may also coniecture that this *Nebo* was an inferior god, added to the great god *Bel*, as *Mercurie* was to *Iupiter*. And vnder the names of these two the Prophet also comprehends all other Idols, foretelling by the spirit of prophesie that all the abominable Idolatries and superstitions of the Gentiles should be abolished, when God (hauing subdued & Idolaters vnder his feet) shall in triumph leade them captiues, for then it should be manifest to all that he was the iust auenger of his Church. The Chaldeans proudly boasted of the protection they had vnder their false gods; but the Prophet refutes this vaine confidence, saying, that the God of Israel will not content himselfe only to roote out the prophane people, but will also ouerthrow all their gods to their vtter shame and disgrace.

Idolaters wil alwaies make choice of some principall patrons.

And therefore he saith, that they shall be *borne vpon mares*, in regard they should be throwne into some cart, or other to be transported and tumbled vpon heapes together as it pleased the carters to dispose of them: that is it which he signifies by the word *put downe*, because the souldiers should lay all the gods on heapes which were so highly aduanced before. And no doubt but this was accomplished when the Medes and Persians tooke Babylon: for the Monarchie being translated to them, these Idols also were taken away as part of the spoile. Now howsoeuer *Isaiah* prophesied these things in respect of the Babylonians, yet doubtles he speciallie aimed at the comming of Christ in the flesh, at whose appearance all Idolatries and superstitions should be abolished. For when his kingdome is once established, all Idols forthwith fall to the ground, for it is not possible that false religion and superstitions can stand with his true knowledge: he expels all darknes by his brightnes, so as he leaues no roome neither for the false gods, nor anie of their seruices: for what communion hath light with darknes, or *Christ* with Belial? as S. *Paul* saith, 2.Cor.6.15.

Where Christes kingdom is established, there all Idols fall to the ground. See 1.Sam.5.4.

But withall we must obserue that the Prophet respected the time in which the Iewes were held prisoners: for they saw the Chaldeans perfume their Idols, and attributed vnto them a soueraigne power, as if the issue of all things had bin at the beck of these puppets, and in the meane while they scorned the God of the Iewes, as if he had bin insufficiét to defend his people, (or if he were) yet that he did not much regard them. He shewes then that there shal be such a change, that the gods of the Chaldeans which were highly exalted should fall, and that the true God who seemed to be throwne to the earth shall be exalted, and shall reuenge the outrages done vnto his seruants.

Vers. 2. *They are bowed downe, and fallen together, for they could not rid them of the burden, and their soule is gone into captiuitie.*

THe Prophet derides the vanitie of these goodly gods, who had neither strength nor motion, neither were they *able to stand vpon their feet*, nor to defend themselues, seeing the poore beasts were faine to carrie them. Heere is a close opposition then betweene their Idols, and the true God, who stands in no need of any help at all. But the Prophet to their further disgrace addes, that the

A close opposition betweene the true God, and Idols.

See verſe 1. the *mares* (whereof hee ſpeakes in this verſe) were *bowed downe* with the burden, of which they would gladly haue *rid themſelues*. And thus theſe falſe gods, after they ſuffered their worſhippers to bee depriued of them, were now become troubleſome to the poore bruit beaſts.

Their ſoules.] It is an Hebrew phraſe; by which the Prophet mockes theſe Gods who had neither ſenſe, nor any vnderſtanding at all. He ſpeakes it then by way of contempt againſt the vaine and dumbe Idols; to wit, that *they and their ſoule* were led into captiuitie.

Obiect. But let vs ſee if this may not as well be retorted vpon the true God, whoſe Arke was taken by the Philiſtims, 1.Sam.4.11. which was *the ſigne of his preſence*: for thus it ſeemed, that *the Lord himſelfe* was in a maner *led priſoner*.

Anſ. The anſwer to this obiection is eaſie. For howſoeuer the Lord meant that the Arke ſhould be a teſtimonie of his preſence, yet he forbad the Iewes to reſt in it, but commanded them to lift vp their eies to heauen, and there to ſeeke and adore him: for as hee is a ſpirit, ſo meant he alwaies to be ſerued ſpiri-
Iohn 4.23. tually. The Arke then was not worſhipped in Gods ſtead, but was *a ſigne* by which the people were led as by the hand, to ſet their affec-
Col.3.1. tiõs on things aboue, euen vpõ the Lord himſelfe: contrariwiſe, the Gentiles doted onelie vpon their puppets, and attributed vnto them a diuine power. Wee may alſo affirme, that the Philiſtims were at laſt well ſcourged for their preſumption; ſo as they felt how they had to deale with the true God: 1.Sam. 5.7.

Obiect. But this anſwer may ſeeme inſufficient, becauſe the Lord ſuffered his Arke to be in contempt for a time, as it plainly appeares by

Anſ. the courſe of the hiſtory: 1.Sam. 5.6. Thus then the true ſolution is; *that howſoeuer the Lord communicates himſelfe vvith vs by ſignes and ſacraments, yet he vvill be ſought of vs in heauen*. Moreouer, himſelfe had foretold by memorable prophecies, that the Philiſtims in their conqueſt led him not priſoner, but that he willingly expoſed his Arke as a pray to his
1.Sam.3.11. enemies, to auenge him of the wickednesſes of the people. Alſo when the Temple was deſtroied and burnt, and the veſſels carried into Babylon, the Iewes could not be ignorant but the ſame God which they had worſhipped in Ieruſalem, was the authour of this chaſtiſement, in regard hee had ſo often foretold that by his Prophets, which then came to paſſe.

Verſ. 3. *Heare yee mee, O houſe of Iakob, and all that remaine of the houſe of Iſrael, which are borne of mee from the wombe, and brought vp of mee from the birth.*

A concluſion vpon the premiſes. THe Prophet heere elegantly ſhewes what great difference there is betweene the true God and Idols: for hee ſaid before, that the gods of the Babylonians ſhould be *carried vpon carts, and drawne by beaſts*, becauſe they were dead ſtockes: heere hee attributes a far higher proprietie vnto the God of *Iſrael*; to wit, *that he carried his people, as the mother carries the child in the vvombe; vvhich being borne, ſhee alwaies carries in her boſome*. Now hee calles the *Iewes* to *giue eare*, that they might make anſwer from their owne experience; for they ought to be the more affected, in regard they had felt by the effects, that God had continually ſupported both *them* and their *burdens*. He vſeth a very fit oppoſition then, and from the former words thus concludes; Acknowledge and confeſſe indeed that I am the true God, and in nothing like vnto Idols, which are vaine things, and dead burthens: adde alſo, that in regard of my continuall benefits, which I haue neuer ceaſed to powre vpon you from *your birth*, you cannot be ignorant, but muſt needes know the greatneſſe of my power. For the Lord is not onely powerfull for himſelfe, but extends it to all his creatures, that we might truly feele the efficacie thereof.

Wee may iuſtifie God to be the true God by our owne experience.

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Which are borne of me from the vvombe.] This ſimilitude, by which God compares himſelfe to a *mother that beares her child in her vvombe*, is very fitting for his purpoſe. Now he ſpeaks of the time paſt, in which hee began to giue vnto his people teſtimonies of his grace: vnleſſe any had rather expound theſe wordes more ſtrictly; to wit, that God hath in mercie aduanced them, and borne them in his armes as a child borne of his mother: Pſal.22.9,10. But becauſe God began not onely to bee a nurcing father to this people from their naturall birth, but alſo begat them ſpiritually; it is not amiſſe to extend his ſpeech euen to that, to wit, that they iſſued as it were out of Gods wombe, into *newneſſe of life*, and to the hope of the eternall inheritance.

If any obiect that God is euery where called a Father: Ier.31.9. Mal.1.6. and that this title properly belongs vnto him: I anſwere, that Gods loue is ſo incomprehenſible vnto his Church, that all the ſimilitudes in the world are inſufficient to expreſſe the ſame. For it is a thing that hath many branches, yea infinite and vnmeaſurable; ſo as if all the benefits that witneſſe true friendſhip, were gathered into one, yet this affection, for the greatneſſe of it, far exceedes all that can bee thought or ſpoken of: there is no ſimili-
No ſimilitude or borrowed ſpeech ſufficient to expreſſe Gods infinit loue to his children. tude therefore that can expreſſe his ineſtimable loue.

Obiect.

Anſ.

If we onely vnderſtand it, that from the time God begat them, hee hath borne and tenderly nouriſhed them in his boſome: this will well ſute with that which is written in the ſong of *Moſes, He nouriſhed and carried* them, as the Eagle doth her little ones vpõ her wings: Deut.32.11. To be ſhort, the Prophets meaning is, that vnleſſe the Iewes forget their originall, they muſt of neceſſitie conclude, that they were not begotten in vaine, but that God, who hath performed vnto them the office of a louing *father and mother*, will neuer leaue them, but alwaies will aſſiſt them. And beſides, that by continuall ſucceſſion of time, they ſo felt his power, that they were at

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no hand to doe any homage to Idols.

When hee mentions the *remainder*, it is to
*Chap.*10.21. shew, as wee noted before, that the greater part by their rebellion, made a defectiō from the Church: and thus the hope of the redemption, appertained but to a small handfull. For this cause he craues *audience*, because the vnbeleeuers were become no lesse deafe at his voice, then the prophane nations. Now howsoeuer the estate of the people at that time was far from perfection, and that the *remnant* of this dispersed people was exceeding small, yet the Lord commands them to consider how miraculously they were preserued and kept vnto that instant; that so they should not doubt but hee would continue a louing father and mother vnto them in like manner for the time to come. And in that he
The true and onely way to redresse our miseries. requires them to *hearken* to his speech, hee shewes that the true and onely remedie of all our miseries consists in depending vpō Gods mouth, and in hearkening to the promises of his grace: for then we shall haue strength enough to beare all our afflictions. As on the contrary, there is a wide gate set open to rush vs into despaire: yea, and to expect nothing but ruine and destruction, when we stop our eares, and will not heare his voice.

Vers. 4. *Therefore vnto old age I am the same, euen I will beare* you *vntill the hoare haires: I haue made you, I will also beare* you, *and I will carry* you, *and I will deliuer* you.

God not onely begins, but perfects the worke of his grace in vs. I Expound this particle *Vau*, *Wherefore*: which wee are diligently to obserue. For thus he concludes; I haue begotten you and brought you forth; yea I haue borne you in mine armes, whileſt you were yet in your swadling clouts: and therefore I will be the protector of your life euen vnto the end. And thus *Dauid* reasons; Thou, O Lord, diddest draw me out of the wombe, thou gauest me hope euen at my mothers breasts. I was cast vpon thee euen from the wombe: thou art my God from my mothers belly: Psal. 22. 9, 10. God promiseth the Iewes then, that hee will alwaies be a father vnto them. The Lord, saith *Dauid*, will finish the good worke he hath begun in me: thy mercies, O Lord, indure for euer; therefore thou wilt not forsake the worke of thine owne hands: Psal. 138 8.

This word, *I*, (six times repeated) is of great weight in my iudgement, although the interpreters expound it simply as a pronoune demonstratiue. But it signifies heere not onely Gods eternall essence, and that he will euer be like himselfe; but it is also spoken in regard of vs, shewing that wee shall alwaies find him one and the same.

Where hee saith vnto *old age*: this might seeme a strange speech, seeing we grow to be perfect men, after God hath once drawne vs out of our childhood. But let euery one examine his owne strength as he ought, and we shall easilie perceiue, that none of vs haue so profited, but we shall still feele that God had need to vphold vs daily by his power: for otherwise the most perfect would fall downe flat at euery turne. Which *Dauid* also expresseth in Psal. 71. Cast me not off O Lord in the time of *mine old age*, forsake me not when my strength faileth.

I haue made you, *I will also beare* you. He renues the same argument againe: as if hee should say; God will not look to your deserts, but to his owne work: and therefore will continue forth his grace towards you. Hence we may thus conclude; Seeing thou hast not only *created* vs to be men, but also *to be thy children*, thou wilt doubtlesse continue to *beare that affection to vs*, which fathers and mothers doe towards their children, and wilt alwaies haue care ouer vs.

Vers. 5. *To whom will yee make mee like, or make me equall, or compare mee, that I should be like him?*

We must not thinke the better of Idolaters because they seeme to prosper in their sinne. THe Prophet brings in the Lord here complaining of the Iewes, for distrusting his power and goodnesse; as also for comparing him with Idols: nay, for abasing him beneath thē. For in seeing the Chaldeans to haue the world at will, they iudged themselues hopelesse, and that the memorie of the couenant was so abolished, as if there had been no God left in heauen to haue taken care of them. The Lord takes vp a complaint therefore against them, in that hee perceiued they attributed some power to the Idols, and in so doing, obscured his regall authoritie. He handled the same argument in the 42. & 43. Chapters, and in those that follow: and therefore we haue the lesse need now to insist any longer vpon euery word. That they should not measure Gods power then, by the view of things present, hee commands them to raise vp their mindes higher. The like aduertisement were fit to be made to vs at this day, if in beholding the prosperitie of the Papists, we should therefore imagin that they had the true religion on their side: for otherwise, what were it but to compare the liuing God with Idols? This circumstance is diligently to be noted, because many expositors baulking, and neglecting it, doe lessen the weight of this sentence: for they thinke the Prophet cries out onely against the superstitious, who attribute some diuinitie to wood and stone, because Gods glory is defamed, when hee is compared to dead Images. I nothing doubt therefore but he taxeth their peruerse iudgement, and crooked conceits, wherewith the people were transported and carried away in aduersitie, to thinke that God respected the Babylonians aboue them. For, if God had fauoured the Babylonians, it would thereupon haue followed, that hee had also approued of their idolatry: and thus his glory should haue been giuen from him, vnto senslesse creatures. To conclude, hence we may gather a
A generall doctrine. generall doctrine (as S. *Paul* fitly applies it, Act. 17.25.) that God is robbed of his honor, when we liken him to dumbe and vaine Idols.

Vers. 6. *They draw gold out of the bag,*

bag, weigh ſiluer in the ballance, and hire a Goldſmith to make a god of, and they bow downe and worſhip it.

7. *They beare it vpon the ſhoulders; they carry him and ſet him in his place: ſo doth he ſtand,* and *cannot remoue from his place. Though one cry vnto him, yet he cannot anſwere, nor deliuer him out of his tribulation.*

THe Prophet told vs the ſame thing before, which he now repeates againe, that hee might ingraue this doctrine the more deepelie in our mindes: for ſuperſtition hath taken ſuch rooting in our hearts, that it cannot bee plucked vp, vnleſſe God wholly alter and change our nature. All that we haue heard againſt the folly of Idolaters, will by and by ſlip out of our memories, becauſe we alwaies retaine in vs ſome ſeedes of ſuperſtition, there being nothing to which we are more inclined, then to file ourſelues in this dunghill. Hee ſaith then that to forge Idols, *one prouides ſtuffe, another implies his art and skill to faſhion is*: & thus there muſt be two fathers of whom theſe Idols are begotten: firſt, the rich churle, who *diſburſeth the gold,* or *ſiluer*: ſecondly, the *Goldſmith*, who giues a forme vnto them. And now behold a new forged god.

Two fathers of whom Idols are begotten.

Wherein he plainly taxeth the ſenſleſneſſe of thoſe that ſeeke *a godhead in their purſes, and in the hands of the artificer.* For who would imagin that from ſo ſudden a change, men would proſtrate themſelues before a piece of mettall, hauing put ſome ſhape vnto it, according to their owne fantaſies? For it is ſuch a god, as ſtands them in ſo much the ſtuffe, and ſo much the faſhioning.

A goodly God, that ſtands men in, ſo much the ſtuffe, & ſo much the forming.

The particle *Aph*, put before the verbe *To worſhip*, ſets out this their madneſſe: for there might be ſome excuſe which deſerued to bee pardoned, if being ſuddenly ouertaken with this error, they ſhould fall downe and worſhip ſome falſe god: but theſe perſiſted obſtinately in their frenſie.

This *bowing* and *worſhipping* being added after the former circumſtances, doth much aggrauate the obſtinacie, and ſhewes that they were vtterly bewitched. This blockiſhneſſe then, as I haue ſaid, is too groſſe, when men will worſhippe a god forged with their owne hands.

The ſame amplification is added in the verſe following; *They beare it vpon the ſhoulders, &c.* For being depriued of all common ſenſe, they runne and cry for helpe to ſuch gods: and muſt they not needs be ſtarke bedlems then?

Verſ. 8. *Remember this, and be aſhamed: bring it againe to mind, O ye tranſgreſſors.*

*Or, returne into your heart.

THis verſe is expounded two waies; to wit, that God ſpeaks both to the Iews & Gentiles. For ſuch as are but meanly inſtructed in the Law, are eaſilie deceiued, in y they quench the knowledge w God hath kindled in their vnderſtandings. Againe, there is no man but hath ſome ſeedes of religion ſowen in his heart by the very light of nature: but he either choketh it by his infidelitie, or corrupts and marres the ſame by his own inuentiõs. In this ſenſe then we may refer it to all mankind in generall. But I had rather retaine the other ſenſe, and the very ſcope of the text requires it. For by and by after, he addes ſuch things as appertaines to none but to y Iewes, whom he heere calles *tranſgreſſors*. For they were throwne down with a very little blaſt of temptation, and were reuolted from the true God: as if their ſeuentie yeeres captiuitie muſt needes haue blotted all the benefits of ſo many hundred yeeres out of their hearts. In regard then that they had troden vnder foote all right affection of pietie, he ſharply taxeth their ingratitude, in that they were ſo eaſilie ſlid into ſuperſtitions.

The Iewes reproued for hauing reuolted for light an affection.

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When hee commands them to *returne into their heart*, it is to ſhew that they were not well in their wits before. Others tranſlate, Bring backe; which is nothing at all to the purpoſe, becauſe euen now he commanded them to *remember*, and will repeat it by and by in the verſe following. He brings them now then to their *owne hearts*, in regard the forgetfulnes of Gods former benefits proceeded from a kind of follie.

Be aſhamed.] Others tranſlate, Be ſtrong, or of good courage: and thus they drawing it from the word *Iſh*, which ſignifies to behaue a mans ſelfe valiantly. Others, from *Aſhiſh* which is as much to ſay, as foundatiõ. As if he ſhould ſay; Bee of good courage; thinke not that I will deſtitute you of conuenient ſuccour. But I rather agree with Saint *Ierom*, who drawes it from the word *Eſh*, which ſignifies fire: for it better ſutes after their ſhame is diſcouered, that they ſhould *bluſh* as red as fire, then to bee valiant or of good courage. And yet I giue euery one leaue to chuſe which of the readings he likes beſt. He would they ſhould *bluſh for ſhame* then, in regard of their careleſneſſe, vnthankfulneſſe, and wickednes, that afterwards they might *turne vnto God*.

S. Ierom.

Verſ. 9. *Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is nothing like me,*

THis is the expoſition of the former ſentence, for hee ſhewes more fully that which he was ſpeaking of before; to wit, that God hath ſhewed ſufficient teſtimonies of his power and maieſtie; not onely for two or three yeeres paſt, but *of old*. For he had continued his benefits, & had made them to feele the tokens of his fauour in a conſtant courſe continually. Thence hee gathers that the ſignes of his Deitie were ſufficient to hold them from turning out of the right way. We haue alſo to obſerue that hee contents not himſelfe to be called *God*, but to be acknowledged *the onely God*, as wee haue ſaid before.

An expoſitiõ of the former ſentence.

God the onely God.

He will therefore be ſeparated from all gods that men forge, that we may wholly reſt our ſelues in him: for he no ſooner receiues any to be a companion with him, but his throne will be made either to totter, or to fall quite downe: for there muſt be one only God, or none at all.

Verſ. 10. *Which declare the laſt things from the beginning, and from of old the things that were not done; ſaying, My counſell ſhall ſtand, and I will do what ſoeuer I will.*

An amplification.

NOw he ſhewes more at large after what maner he would haue ỹ Iewes to thinke of the time paſt, to wit, becauſe they were dayly inſtructed by continuall propheſies ſo farre forth as was expedient. But hauing made this preface, he comes in the next place to mention the hope of their deliuerance. Neither are we to wonder that he repeates one thing ſo oft, becauſe it was a matter whereof they could hardly be perſwaded, for the people were not only ſlow to beleeue, but with their infidelitie they ioined rebellion. He admoniſheth them then that they had bin *often taught for a long time together*, how ſafe a thing it is to truſt in God, who doth not ſo much commend his foreknowledge vnto them, as to ſhew what he had ordeined to fall out by the miniſtrie of his Prophets. Neither had there bin any truth nor ſtedfaſtnes at all in the propheſies, vnleſſe the ſame God which had foreordeined this or that to come to paſſe, had not alſo the euents thereof in his owne power. And withall he aduertiſeth them that in all propheſies he ſpake nothing but the truth: for he *publiſhed his decrees*, to the end they ſhould not doubt to reſt boldly therein as ſoone as the Prophets had ſpoken. But becauſe I haue handled theſe things largely before, therefore I touch them the more briefly for the preſent.

* Or, the thought.

Verſ. 11. *I call * a bird from the Eaſt, and the man of my counſell from farre; as I haue ſpoken, ſo will I bring it to paſſe: I haue purpoſed it, and I will do it.*

An application of the generall doctrine to a particular vſe.

THe Prophet hauing ſpoken of the preſcience and power of God, now applies his generall ſpeech to a particular vſe, for he meanes to comfort the Iewes: to wit, that they were not in ſuch perpetuall ſlauerie vnder ỹ Babylonians, as that no hope were left them touching their deliuerance. He now comes to a ſpecialtie then, and promiſeth that *Cyrus* ſhall come with haſte, howſoeuer it ſeeme impoſſible in the eies of fleſh and blood. Where I haue tranſlated the word *Aait*, *thought*, almoſt all the Interpreters tranſlate *Bird*, which is the true ſignification of the word: but becauſe we may gather out of the ſecond of *Daniel*, verſe 14. that it is ſometimes taken for counſell, or thought, I had rather follow this interpretation, which is alſo approued by certaine Hebrues: yet it may be, the Prophet therein alludes to a *bird*; as if he ſhould ſay, It ſhall be a ſwift thought or counſel; neither do I denie but he notes the ſwiftnes of *Cyrus* his voyage.

Cyrus.

Where he calles *Cyrus, the man of his counſell*, it is a repetition much vſed amongſt the Hebrues, whereby alſo it appeares, that the word *Aait* is put in ỹ firſt member for *thought*, or decree. Now he calles him a *man of his counſell*, becauſe he ſhal be the executioner of this iudgement. Notwithſtanding if any had rather retaine the word *Bird*, I will not gaineſay him, in regard of the neere affinitie that is betweene the ſimilitudes: for *Cyrus* his comming was ſo ſudden and vnexpected, as that he ſeemed to come *flying as a Bird*. He beſieged and tooke Babylon whileſt the Chaldeans thought all paſſages were ſhut againſt him. Alſo, if this interpretation be better liked, we may ſay that *Iſaiah* alludes to thoſe diuinations which they made from the flying of Birds, whereunto the Chaldeans were exceedingly giuen: for as they practiſed iudiciall Aſtronomie, ſo obſerued they the flying & chirping of Birds, thinking that herein conſiſted a certaine knowledge of things to come, but the Lord tels them he will ſend a bird which they could not foreſee. Notwithſtanding, the firſt expoſition contents me beſt, to wit, that he hath reſpect to the ſwift paſſage of *Cyrus*, ſignifying, that the waies can not be ſo ſhut vp, nor the fortreſſes ſo ſtrong, that they ſhould hinder him frō approching ſuddenly vnto Babylon.

Iudiciall Aſtronomie.

Where he addes from the *Eaſt*, it ſerues not only to make the promiſe certaine, but alſo to aſſure the Iewes that no diſtance of way ſhould be able to let or foreſlow this worke of God, and therefore by way of expoſition he addes in the ſecond member, *from farre*. Hence let vs learne to what end we ought to referre all that which we reade of Gods preſcience or power in the holy ſcriptures, for theſe things are not ſaid to hold vs in ſuſpēſe, but to the end we might the better applie them to our vſe.

He alſo cloſely oppoſeth Gods *counſell* to our *thoughts*. Why ſo? Becauſe he will ſo deliuer his Church, that men ſhall not be able to conceiue the reaſon thereof in their minds. Howſoeuer then that which God promiſeth ſeemes incredible, yet he ſhewes that he will eaſily open himſelfe a way, to the end wee ſhould not meaſure his incomprehenſible counſels within the [narrow ſcantling] of our reaſon.

I haue thought it. Others tranſlate, I haue formed it: but I thinke the verb *Iaſar* agrees beſt, being taken here for *to thinke*. He therefore confirmes that which he ſaid before, to wit, that this was thus ordeined of him before, and therefore ſhould remaine ſtedfaſt and inuiolable. And whereas he addes, *As I haue ſpoken, ſo will I bring it to paſſe*, it is as much as if he had ſaid, that he foretold nothing in vaine, and that this propheſie which was publiſhed at his commandement, ought to be accounted of, as if it were alreadie accompliſhed. He hath put this firſt member then

then to gaine credit to his words: and then hee addes in the ſecond, *his thoughts*, with his word preached: which wee are dilligently to obſerue, becauſe we are toſſed with diuers diſtractions, doubting whether God hath ſpoken in good earneſt or no; becauſe wee imagin him to be ſuch a one as our ſelues; that is to ſay, [in plaine Engliſh] an hypocrit, or a diſſembler. But he proteſts that nothing proceedes from him, but that which hath iſſued from his mature deliberations: ſo as the preaching of the word, is no other thing but an aſſured teſtimonie of his ſecret counſels, which he hath purpoſed to manifeſt vnto vs. As oft then as the Lord vtters his voyce, wee ought to build vpon the aſſured accompliſhment of it.

Gods promiſe and the performance goe together.

Verſ. 12. *Heare yee mee, yee ſtubborne hearted that are farre from iuſtice.*

HE ſharply rebukes the Iewes againe, who would neither giue credence vnto God, nor receiue any conſolations at all in their aduerſities. This was a galling reprehenſion, which no doubt went very neere the quicke: but they well deſerued it, in regard neither threatning, nor promiſe of God, were it neuer ſo ſweete and amiable, was auaileable to tame them. Theſe two epithetes which he heere vſeth, are to be noted: whereby hee giues vs to vnderſtand, that the afflicted and miſerable, ſhut vp the paſſage of Gods helpe from them by their owne rebellion. For by their murmurings and grudgings, they ſhake off the feare of God, and in thus doing, ruſh themſelues headlong into ſuch deſperate courſes, that they make open war vpon him. Now he ſpeakes to the Iewes, who were readie to burſt with malice and pride: notwithſtanding afflictions oppreſſed them to the vtmoſt. And thus hauing ſhaken off the feare of God, they fell into ope raging, which [I would to God] many among vs were not guiltie of, who wax worſe by their calamities. Thus then they would accept of no remedie nor medicine at al to cure their euils. If any would haue the word *iuſtice* to bee taken heere for Gods ſuccor, as in the verſe following; I leaue it free for them ſo to doe: for it is no ſtrange thing to ſee the *obſtinate*, who repell God, and reiect his grace, to bee vnable to reſt vpon his ſweete promiſes, or not to ſuffer that any ſhould doe them good, albeit helpe bee offered them.

The rebellious nature of the Iewes deſcribed.

Verſ. 13. *I will bring neere my iuſtice: it ſhall not be farre off, and my ſaluation ſhall not tarry: for I will giue ſaluation in Zion, and my glorie vnto Iſrael.*

IF any had rather retaine that which I was ſaying; to wit, that ſuch as *are farre* from iuſtice, and vncapeable of Gods grace, are here called to repentance, the ſenſe will bee all one: but if wee ſay that the Iewes were *farre from iuſtice*, in regard they were giuen vp to a diſſolute behauiour as men paſt grace, then there is an apt oppoſition betweene the *iuſtice* of God, and the *iuſtice* of men. Although the Iewes then were farre from iuſtice, and had caſt off all ſtudie of pietie; yet God affirmes, that his *iuſtice* is *neere*. As if he ſhould ſay; I muſt confeſſe incredulitie is a maine let and hinderance, yet ſhall it not hinder me in the end from manifeſting the force of my truth. What though ſome did not beleeue, ſaith *Paul*? ſhall their vnbeliefe make the truth of God without effect? God forbid. Rom. 3. 3. Yea, let God bee true, and euerie man a lier. And to ſay the truth, if he did not ouercome mens ſtubbornneſſe by his goodneſſe, wee ſhould incontinently periſh. For which of vs receiues the bounty of God, or his grace when hee offers the ſame, as wee ought? Doth hee withdraw his mercy or his truth from vs? It is for no other cauſe, but for that we be *farre from iuſtice*. Contrariwiſe, though we reſiſt him, yet he drawes *neere* vnto vs, that he may manifeſt his *iuſtice*, albeit we be vtterly vnworthy of it. Yet he doth this in ſuch wiſe, as the wicked receiue no fruit at all by it. For the Prophet comprehends not thoſe curſed apoſtataes, as if this ſaluation promiſed belonged vnto them; but onely affirmes, that God hath meanes ready to make his iuſtice appeare.

An oppoſitiō betweene the iniuſtice of man, and the iuſtice of God.

Why God withdrawes his fauour from vs for a time.

But heere it is needfull for vs to conſider in what ſtate this people ſtood, to whom this ſpeech was directed. They were all in a manner tainted with the ſinne of infidelitie, and thoſe that reſted vpon the promiſes were but very few: euen the elect ſometimes ſhewed themſelues but too *obſtinate*; ſo as they ſeemed to be no leſſe infected with this contagion then the reſt. He taxeth them all in generall then, as well to conuince the reprobates, as to gall the elect, and to bring them into the right way. But he chiefly ſets himſelfe againſt the rebels, as I haue ſaid, who obſtinately and *ſtubbornly* reiected all hope of grace.

All are gone out of the way.

And my ſaluation.] Heereby it appeares what he meant by the word Iuſtice; to wit, the help and ſuccour of God promiſed in fit and due ſeaſon to his people. He takes *iuſtice* and *ſaluation* then, for one and the ſame thing, becauſe it is an excellent teſtimony of Gods iuſtice, when he conſerues and protects his diſtreſſed ones. It is not added ſuperfluouſly, that *it ſhall not be far off, and ſhall not tarrie*: for heerein he expreſſeth Gods exceeding great mercie, in that he will *finiſh* the courſe of his *iuſtice*, albeit the people ſhould reſiſt the ſame.

Note Gods great clemency.

And vvill put.] The letter *Vau*, is heere put for a particle of rendring the cauſe, thus; *For I vvill put.* Now this is a confirmation of the former ſentence: as if hee ſhould ſay; Seeing the Lord hath once determined to ſaue Ieruſalem, ſhee cannot be diſappointed of ſuch a benefit. He ioines his *glory* with the *ſaluation* of the faithfull: as alſo Saint *Paul* takes the

Gods glory and our saluatiō lincked together.

word *glory*, for mercy: Eph.1.6. and 3.16. For then Gods *glory* shines fully, when he drawes his children out of the bands of death, and sets them at libertie, because hee will haue the *saluation* of his Church and his *inflicte*, to be conioyned with an indissoluble knot.

THE XLVII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Come downe and sit in the dust, O Virgin, daughter Babel, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called Tender and delicate.*

Gods decree put in execution.

NOw *Isaiah* sets that downe at large, which hee mentioned before touching Gods counsell, and the execution thereof. For hee speakes heere in plaine termes of *Babylons fall*, because there was little or no hope that the people should euer returne, as long as the Babylonicall Monarchie florished. He therefore conioined these two things together; to wit, the ouerthrow of this Monarchy, and the peoples deliuerance which should insue. For the statelinesse of this Citie was vnto the poore Iewes as a deepe graue, in which they were buried: but when the Lord opened it, then the peoples first life was as it were restored to them afresh. In that hee commands her to *come downe:* it hath greater weight in it then if he had directly threatned she should come downe: for thus he speakes with authoritie, as if he were alreadie set in a throne of iudgement: for he spake nothing but what he had warrant from God to deliuer; and therefore hee boldly pronounceth what should happen. And this commission wee see the Lord gaue to *Ieremiah*; Behold, I haue set thee this day ouer kingdomes and nations, that thou shouldest plucke vp and destroy, and pull downe and plant: Ier.1.10. For there is no power at all that is not vnder the checke of Gods word.

Babylons fall.

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No power so high, but it is subiect to the authoritie of Gods word.

Lastly, his meaning is to bring the Iewes as it were, to view the thing done, for they could not without much difficultie conceiue how this change should happē, vnlesse God should destroy their enemies with thunder & lightning from heauen. Touching this word *daughter* of Babylon; it is a figure much vsed among the Hebrewes, when they speake of Cities and nations. He calles her *virgin*, not in regard of her chastitie or shamefastnesse, but because shee was tenderly and delicately entertained, as *virgins* be, and was not as yet forced nor rauished by the enemie, as it was said of Zidon in Chap.23.12. The like may be said at this day of Venice, and of other Cities flowing and abounding in riches and pleasures: in which regard, they seeme most happy in the eies of the world. But they haue no lesse cause to feare the change of their estate, then the Babylonians, howsoeuer they seeme now to be far off from danger. *For thou shalt be no more*: that is to say, those that esteemed thee happy, shall reioice no more with thee for thy prosperitie.

Venice.

Vers. 2. *Take the millstones, and grind meale: loose thy lockes, make bare the feete, vncouer the leg,* and *passe thorow the floods.*

ALl this description tends to this end, namely, that Chaldea shal taste of a wonderfull change. For this Citie which before was in great honour, shall bee brought into extreme dishonour, and euery way put to such *drudgerie*, that all shall perceiue euident and apparant signes of Gods wrath therein. Behold then the marks of a most seruile bondage, *Take the millstones, and grind meale.* For they were wont in ancient time, to put slaues of the basest and abiectest condition to the mill. Their condition then must needs bee miserable, when they were held no better then *horses*: for in warre, those that got the conquest, handled some of their prisoners with much better respect. But heere the Prophet propounds nothing before the Chaldeans, but a wofull condition in all points, to the end the faithfull might assure themselues that they should goe forth freely; when the Chaldeans, who held them captiues, should themselues be captiuated. Now howsoeuer we reade not that the great states of the land were thus dishonourably vsed, yet it sufficed for the accomplishment of the prophecie; that *Cyrus* suffering them to inioy some base offices, made them vncapeable of any rule or authority, by constraining them to cease from all honest exercises, and liberall sciences.

Notes of extreame slauerie.

The righteous escapeth out of trouble, and the wicked shall come in his stead: Prou. 11.8.

And because they ouerflowed in voluptuousnesse, by the *lockes* hee alludes to the trimmings of virgins. We know they are but too curious in tricking and setting out their *haire*. *Isaiah* therefore on the contrarie describes here a *dressing* far discrepant from the former; to wit, that from the head downe to the *feete*, they should be couered with ignominie, with filth and mire, in stead of that braue and costly attire they were wont to weare. Maidens and virgins will scarsly bee seene to passe through the streetes, much lesse through high waies: but the Chaldeans *must passe thorow the floods*, and that with the thigh or *leg vncouered*.

Virgins but too curious in setting forth their haire.

Vers.3.

Verſ. 3. *Thy filthines ſhall be diſcouered, and thy ſhame ſhall be ſeene: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.*

The concluſion.

THis is the concluſion of the former ſentence, as if he ſhould ſay, As long as Babylon floriſhed ſhe kept her reputation, and was greatly eſteemed: for oftentimes vnder riches and authoritie there lie many vlcers, as vnder vailes, which being taken away, the filth is diſcouered to the great ſhame of the parties, as *Demoſthenes* ſpeaking of *Philip* king of Macedon ſaith,

A ſaying of Demoſthenes, ſpeaking of the eſtate of Philip king of Macedonia.

Whileſt mens bodies are in good plight, the weaknes vvhich is hidden in ſome of the members is not eſpied, but if the body fall into any dangerous ſickenes, then all is out of order, heere is a breach felt, there is a ſinew periſhed, or ſomewhat elſe out of tune.

A Simile.

The ſame we ſee to happen in kingdomes, Common-wealths, and Cities ill gouerned; for the filth and corruption which before was couered vnder the glorie of their eſtates, being now a little troubled, are diſcouered; when their pomp and riches are taken from them, then their cruelties, treaſons, robberies, periuries, vniuſt taxes, and other impieties, by which they purchaſed to themſelues honour in time of proſperitie, begin to turne to their diſhonour in the time of aduerſitie.

I vvill take vengeance, and vvill not meet thee as a man.] It is as much as if he ſhould ſay, Thinke not thou haſt to do in this caſe with a mortall man, whoſe violence thou mayſt reſiſt: for in other places where mention is made of *mans hand*, it ſignifies a kinde of moderation. But here the Prophet ſhewes that the Chaldeans ſhall find no reliefe at all, becauſe God will vtterlie roote them out. Others tranſlate, *I vvill not meet a man*, that is to ſay, I will accept of no man that ſhall intreate for them: Let who will come forth and intercede for them, yet I will not remit their fault, neither leſſen nor aſſwage the puniſhment one whit. This ſenſe agrees well, but it is a little conſtreined, in regard of the diſpoſition of the words: for thus, the verb *Paga*, which ſignifies to goe before, muſt be taken in the paſſiue ſignification, which cannot be. Moreouer, the Prophet ſaith not ſimplie that God will not be intreated, but that he wil not be appeaſed. Thus the firſt expoſition ſutes beſt, if we conſider rightlie of the order of the words: yet euery one may follow whether of the ſenſes he will, for take which you liſt, the ſumme will be, that the Lord will race them out without pitie or mercie; only this I ſay, the firſt expoſition likes me well, becauſe it agrees beſt with the text.

Verſ. 4. *Our redeemer, the Lord of hoſts is his name, the holy one of Iſrael.*

The end of Gods iudgements is to manifeſt himſelfe the redeemer of his Church.

THe Prophet ſhewes to what end God would *take vengeance* vpon the Chaldeans, euen in regard of the peoples ſaluation, as he ſaid in Chap. 45. 4. But this ſentence hath much greater force in it, in regard it comes in abruptly, and as one wakening himſelfe out of a dreame when he ſaw Babylon ruinated, which before made it her trade to ſubdue and treade other nations vnder her feet. And he ſhewes that this ſhall come to paſſe for none other cauſe, but to the end the Lord may manifeſt himſelfe to be the *redeemer* and auenger of his people.

The holy one of Iſrael.] As if he ſhould ſay, This people was not eleſt, nor ſeparated frō other nations in vaine: his meaning is then to ſet forth a teſtimonie of his power in this particular, and that is the reaſon why he ioines this title *holy* vnto it.

Verſ. 5. *Sit ſtill and get thee into darknes, ô daughter of the Chaldeans, for thou ſhalt no more be called, The Lady of kingdomes.*

By how much the more the peoples deliuerance ſeemed incredible, by ſo much the more is the Prophet forced to ſet it forth by ſundrie deſcriptions.

HE continues on the ſame argument ſtill, and ſhewes, that the end of the Chaldean Monarchy drawes neere. But becauſe this ſeemed ſomewhat incredible, hee repeates the ſame thing in many words, which he might haue diſpatched in one ſentence. He vſeth theſe deſcriptions then to ſet the thing done (as it were) before them. Where he bids them *ſit ſtill* and be quiet, it is in ſigne of ſhame and contempt. And yet this *ſilence* may be oppoſed to her firſt eſtate, wherein ſhe reigned as a Lady: for then ſhe not only lifted vp her voice with authoritie like a Miſtris, but ſhe cauſed her words to giue ſuch a ſound, that the *noiſe* thereof terrified all the Eaſt. Now the Prophet commands her to ſit ſtill and leaue her cackquet, in regard her condition is ſo changed, that where ſhe was wont to ſpeake ſo loude before, ſhe ſhall not dare now to mutter one word diſtinctlie from betweene her teeth.

Now in that he bids her *enter into darknes*, I willinglie receiue the firſt expoſition: for thoſe who are fallen from a proſperous eſtate into aduerſitie, ſit downe and put their mouthes in the duſt with ſhame, and dare ſcarcely ſo much as gaſp. *For thou ſhalt no more be called.* We know that this Monarchy had a large extent, and was Lady ouer many great kingdomes, for ſhe was the head of all dominions, it was needfull then that theſe poore captiues ſhould be fortified with theſe promiſes, and aduertiſed of Babylons ruine, that they might be put in hope of their deliuerance.

Verſ. 6. *I was vvroth vvith my people, I haue polluted mine inheritance, and giuen them into thine hand: thou didſt ſhew them no mercy, but thou didſt lay the very heauie yoke vpon the ancient.*

A preuention.

THis is a preuention, whereby he admoniſheth the Iewes (as he often hath done heretofore) that their captiuitie was a ſcurge inflicted vpon them by God: for if the ſtroke had come from the hand of another, then the remedie had not bin in him. That they might

be perſwaded then that he which had ſmitten them was able to heale them, he wills them to impute it to the deſert of their owne ſinnes that they were ſo hardly dealt withall; yet he exhorts them to hope well, in regard God was minded to keepe a meaſure in chaſtiſing of them; and withall toucheth the *cauſe* why the Chaldeans ſhould be ouerthrowne, namely, that God, who is the iuſt reuenger of wrongs and iniuries, hath much more iuſt cauſe to reuenge the outrages done to his people. Beſides, in the firſt member he calles the Iewes to repentance, in regard they had drawne all theſe euils vpon their heads by their owne offences. Next, he accuſeth the Chaldeans, for taking vp this occaſion to exerciſe their crueltie, as if one ſhould flea a child whom the father had only commanded to be whipt with a rod. Whence it followes that the Chaldeans inſulted without cauſe, as if by their owne power they had ſubdued and led the Iewes captiue, for they ſhould be iuſtly puniſhed, in that they *cruelly miſuſed the priſoners* whom they had vanquiſhed.

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Now whereas he ſaith that he *was wroth*, and therefore *polluted* his heritage, let vs not thinke that hauing changed his mind he was ſo farre offended as vtterly to neglect the care of his people, ſo as to thinke no more vpon his couenant: no, the contrarie plainly appeares as well by the euent, as in that he vouchſafeth to call them *his people*, notwithſtanding the greater part became Apoſtataes from him, and were iuſtly reiected of him as prophane. But in ſpeaking thus, he had reſpect to his couenant, for he had an eie to the foundation and originall whence they iſſued: ſo as thoſe who came of *Abraham* according to ỹ fleſh, are reckoned for the people of God, albeit there were very few which were his children by the right of adoption, for all in a maner falſly challenged to themſelues the title of *Abrahams* offspring. Thus the word *wrath* in ſcripture is not to be attributed to any paſſion in God, who euer deſires the ſaluation of his people, but vnto vs, who prouoke him by our wickednesſes. For he hath iuſt cauſe to be angrie, albeit he ceaſeth not ſtill to loue vs. He ſo *prophanes* his Church then, that is to ſay, proſtitutes it, and giues it vp as a pray into the enemies hands, that neither do his elect thereby periſh, nor yet is his eternall couenant violated. Nay, in the midſt of his wrath he remembers mercie, Haba.3. 2. and mitigates his blowes wherewith he ſmites his people, and in the end will ſeuerely puniſh thoſe that vexed them.

Wrath, not any paſſion in God.

God may iuſtly be angrie with vs, and yet loue vs.

If the Lord *polute* his Church then for a time: if tyrants cruellie oppreſſe her, let vs not be out of heart, but let vs flee to this promiſe, to wit, that he who *auenged himſelfe* vpon the inſolencie of the Chaldeans, will not let the rage of our enemies goe vnrecompenced. Moreouer we are diligentlie to obſerue, that men ought not to abuſe their victories, to handle their priſoners hardly, as often it falles out, for when they caſt off all humanitie, they become like wild beaſts, and ſpare neither *old nor yong*, men nor women, when they haue gotten the maſterie: in a word, they vtterlie forget their condition. Now howſoeuer they abuſe their power, yet wee may reſolue vpon it, that God will meet with them in the end, for ſuch ſhall haue iudgement mercileſſe, as will ſhew no mercie, Iam.2.13.

A conſolation of great vſe.

Shew no cruelties vpon the vanquiſhed.

But it may be demanded how the Chaldeans could exceed the bounds which God had preſcribed them; was not God able to haue ſuppreſſed their rage? And if he were not, where is the truth of that ſentence, An haire of your heads ſhall not fall to the ground without the will of your heauenly father? Luke 12.7. The anſwere to this is eaſie, for howſoeuer it was not in the power of ỹ Chaldeans to paſſe their bounds indeed, yet may we perceiue a more then brutiſh crueltie in them, in that they indeuored vtterly to roote out theſe poore helpleſſe wretches who yeelded themſelues to their mercie. The Lord complaines by his Prophet *Zacharie* of the ſame vnrulines of prophane nations, who violentlie ruſhed vpon his people to deſtroy them, though his wrath was not much moued againſt them. I am greatly angrie, ſaith he, againſt the careleſſe heathen, for I was angrie but a little, and they helped forwards the affliction, Zach.1.15. Here then he amplifies their fault, in that they ſpared not *the ancient*, whoſe age naturallie procures ſome reuerence. Whence we may gather how inſupportable their wrath was againſt thoſe which reſiſted them.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Verſ. 7. *And thou ſaydſt, I ſhall be a Lady for euer, ſo that thou didſt not ſet thy minde to theſe things, neither didſt thou remember the latter end.*

HEre he taxeth the pride of the Babylonians, who promiſed vnto themſelues a perpetuall domination, and neuer thought of any falling from their greatnes by any inconuenience that might happen. See how the childrē of this world are bewitched with their proſperitie, contemning all others in reſpect of themſelues. But *Iſaiah* ſcornes ſuch pride, and ſhewes, that there is nothing more abominable in the ſight of God. *To ſay*, is taken heere to conclude in a mans ſelfe of a thing: which will better appeare anon. For the proud are not wont to vtter ſuch words in publique before euery one, but theſe high conceits are boiling euermore within them, although they make no ſhew thereof outwardly. Now this is a follie inſupportable, that men will ſo farre forget their owne fragilitie as thus to exempt themſelues from the common ranke of others, for in ſo doing they thinke not of what mould themſelues bee made of, to wit, duſt and aſhes. I grant the faithfull may be ſecure, in regard they are prepared with patience to expect and looke for the worſt that may befall them, becauſe they are couered vnder the wings of Gods protection, and yet they are not free from the conſideration of thoſe euils to which they are ſubiect, in regard that there is no eſtate perma-

The faithfull ſecure, and yet not free from feares.

permanent in this world. The prophane then lift vp their creſts againſt God, as oft as by their fond imaginations, they promiſe to themſelues ſome reſt in the midſt of the continuall tempeſts wherewith this world is toſſed.

Now to ſet forth the Babylonians furie, he addes that the *length of time* made them neuer the more moderate. It was no great wonder if vpon hot bloud they plaid the bedlems: but to exerciſe their crueltie from day to day, hauing got the conqueſt, and to inſult ouer poore captiues without ceaſing, was a thing vtterly inſupportable, and more then barbarous. But all this flowed from pride (as
Pſal.55.19. I haue ſaid:) for they *thought of no changes:* they imagined their mountaine ſtood ſo ſtrong, as there was no remouing or altering of their firme eſtate. Heere is the ſecond reaſon then wherefore the Lord brought Babylons Monarchy to the ground.

Neither didſt thou remember the latter end thereof.] Some thinke there is a change of the perſon heere, but without any good ground. For mine owne part, I take it he ſpeakes of the *end* of Ieruſalem: and this is the moſt receiued opinion. For the Lord often ſpeakes of his Church, without mentioning her name, by way of excellencie: as wee alſo doe, when wee would expreſſe the vehement affection wee beare to ſome that wee loue dearely. But the wicked are ignorant of the *end* of the
Zach.2.8. Church; neither doe they know wherefore the Lord corrects her: they make themſelues merry with her mournings, becauſe they would gladly behold her vtter ſubuerſion; neuer thinking that God cares for her.

Obiect. If any obiect that the Babylonians could
Anſ. not know it: yet that could not excuſe thē. For they could not be ignorant what God it was whom the Iſraelites worſhipped. Whileſt they thus aduanced themſelues then aboue the poore Iewes, and handled them ſo cruellie, they therein perſecuted God himſelfe: euen as if of ſet purpoſe, they had determined to trample both him, and the couenant which hee had made with his people, vnder their feete.

Verſ. 8. *Therefore now heare thou that art giuen to pleaſures, and dwelleſt careleſſe: ſhee ſaith in her heart; I am, and none elſe: I ſhall not ſit as a widow, neither ſhall I know the loſſe of children.*

Babels intollerable pride. HEere the Prophet threatens the Babylonians their ruin againe: wherein hee ſeth very fit words to confirme the peoples hearts in good hope, leſt being amazed at the proſperitie of the Chaldeans, they might happily faint, and be brought out of heart. And yet he ſpeakes not to Babylon, as if he meant to *forewarne* her; but it is rather ſaid for the conſolation of the faithfull. Hee addes that ſhe was drunken in *pleaſures:* for howſoeuer proſperitie in it ſelfe is not to be condemned, in regard it is the good gift of God; yet wee are
Proſperitie in it ſelfe not to bee condemned. not ignorant how the children of this world are wont to abuſe it, by falling into riot and exceſſe. Moreouer, hee now toucheth in a word, what it was which *ſhe ſaid* in her ſelfe in the former verſe; to wit, a ſecret perſwaſion, whereby ſhee concluded that things ſhould come thus and thus to paſſe. For ſo the proud are wont to doe, howſoeuer for modeſties ſake they diſſemble and couer it, becauſe they would not that euery one ſhould be priuie thereto.

I am, and there is none but I.] What an inſupportable inſolencie call you this? ſhe prefers her ſelfe *aboue all the world.* Firſt, ſhe thinkes *ſhe ſtands by her owne power:* ſecondly, ſhe makes her ſelfe beleeue, *that the reſt of the world are not worthy to be compared with her:* thirdly, *ſhe promiſeth her ſelfe a reſt vnchangeable.* For the firſt, none can ſay truly *I am*, but God only, to whom it belongs properly to ſay, I am that I am: Exod.3.14. For by this title he diſtinguiſheth himſelfe from all creatures. Thus then Babylon tooke from God the honour due vnto him, when ſhee imagined that ſhee ſtood by her owne power: and in aduancing her ſelfe thus, ſhee bid battell vnto Iehouah. Moreouer, ſhe wronged the whole world, in abaſing them thus vnder her feete. But theſe haughtie mindes firſt indeuour to begin with God, that ſo they may make him their enemie: and then they ſet themſelues againſt men, that ſo they may leaue none exempt either in heauen nor earth, againſt whom they make not warre by their ouerweening. The third member, which containes the height of her pride, conſiſts, in that ſhe reſolues vpon a ſtate that *cannot be moued*; neuer thinking what little hold worldlings haue of things preſent: for often times, the higher men are aduanced, the lower is their fall.

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None can ſay truely, I am, but God onely.

Verſ. 9. *But theſe two things ſhall come to thee ſuddenly on a day, the loſſe of children, and widowhood: they ſhall come vpon thee in their perfection, for the multitude of thy diuinations, and for the great abundance of thine inchanters.*

WHereas Babel thought her ſelfe exempt frō feare of al dangers, the Prophet here denounceth an extreme calamitie to befall her. She promiſed her ſelfe that ſhe ſhould neuer feele *loſſe* neither of *husband* nor *children*: on the contrary he ſhewes, that *both theſe euils* ſhall ouertake her: ſo as ſhe ſhall be made a wofull ſpectacle for all to behold with contempt, in regard of her deſolateneſſe. He addes that it ſhall *come vpon her in perfection*: that is to ſay, there ſhall not one iot or tittle thereof faile: for ſhe ſhall know the miſerie of widowhood, with a witneſſe; as they ſay. And thus there is a cloſe oppoſition betweene the moderate corrections, in which ſome mitigation may bee expected, and that horrible vengeance of God, which brings forth no other iſſue but a finall deſolation: for the more the wicked exalt themſelues in

Babels fall.

The higher the proud exalt themselues, the lower the Lord will abase them.

their pride, the lower will the Lord abase them in his indignation and wrath.

Because of the multitude, &c.] Others translate; Of thy soothsaiers. But mee thinks the word should rather note out the vice, then the persons. Some take the letter *Beth*, for a particle of rendring the cause, and expound it, Because: in which sense it is often found in the Scriptures: albeit wee may expound, that the Chaldeans shall finde no helpe nor succour in their deceiueable diuinations, in which they gloried so much: and so it may be translated, *Notwithstanding*.

As if hee should say; Notwithstanding the multitude of thy diuiners and coniecturers, these things must needes befall Babylon. For he derides the confidence which they put in these fond prognosticators, through whom they thought to *foresee things to come*. But in regard he will insist longer vpon this point in the 12. and 13. verses, therefore I willingly consent, that hee heere recites one of the causes of their destruction; to wit, that they despised all dangers, vpon the confidence they conceiued in these impostures and illusions.

Vers. 10. *For thou hast trusted in thy wickednesse: thou hast said; None seeth mee. Thy wisdome and thy knowledge, they haue caused thee to rebell; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else.*

HE explanes that which he said in the former verse, though we may extend it further; to wit, that he taxeth the Chaldeans for their fraud, oppression, outrages, and wicked practises, whereby they so highly magnified thémselues. For all these great kingdoms lightly become great dens of theeues, as an archtheefe which once raigned among them said: because they can neuer inlarge their territories, but by plucking from others by force and violence; therefore they driue the lawfull possessors out of their houses, that they may be Lords and Kings within themselues. Now he calles that *wickednesse*, which hee adornes afterwards with these goodly titles of *wisdome* and *knowledge*. For thus tyrants are wont to compasse their deuices: they forget all equitie and right, that they may make the poore to fall in their nets. But the Lord detects and discouers their trecheries, so as euery one may see they dance but in a net. After *Iob* hath said, that God catcheth the wise in their wisdome: to shew what this wisdome is, he calles it craftinesse: Iob 5.13.

As touching that which by and by followes; namely, that Babylon *said none saw her* wickednesses: this sets forth with what freedome she committed the same. For seeing reuerence or shame holds men in some awe, he that feares not God as a witnesse of his behauiour, and thinkes men notes nothing hee doth; such a one will not sticke to practise anie villanie. I grant that the most wicked are sometimes stung with the worme of an euill conscience: but they close vp their eies, and plunge themselues into a benummednes and deadnesse of conscience, as Moles within the ground. In a word, their consciences are seared vp with an hot yron. But aboue all we see how they scorne God with a desperate presumption, as if by their fetches they were able to dazle his eies. For when they purpose to beguile the simple, it sufficeth that they may doe it closely: as if belike, they could deceiue his eies [who in all places beholds both the euill and the good: Prou. 15.3.] But they flatter themselues in their cunning in vaine; for the Lord will easilie plucke off their vizards. Let all men detest such *wisdome* then, by which men deceiue their owne soules, and pull ineuitable ruine vpon their owne heads.

I am, and none else.] He againe repeates those blasphemies mentioned in the 9. verse: that all might know how much God abhors them; and how neere such are to endlesse perdition, that exalt themselues higher then is fit.

Vers. 11. *Therefore shall euill come vpon thee, and thou shalt not know the morning thereof: destruction shall fall vpon thee, which thou shalt not bee able to put away: destruction shall come vpon thee suddenlie, ere thou bee aware.*

HE continues stil to scorne the vaine confidence of the Babylonians, who thought all things safe, by reason of the foresight they had touching the situation of the starres. He therefore denounceth against them, that which the Scriptures affirme to hang ouer the heads of all contemners of God. *When they shall say, Peace and safetie, then shall sudden destruction come vpon them:* 1. Thes. 5.3. So as they shall not know in the *morning*, what shall befall them ere night. Now it appeares sufficiently out of Dan. 5.30. how certainly these things came to passe.

Babels sudden downefall.

Vers. 12. *Stand now among thine Inchanters, and in the multitude of thy Soothsayers (with whom thou hast wearied thy selfe from thy youth) if so bee thou maiest haue profit, or if so be thou maiest haue strength.*

THe Propher speakes to the Chaldeans, as wee are wont to speake to common ruffians or harlots, who will receiue no admonitions. Hold on your course still; you shall see in the end how the world will goe with you. So he saith; *Thou shalt tell me one day what good thou hast gotten by thy soothsaiers and coniectu rers.* By the word *Stand*, hee alludes to the gesture of diuiners, who stand still in a place, til some bird flie that way. Also, the Astrologers stand obseruing the course of the heauens, and will not misse the least point. If any had rather expound it Diuines, then Diuinations; I

Babels confusion remediesse.

dog

doe not much contradict him, becauſe the word *Kabarim* is ambiguous.

If thou mayſt be ſtrengthened:] As if he ſhould ſay, Thy diuiners can not turne away that deſtruction which is ready to fall vpon thine head, for he inſults ouer their peruerſe confidence: foretelling, that after they ſhal haue vſed all ỹ ſhifts they can, yet they ſhall proue fruitleſſe and bootleſſe.

Verſ. 13. *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counſels: let now the * Aſtrologers, the ſtarre-gazers, and Prognoſticators * ſtand vp, and ſaue thee from theſe things that ſhall come vpon thee.*

* Or, binders of the heaue.

* Or, come forth.

NOw hee deſcribes that more plainely which he ſaid a little before ſomewhat obſcurely, to wit, that all the *counſels* which Babel tooke in times paſt ſhall turne to her deſtruction, in regard ſhe nouriſhed within her a vaine hope wrought in her heart, from the perſwaſion of her wiſdome and power, as if nothing had bin able to haue done her hurt. He ſpeakes not of *counſell* in the ſingular number, but of *counſels*, and, of *multitudes* of them, to ſhew, that they boaſted and bragged in vaine, though they were neuer ſo wittie and cunning to deceiue; for the fuller their counſels were of *fine conueiances*, and *the more they vvere in number*, the more ſhould they be vexed that were the deuiſers of thé.

A plainer deſcription of that which before was deliuered obſcurely.

This is a generall ſentence therefore againſt all ſuch, as truſting in the excellencie of their wit, build Caſtles in the aire, reſting vpon their owne prouidence, and inuent by all meanes how they may circumuent and catch the ſimple in their ginnes, for God will ſcatter all their plots, and ouerthrow their counſels, as he threatned before in Chap. 30. 1. Wo to them (ſaith he) that take counſell, but not of me; that couer with a couering, but not by my ſpirit. What is the reaſon then that men proſper not in their counſels? Surely becauſe they ſeeke not at all vnto God, from whoſe mouth we ought to looke for all wiſedome and counſels in aſking it at his hands. The more ſuch kind of perſons conſult then, the more trouble they put themſelues vnto, and the leſſe fruit they gaine thereby, as *Salomon* well ſaith, They riſe vp early, and goe to bed late, and eate the bread of carefulnes, trauailing for nothing, Pſal. 127. 2. for he ſpeakes there of the vnbeleeuers, who haue not learned to caſt their care vpon the Lord, but truſting in their owne induſtrie, enterpriſe many things raſhly and vnaduiſedly. The Lord derides ſuch confidence, and cauſing it to become fruſtrate, in the end they feele by experience how little good they get by their plots and indeuors, and thus they are corrected for their boldnes, whileſt Gods childrē inioy his bleſſings with *quiet ſleepe*, as it is further added in that Pſalm: not that they are vtterlie exempt from all troubles, but becauſe firſt of all they vex not themſelues: ſecondly, they commend the iſſues of all their affaires with quiet minds to the bleſſing of God.

Iam. 1. 5.

Come forth] Heere we ſee what theſe counſellers are of whom the Prophet ſpeakes, to wit, thoſe diuiners who gat themſelues much credit among the people vnder the vain title of wiſe men, as if forſooth they had knowne all things by beholding the ſtarres: but wee haue ſpoken before Chap. 44 25. of the vanitie that is in this Iudiciall Aſtronomie. If any obiect, that it was not in theſe diuiners to turne away imminent dangers: I anſwere, The Babylonians would ſo haue taken it, if they hauing foreſeene this deſtruction had forewarned them of it; but ſeeing they foreſaw it not, therefore it followed that their profeſſion was vtterlie vaine. Many replie, that the Prophet ſpeakes heere againſt the ignorance of the Arte, and not againſt the Arte it ſelfe: but ſuch are deceiued, for he ſpeakes here of the Chaldeans, who were the fathers of this Arte.

Iudiciall Aſtronomie. Obiect. Anſ. Obiect. Anſ.

Now he addes very pleaſantly, that they *bind the heauens*: in regard they ſtick not to auerre that their dreames are as certaine as if they had the world tied in a ſtring, or as if they had the ſtarres claſped in their armes. Yet if any had rather tranſlate *enchanters*, the ſenſe will not be amiſſe, for the Hebrue word ſignifies both the one and the other. Now howſoeuer it be not euill in it ſelfe to conſider of the ſituation of the ſtarres, yet the Prophet notwithſtanding ſaith, that ſuch as will foretell things to come, do paſſe the bounds of this ſcience. It alſo ſeemes, that to make theſe ſpeculators the more odious (in regard they did diſcredit all diuine predictions) he cloſely oppoſeth them to the true Prophets, for when wee fixe a fatall neceſſitie to the ſtarres, Gods iudgements muſt needs be put out of mind.

To conſider of the ſituation of the ſtarres, allowed to foretell things to come, there, by condemned.

Verſ. 14. *Behold, they ſhall be as ſtubble, the fire ſhall burne them, they ſhall not deliuer their owne liues from the power of the flame: there* ſhall be *no coales to warme at*, nor *light to ſit by.*

HE heere inueyes more ſharply againſt theſe Aſtrologians, who aggrauated Babels pride by their vaine brags: for ſuch deceiuers are wont to bereaue men of all feare of God, by attributing all things to the diſpoſition of the ſtarres, ſo as they leaue nothing to Gods prouidence. See from whence the contempt of God and of all his threatnings ſprings, namely, from not attributing the puniſhments which he ſends to his hand, but to deſtinie, and to a meeting of ſecond cauſes, which wizards fondlie imagin in their owne braine. This is the reaſon why he takes vp the Chaldeans in ſuch a rigorous ſort, reſembling them vnto *ſtubble ſet on fire*, which is conſumed in an inſtant; for hee compares them not to *wood* with which one may make a fire of ſome continuance to *warme himſelfe by*, but to ſtubble, or hemp-ſtalks, to ſhew, that there is nothing of ſo ſhort continuance as ſuch kind of men.

A terrible denunciatiō againſt theſe Aſtrologians.

Whence the contempt of God and all his threatnings ſprings

Verſ. 15. *Thus ſhall they ſerue thee with*

*Or, and with those with whom thou hast traded.

with whom thou haſt wearied thee, *euen *thy merchants from thy youth: euery one ſhall wander to his owne quarter; none ſhall ſaue thee.*

He now directs his denunciation against the Babylonians.

HAuing denounced deſtruction againſt theſe *Star-gazers*, he returnes to the Babylonians; and telles them that they are not to expect help from them, whence they thought to haue it: for they ſhould but loſe their time in reſting vpon ſuch counſels, after which they had ſo long and ſo painfully trauelled. Now in ſpeaking of ſuch as traded with her, he meanes thoſe whom wee commonly call Pettifoggers: which is a ſimilitude taken from Merchants who haue infinit ſhifts to beguile: for there is no kinde of ſubtile fetches, but they haue them at their fingers ends. Princes in regard of their greatnes traffique not; but they will vſe ſuch fellowes to ſerue their owne turnes, and to traffique for them. Now howſoeuer this may bee vnderſtood of all thoſe that were in league with the Chaldeans, and had ſuccoured them, yet the Prophet aimes ſpecially at her Diuiners.

Where he addes, *from thy youth:* it is to aggrauate Babels iniquitie, who of old was poiſoned with this fond opinion: ſo as it was become another nature vnto her.

Euery one ſhall vvander to his quarter.] Some thinke the Prophet ſpeakes of the Aſtrologers flight, in regard euery one ſhould bee conſtrained to ſhift for his owne life: and I will willingly agree to this expoſition. But yet I alſo thinke that he alludes to the regions of heauen, which the Aſtrologers part and meaſure out, to draw their prognoſtications from thence. He derides their vaine brags then: as if he ſhould ſay; They retire to their regions, but they ſhall *vvander* in their imaginations, and ſhall find no place of refuge. If any had rather vnderſtand it of their reuolt, from whom Babel looked for preſent helpe in time of need, I gainſay him not.

THE XLVIII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Heare yee this, O houſe of Iakob, which are called by the name of Iſrael, and are come out of the waters of Iudah: which ſweare by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Iſrael; but not in truth nor in righteouſneſſe.*

Now the Prophet directs his ſpeech to the Iewes.

NOW hee directs his ſpeech to the Iewes, whom hee chiefly reſpected in the whole chapter before going.

The drift of Iſaiah in this Chapter.

For he was not ſent to the Babylonians; but ſo ſpeakes to thé, that ſtill his meaning is, the Iewes ſhould make their profit of it; for whoſe good he was principally appointed, & ordained to that high and excellent calling. He hath foretold the ruine of Babel then, to the end the Iewes might in patience and ſilence wait for their deliuerance: and yet, that the greatneſſe and power of their enemies in the meane while, might not daunt nor diſcourage them. But reſting ſecurely vpō theſe promiſes, they might ſtand with inuincible force againſt al temptations. Now in as much as the Iewes were ſomewhat obſtinate, and would not eaſilie be brought to credit theſe promiſes: as alſo that *Iſaiah* by the ſpirit of prophecie, wel foreſaw how ſtiffe necked and rebellious they would proue, euen in their captiuitie; he therefore reproues them thus ſharply. Ezech. in Chap. 33 31. ſhewes at large how great their incredulitie was, when they murmured againſt God and fel off the hooks, making no more account of theſe promiſes, then of ſo many fables. It is not without cauſe then that *Iſaiah* is ſo vehement: ſhewing that they much diſhonoured the Lord, in that they would not reſt vpon his truth.

He ſpeakes to *Iſrael*; but ſo, as to Iſrael, degenerate: Iſrael in name, and not Iſrael in deed. Hee giues them not this title then, by way of honour; but rather to conuince them of their falſe confidence, in that they wrongfully vſurped this honourable title, and nothing at all anſwered the truth thereof in their practiſe. For why did God digniſie his ſeruant *Iakob* with this name, but becauſe he ſhewed himſelfe valorous and inuincible in aduerſitie? Which appeares by that *vvreſtling* he had with God, who pitcheth the field as it were to make warre vpon vs, when hee exerciſeth vs with diuers tribulations: Gen. 32.28. How could this title agree then to his ſucceſſors, when they fainted and forſooke their confidence in the day of aduerſitie? He afterwards reprocheth them, in that they nothing at all reſembled the holy fathers, from whom they were deſcended. Pſal. 24.10.

By *vvaters*, vnder a figure, hee meanes the fountaine and ſpring from whence the Iewes iſſued: for I allow not of the Rabbines ridiculous gloſſe; who by the word waters, vnderſtand that ſperm whereof children are ingendred, becauſe it is moiſt and wateriſh: but it is a ſimilitude very fitly drawne from waters which flow from a ſpring. Now hauing taxed them for baſtard and degenerate children, he addes that they falſly couer the ſame title vnder the cloke of pietie and religion; from the truth whereof, they were alſo reuolted.

An oath, a part of Gods worſhip.

Now becauſe an *oath* is a part of Gods worſhip, he heere puts it for the whole, vnder the figure ſynecdoche. For as the Idolaters offer God great wrong in ſwearing by their Idols; ſo the true worſhippers doe highly honour him

him in ſwearing by his name, for thereby they proteſt to haue but one God, whoſe name they thus glorie in. But in this place the Prophet inueyes bitterly againſt the hypocrites, who had nothing in their mouthes but the *name of God*, and tolled it continuallie vpon the tip of their tongues, but in the meane while their hearts were farre off from him, as it is in Chap.29.13. for this cauſe he ſaith, But not in *righteouſnes*, which word he takes heere for vprightnes and ſoundnes of heart, without which nothing we doe is acceptable before God. Or, *truth* and *righteouſnes* may be taken for words of one ſignification, as if he ſhould ſay, There is nothing but hypocriſie and vaine ſhewes in all your doings; you profeſſe your ſelues to be the ſeruants of the God of truth, and behold, you let all the world ſee that you are ſtuffed with diſloyaltie and lies.

Hypocrites taxed.

Verſ. 2. *For they are called of the holie Citie, and ſtay themſelues vpon the God of Iſrael, whoſe name is the Lord of hoſts.*

HE holds himſelfe to the point ſtill, and in other words refutes their vaine ſhewes, for falſly they gloried to be citizens of the *holy Cuite*, and yet they ſtuck not to pollute and defile it with their leaud practiſes.

An amplification of the Iewes hypocriſie.

Ieruſalem was worthily reputed *holy*, in regard God had ſanctified it for the place of his abode, but it was prophaned with ſo many abuſes, that there was no holines at all in a maner left in it. In the 15. and 24. Pſalme wee ſee who are worthie to be eſteemed the true citizens of Ieruſalem, but ſeeing the Iewes bluſhed not to play faſt and looſe with God, they thought it enough to couer themſelues vnder this vaile, of the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord.

Ier.7.

Where he ſaith, they *ſtaied vpon the God of Iſrael*: hee ſpeakes not of a true confidence, but of a malepart boldneſſe. For as the faithfull ſtay and reſt vpon the Lord with their whole hearts, ſo hypocrites doe falſly maske themſelues with his name, and are beſotted with a vaine and fond perſwaſion: they contemne all things, yea, they feare not impudentlie to diſgorge this brag; Tuſh, God will ſurely helpe vs, he will neuer forſake his people, as if God were a foſterer of ſuch a prophane crew. To be ſhort, they caſt his lawes behind their backs, and tread them vnder their feet, and yet proteſt with high termes that God is the *ſtay* of their ſaluation. But to the end they ſhould not thinke to eſcape vnpuniſhed for ſuch dallyings, the Prophet affirmes, that Gods maieſtie and glorie ſhall no whit be impeached, though hypocrites indeuor to transfigure him at their pleaſures. For in calling him the *Lord of hoſts*, he addes it as a threatning, to the end they might know that the *God of Iſrael*, vnder which title they vainely couered themſelues, was alſo the *Lord of hoſts* to puniſh ſuch hypocrites, and that could not indure to be thus mocked and triſled withall.

Verſ. 3. *I haue declared the former things of old, and they went out of my mouth, and I ſhewed them: I did them ſuddenly, and they came to paſſe.*

HE accuſeth the Iewes of ingratitude, in regard they diſtruſted GOD who had ſhewed them infinite teſtimonies of his goodnes to confirme them in a true and ſound faith, and thus he beteaues them of all excuſe, in telling them that he hath *declared former things*. Now it ſeemes he ſpeakes not only of their redemption from their captiuitie, but of other benefits which the Lord had done for his people; as if he ſhould ſay, I began *of old* to tell you what ſhould enſue, neither haue I promiſed any thing which is not accompliſhed: but notwithſtanding ſo many experiences, you beleeue nothing that I ſay, no not the moſt certaine and the infallible truth.

Before he taxed their hypocriſie: they now their ingratitude.

Wee may alſo ſuppoſe, that the Prophet ſpake not only to thoſe which then liued, but likewiſe to ſuch as were afterwards to ſurtiue them in the captiuitie, that when the calamitie ſhould befall them, they might call to minde what was foretold them, for God meant to haue this propheſie renoumed, that during their exile, they might know how theſe things fell not out by chance, and therfore were to gather conſolation thence. *Iſaiah* reprehends them ſharply then, in regard that albeit they knew the truth of theſe propheſies by *the euent*, yet they would not acknowledge Gods hand in the, neither would they reſt vpō his promiſes. Had he not good cauſe then, thinke you, to rebuke them thus ſharply, and to condemne their obſtinacie? Yes doubtleſſe. For they reſiſted that hand which offred them reliefe, and reiected his mercie: they limited the holy one of Iſrael, in that they would not beleeue that it ſhould euer be permitted them to returne home into Iudeah. Nay, when the way was ſet wide open before them, very few had any heart to returne into their countrie. Others ſuppoſed that *Cyrus* did but dallie with them, only permitting them to goe, that hauing gadged and ſounded the depth of their affections, he might take occaſion therby to oppreſſe them and deale the more ſeuerely with them, not conſidering that thoſe things which the Lord had foretold muſt of neceſſitie come to paſſe, though men and Angels ſhould withſtand the ſame.

I ſo vnderſtand theſe *predictions* then wherof the Prophet ſpeakes, that vnder them I alſo comprehend the ancient propheſies, in which the Lord had ſaid to *Abraham*, that his poſteritie ſhould be led captiue, and ſhould after be reſtored to their firſt libertie, Gen. 15.13. And ſo we muſt come to other propheſies of this nature by degrees, which ſucceſſiuely followed one another, for euen this propheſie was many times confirmed now in one age, and then in another. His meaning is then, that the Lord yet neuer foretold any thing, but the iſſue and euent anſwered vnto the beginning.

God yet neuer foretold any thing, but the euent was anſwerable to the beginning.

Verſ. 4.

Verſ. 4. *Becauſe I knew that thou art obſtinate, and thy necke is an yron ſinew, and thy brow braſſe.*

The Iewes obſtinacie & impudencie diſcouered.

THe Lord heere proteſts by his Prophet, that he ſpake of things *to come*, becauſe of the peoples *obſtinacie*. As if the Prophet ſhould ſay; I haue done more for you then ſtood with my calling. Not that he only bent his ſpeech this way, for wee know that the principall drift of his ſermons appertaines to the godly, who quietly obey, and willingly giue eare. But *Iſaiah*, that had to deale with a froward people, rightly affirmes, that God would haue vſed a moſt ſoueraigne remedie, in ratifying his law by many prophecies, and that ſucceſſiuely one after another. For as hee had foretold nothing but the truth to their fathers, ſo he ſhewes that he continues ſtill ſo to doe, that heereby hee might batter downe the obſtinacie and rebellion of this people.

Hee ſaith their *necke* was as an *yron ſinew*, becauſe it could not be bowed. I grant that ſinewes are ſtiffe, yet they are bowable. But heere he ſaith, nothing will bow them, becauſe they are as vntamed heifers. Afterwards hee addes, *a brow of braſſe*, to ſet forth their impudencie. Two things holds vs in awe: firſt, teachableneſſe, if we willingly ſubmit our ſelues to the wholſome admonitions and inſtructions, which ſhall bee tendered to vs. Secondly, if being ouertaken with anie ſinne, wee be ſo touched with true remorſe and bluſhing, that wee condemne the euill committed: where theſe two graces, humilitie and ſhamefaſtneſſe are wanting, it is a ſigne of a deſperate obſtinacie. By two arguments the Prophet ſhewes that this people was giuen vp to all iniquitie, in that hee affirmes they were become *vnteachable* and *ſhameleſſe*. Notwithſtanding when the Lord cannot otherwiſe remedie ſuch a miſchiefe, yet he ſo farre ſupports our rebellion, as to admoniſh vs of things *to come*. And thus, transforming himſelfe as it were, he is readie to trie all the waies hee can, that hee might allure vs vnto him, and ſet vs againe in the right way.

Two things keepes vs in awe.

1

2

Verſ. 5. *Therefore I haue declared it vnto thee of old; before it came to paſſe I haue ſhewed it thee, leſt thou ſhouldeſt ſay, Mine Idoll hath done them, and my earued Image and my molten Image hath commanded them.*

AGaine he propounds the ſame thing vnto them, that the people being deliuered out of Babylon, might acknowledge that God himſelfe had done it, leſt they ſhould attribute this redemption either to their Idols, or to fortune. If it bee asked wherefore the Lord makes mention of *Idols*, ſeeing the Iewes profeſſed to worſhip but one God: I anſwer, they were already ſo corrupted by ouer much familiaritie with the Gentiles, and had ſo defiled themſelues with ſuperſtitions, that God was in a manner vtterly forgotten. *Ezechiel* complaines of this in his eight Chapter, verſ. 3. For there being carried in a viſion into Ieruſalem, hee ſaw the Sanctuarie of the Lord polluted with diuers idolatries and abominations. It is no maruell then if our Prophet put them in mind of *God*, the onely author of all benefits, to the end they might acknowledge their redemption to be his worke.

Queſt.

Anſ.

Leſt thou ſhouldeſt ſay.] He meanes that the Iewes ſhould be inexcuſable, if they did not confeſſe this benefit of being ſet free from bondage, to proceede from Gods hand. For that which was foretolde ſo long before *came it came to paſſe*, could not fall out, neither fortune nor chance. Hee ioines Gods preſcience then with his power, ſhewing that he hath not only foretold theſe things, but hath alſo performed them. Heere then we may behold as in a glaſſe, the frowardneſſe of our owne hearts, which are alwaies plotting how to bereaue the Lord of his deſerued praiſe, euen as oft as he ſends vs any helpe, or beſtowes any benefit vpon vs, whereby he ſtretcheth out his hand to becken vs to himſelfe. But the world reſiſts God in this behalfe, euen with an high hand, euermore attributing that to creatures, which proceeds from God: as in the Papacie, where wee ſee they aſcribe the benefits of God, vnto the Saints departed; as if he ſate idle in heauen, or were fallen into a dead ſleepe. It is needfull therefore that the light of Gods word ſhould alwaies ſhine before vs, for the rectifying of our iudgements: for wee ſhall alwaies miſſe the marke in conſidering of Gods workes, vnleſſe he giue light vnto our ſteps, by the lanterne of his bleſſed truth.

A looking-glaſſe wherein we may take a view of the frowardneſſe of our nature.

The ſame thing often befalles many at this day, which *Iſaiah* bewailes touching his nation; to wit, that notwithſtanding all admonitions, yet they ceaſe not to forge Idols, which they adorne with Gods ſpoiles as it were. The Apoſtles, *Peter* and *Iohn*, in their life time, Act. 3. 12. cried with a loud voice, that they did no miracles by their own power or godlineſſe: and yet we ſee how the Papiſts, whether they will or no; yea as it were to vex them, will burthen them now they are dead with infinit miracles. Well, howſoeuer God at this day foretelles vs not of *things to come*, yet ſhall the Law and the Goſpell be of no leſſe force to condemne our vnthankfulneſſe, then if wee had ſeene the wonders (whereof God ſhewed himſelfe the author) contained in the prophecies.

Peter and Iohn made to worke miracles by the Papiſts now they are dead, who proteſted they did no thing by their owne power being aliue.

Verſ. 6. *Thou haſt heard; * behold all this. And will not yee declare it? I haue ſhewed thee new things *euen now, and hid things which thou kneweſt not.*

*Or, ſee all.

*Or, from.

BY this wee may better diſcerne that the Prophet ſpeaks of the captiuitie to come, and of the redemption that was to inſue. Wherein he as well prouided for the good of the people of his owne time, as for theirs that were to ſucceede: that ſo, albeit thoſe which

God ſpake plainly, but we are dull of hearing.

which then liued, made no right vſe thereof, yet at leaſt thoſe that ſuruiued them, being heereby admoniſhed, might amend. For it often fals out that the word moues not ſuch as are preſent: nay, they hauing heard it, goe their waies and contemne it: but their ſucceſſors on the contrary, receiue it with more reuerence.

Where he bids them *behold*: ſome thinke the Prophet ſo propounds the euent of the thing, as if he ſhould ſay, God neuer ſaid any thing, but the truth thereof hath manifeſted it ſelfe. But I expound this word *behold*, or See, thus; Seeing the Lord hath ſpoken: it is thy duetie to thinke well of that he hath vttered, and to giue diligent attention thereto. Whence we may gather, that our dulneſſe is the cauſe why we ſuffer that which proceeds out of Gods mouth, to fall to the ground; and that many doe therefore couer themſelues with the vaile of ignorance in vaine. For the Lord ſpeakes diſtinctly enough, vttering to euery mans capacitie, as much as is needfull for them to know; if the auditors were but as attentiue as they ought, and did aduiſedly conſider what is ſaid.

But the Lord requires ſomewhat more of his people beſides *hearing* and *vnderſtanding* of his word; to wit, that they ſhould *publiſh* the wonders whereof they haue had experience. And thus vndoubtedly hee inſtructs his ſeruants vpon this condition, that being taught themſelues, they ſhould labour in the next place, to bring others to confeſſion of the ſame faith with them.

From now, is as much as if he had ſaid; Note this day in which the Lord foretelles thee by my mouth, that which thou *knoweſt not*: for it cannot be apprehended nor foreeſene by any humane coniecture.

Verſ. 7. *They were created now, and not of old. And euer before this thou heardſt them not, leſt thou ſhouldſt ſay; Behold, I knew them.*

Neither the peoples captiuitie nor deliuerance happened by chance.

THe Prophet ſhewes that hee diſputes not about things knowne, or vnderſtood, by long vſe: firſt, to correct the pride which is naturally grafted in all men, (for they vſurpe vpon that which belongs to God onely:) and ſecondly, that none ſhould attribute the leaſt iot thereof vnto fortune, or to any ſecond cauſes whatſoeuer. Men vſe many ſhifts to depriue God of his glory, applying al their wits, to ſee how they may part among the creatures, that which is his proper right, that they may leaue vnto him no more but his naked and bare titles. Leſt the people ſhould imagin then, that they were either ouercome by the power of the Chaldeans, or ſet at libertie by chance, therefore the Prophet ſo oft repeates, that all is Gods worke.

Where hee affirmes, that they *heard not*: ſome expound, that the people reiected Gods admonitions, and would not obey the wholſome counſels which were giuen them. But I thinke he meant another thing, to wit, that that which could not be knowne by humane reaſon, of which alſo the Iewes were ignorant, was ſo manifeſted vnto them, that they could not well defraud the holy Ghoſt of his iuſt praiſe. And this is euident enough by the ſcope of the text.

Verſ. 8. *Yet thou heardſt them not, neither diddeſt thou know them; neither yet was thine eare opened of old: for I knew that thou wouldeſt grieuouſly tranſgreſſe; therfore haue I called thee* a *tranſgreſſor from the wombe.*

a Or, a rebell.

A confirmation of that wherewith they were taxed, verſ. 4.

THe Prophets meaning is, that the Lord hath not inſiſted ſo long vpon this matter without cauſe, but hath been thus inſtant in exhorting the people, to the end they might acknowledge that they were chaſtiſed, and in the end deliuered from all their miſeries, by the immediate hand of God. For they (being of an obſtinate nature) might complaine, that it was needleſſe to trouble their heads with ſo many repetitions of one and the ſame thing. The Prophet anſwers, that it is no wonder, ſeeing he hath to deale with a ſort of *tranſgreſſors*: and thus in other words, he confirmes that which he ſaid in the fourth verſe, touching the *yron ſinew*. The ſumme is, that God knowing the peruerſitie of this people, omitted no good meanes to win them to his obedience: by how much the more then they haue been conuinced by ſufficient and infallible teſtimonies, ſo much the leſſe ſhall they be excuſable before him. Now hauing pulled off their vizard of holineſſe, to wit, their glorying in the name of *Iſrael*, (as in the firſt verſe) hee impoſeth vpon them a more proper name, and flatly calles them *rebels*.

By the *wombe*, I vnderſtand not their firſt eſtate, by and by after they were ſeparated to be the Lords people; but from their deliuerance out of Egypt, which was as a birth of the Church: Exod. 12. 21. But howſoeuer this people had had infinit experiences of Gods great goodneſſe towards them, yet they neuer ceaſed to behaue themſelues diſloyally againſt ſo good a benefactor; nor to wax more and more vntamed: ſo that hee had iuſt cauſe to tax them with the titles of *rebels* and *traitors*.

Verſ. 9. *For my names ſake will I deferre my wrath, and for my praiſe will I refraine it from thee, that I cut thee not off.*

The ſcope of the former reprehenſiõ manifeſted in this verſe. 1

HAuing reproched the people touching the malice which flowed from the fathers to the children, and ſo to their nephewes: now hee ſhewes that they are ſtill vpheld by Gods mercy, whereas they were otherwiſe worthy to periſh an hundred times. The vſe of this admonition was double: for it was needfull that the faithfull ſhould be thus ſuſtained, leſt they ſhould haue fainted in their captiuitie. Beſides, when they had leaue to re- 2

turne, it was fit they ſhould be humbled to acknowledge that their deliuerance proceeded wholly from the meere grace and good will of God. And thus we ſee that the former reprehenſion tended to teach them, that it was the Lords hand that drew them out of Babylon as out of a graue, not for their deſerts, for they were well worthie to haue bin vtterlie deſtroyed.

Vſe to vs.

In that God ſpares vs then at this day, and mittigates his corrections; in that he remits our offences, and hath any reſpect at all vnto vs, theſe things wholly proceed from his free grace. Why ſo? Becauſe we ſhould learne to attribute none of theſe benefits to the merits or ſatisfactions of men. Here then the diſtinction of ỹ Sophiſters falles to the ground (as wee haue ſhewed in other places) touching the remitting of the puniſhment, which they affirme not to be free, becauſe we muſt make ſatisfaction for the ſame vnto God. But our Prophet teacheth, that God freely remits it, and that only for his *owne names ſake*. For he ſpeakes here of the puniſhment which he might iuſtly inflict vpon the Iewes. He had very good cauſe then to haue cõſumed them, if he had not reſpected the *maintenance of his owne glorie*.

Diſtinction of the Sophiſters.

Verſ. 10. *Behold, I haue fined thee but not as ſiluer: I haue choſen thee in the furnace of affliction.*

God ſo corrects his Church, that in the meane while he thereby procures her ſaluation.

THe Lord ſhewes, that he vſed ſuch meaſure in correcting his Church, that therewithall he prouided for their ſaluation. In the former verſe he ſaid that he *ſpared, or would ſpare them*, becauſe he reſpected his *glorie*: now he ſhewes that he hath *chaſtiſed* them in deed, yet ſo, that he did it for their good; for he corrected them, to *fine* them, but we are not wont to trie and fine that which we mind to caſt away: ſeeing then he had none other end, it followes that he did it to procure their benefit and ſaluation thereby. Beſides, he mentions this *triall* by way of preuention, leſt any ſhould obiect, that Gods loue little appeared in ſo ſharp afflictiõs. The Prophet, I ſay, doth in fit ſeaſon preuent ſuch a conceit, & tels them, that God hath skill enough to correct his Church in mercie, and yet not vtterly to forſake her.

Simile.

Correction would rather cõſume then refine vs, if God ſhould not moderate and ſanctifie them to vs.

Moreouer, he addes that he hath *not* fined vs as *ſiluer*, for then we ſhould haue bin vtterly conſumed. There is ſome puritie to be found in *ſiluer*, but in vs there is nothing but droſſe: and were it not that the Lord made vs *ſiluer*, we ſhould be burnt to aſhes, yea to nothing, euen as tow or flax. Corrections would draw from vs no puritie at all. The Lord in trying of vs then hath reſpect to our abilitie, leſt he ſhould paſſe meaſure, as Pſal. 103. 13. 14. then he makes our chaſtiſements profitable vnto vs by the worke of his owne ſpirit, which would otherwiſe proue mortall and deadly vnto vs.

To choſe, is taken here to diſcerne: for we ordinarily make choice of that which we deſire to keepe, as wee haue ſaid Chap. 7. 15. where it is ſaid, that Chriſt ſhould eate butter and hony, till he had knowledge to *chuſe* the good, and refuſe the euill. He ſhewes then by this word what difference there is betweene the ſtripes wherewith the faithfull are ſmitten, and thoſe which the wicked are to ſuſtaine, wherewith in deed they ſhall be ouerwhelmed. But howſoeuer the Lord tries and ſmites vs, yet are we acceptable in his ſight, and he reſerues ſtill a fatherly affection towards vs, euen in the middeſt of our afflictions, and in the end he brings vs forth *bright as ſiluer*, and ſo makes our ſuffrings to become a ſacrifice of a ſweet ſmelling ſauor in his noſtrils. To conclude, his meaning is, that God ceaſeth not euen then to be good to his Church, whileſt he ſeemes to conſume her to nothing.

A Conſolation. *Pſal.* 34. 20. *Hab.* 3. 2. *Exod.* 3. 2.

Verſ. 11. *For mine owne ſake, for mine owne ſake will I do it: for how ſhould* my name *be polluted? ſurely I will not giue my glorie vnto another.*

A repetition of that he ſaid verſ. 9. with an interrogation added.

HE repeates that which he ſaid before, but he addes an interrogation, which the Hebrues are wont to vſe when they ſpeake of abſurdities, as heere, Can it be that my name ſhould be prophaned? The ſecond member, *I will not giue my glorie &c.* ſerues for an expoſition of this interrogation. *Iſaiah* then amplifies that which he ſpake before in few words, and flies an higher pitch in his ſtile; for it is not only a bare amplification of the former ſentence, but rather a beautifying and adorning of it for ỹ greater *confirmation* thereof. Now by theſe words he meanes that men as much as in them is, doe *profane Gods name*, and giue away his *glorie* vnto creatures; only the Lord in his admirable prouidence ſtops the courſe of this miſchiefe, and keepes his glorie vnblemiſhed. Although we by our fault then doe expoſe this glorie of God to contempt, yet will he preſerue it as long as he ſhall continue our protector. Hence we gather a very ſweet conſolation, to wit, that the Lord ioines his owne *glorie* with our *ſaluation*, as we haue often ſhewed you before.

I will not giue.] That is to ſay, I will not indure that any ſhould rob me of my glorie: but this had fallen out if the people had bin vtterly conſumed, then would they haue ſcorned the God of Iſrael; for the wicked were wont in the afflictions of the Saints to diſgorge theſe blaſphemies, *Where is now their God?* Pſal. 79. 10. Pſal. 42. 3. *Moſes* alſo alledgeth, that the Lord withheld his hand from deſtroying the people for the ſame cauſe: *I feare, ſaith the Lord, the furie of their aduerſaries, leſt they ſhould vvax proude, and leſt they ſhould ſay, our hie hand, and not the Lord hath done all this*, Deut. 32. 27. And queſtionleſſe, as oft as the Lord terrifies the faithfull, by manifeſting vnto them the ſignes of his heauie diſpleaſure, the only remedie then left vs is this, that he will yet remember his owne couenant of grace made with vs in Chriſt, leſt he ſhould proſtitute his holy name to the outrages and blaſphemies of the wicked. Neither did the Prophet only ſtirre them vp hereby to giue thanks

thanks to God, and to confeſſe that their proſperitie proceeded from his free mercie; but he did likewiſe put a forme of praier into their mouthes, and a ſhield of defence vpon the armes of the faithfull, wherewith they might repulſe all the fierie darts of the diuell.

Verſ. 12. *Heare mee, O Iakob, and Iſrael my called. I am, I am the firſt, and *I am the laſt.*

*Or, yet.

Chap 41.4. & 44.6. God changeth not, and therefore we are not conſumed as it is in Mal.3.6.

WE haue told you heeretofore why the Lord ſpeakes of his eternitie; namely, to teach vs that he is alwaies like himſelfe, and that wee ſhould not meaſure his power by the narrow ſcantling of our owne ell. He heere calles for *audience*, becauſe the onelie thing that deceiues vs, and makes vs wander after ſo many falſe opinions is, that wee haue *no eares* to *heare*. Where he ſaith Iſrael is his *called*: he oppoſeth it ſecretly againſt that reprobation, whereof hee ſpake in the beginning of the Chapter. For hee there ſhewed that the Iewes wrongfully vſurped this title, and falſly gloried therein; becauſe they ſhewed not themſelues to bee true Iſraelites in deed. But heere he declares that Iſrael is his owne *called*: as if a father in rebuking his ſonne, ſhould in anger call him *baſtard*; and yet being appeaſed, ſhould afterward terme him his *ſonne*. Thus the Lord ſhewes that the Iewes were growne ſo degenerate, that hee had iuſt cauſe to reiect them: and yet albeit their vnworthineſſe of that great honour he ſhewed them, he ſtill reſpects his owne *calling* of them, which they could not aboliſh nor make vnfruitfull by their malice or vnthankfulneſſe.

Simile

1

2

The particle *yet* in this place, ſignifies a continuance: for the Prophet meanes nothing elſe but that God is alwaies like himſelfe: that is to ſay, he repents not, nor changeth not his mind, as men are wont to doe: and therefore he ſaith, that he is the *firſt* and the *laſt*. Now we haue alſo in theſe words to note, that *Iſaiah* ſpeakes not heere of God his eternall eſſence, but applies this doctrine to our vſe: ſignifying that he will be ſuch a one to vs, as he hath euer been in times paſt: as alſo that wee ſhould remember to ſeparate him from Idols; leſt our mindes being diſtracted by new inuentions, ſhould erre from his true feare.

Verſ. 13. *Surely mine hand hath laid the foundations of the earth, and my right hand hath ſpanned the heauens: when I ſhall call them, they ſtand vp together.*

As God is vnchangeable, ſo is he almightie.

THe Prophet ſhewes heere more plainly, what his meaning was in the former verſ. For hauing ſaid that God is alwaies one, and neither changeth his affection nor will towards vs, hee now magnifies and extolles his power, in regard of his viſible workes which wee daily behold. And thus the Lord comming forth of his Sanctuarie, doth after a ſort manifeſt himſelfe familiarly vnto vs in them.

Whether wee turne the wordes, my right hand hath *meaſured*, or, hath *ſuſtained*; the ſenſe will be alwaies alike: neither is it needfull that we ſhould ſtand much about the interpretation of the word *Tepaḥ*. For the word To meaſure, notes out the admirable wiſdome of God, in that hee hath ſo aptly proportioned all the parts of this faire *curtaine* of the heauens, that it ſhould neither bee higher nor lower from the earth then it is: but that they conſtantly keep the order preſcribed them of God: ſo as in this round and ample vaſtneſſe, wee can behold nothing deformed or miſplaced. If any had rather retaine the word *To vphold*, it is alſo a commendation of Gods ſingular wiſdome and power, who beares vp this infinit weight, and great maſſe of the heauens in their continuall motion, and yet keepes it from tottering or reeling from one ſide to another.

Note.

But the laſt member where hee ſaith, that all things *ſtand vp together* when he *calls* them; hath ſome more difficultie in it. For it is either to be referred to the firſt creation of the world, or to the perpetuall gouernement thereof. If we refer it to the firſt creation, the preſent tence of the verb To appeare, ſhould be taken for the future tence, thus; As ſoone as the Lord commanded them to appeare, they forthwith obeied, according to that in the 33. Pſalme, verſ. 9. *He ſpake the vvord, and it was done*. But if wee accept of this expoſition, the word *together*, which is added, ſeemes not to ſute well with the hiſtorie of the creation mentioned by *Moſes*. For the heauens and the earth were not created and adorned in an inſtant: Gen.1.2. Things were firſt intermingled and confuſed: then the Lord ſeparated them and placed them in order. But the ſolution is eaſie; for the Prophets meaning is nothing but this, that the Lord created all things by his onely will, and ſo formed heauen and earth, that they forthwith obeied his commandement.

1

2

Obiect.

Anſ.

And yet for mine owne part, I willingly extend this ſentence to the perpetuall gouernment of the world. As if he ſhould ſay; Heauen and earth obeied Gods voice, and yeelded to his abſolute power: ſo as theſe creatures ſo farre remote one from another, willingly conſented and agreed together, with an incredible harmonie; neither more nor leſſe then if they were turned about with one wheele. And howſoeuer the ſpace bee wondrous great betweene earth and heauen aboue, yet the Lords voice was diſtinctly heard in euery part of them. There was no need of meſſengers then to teach or publiſh his will, but himſelfe in an inſtant executes the ſame at his pleaſure. Shall a man finde any Prince that *can haue all his ſeruants by and by about him at his call?* No, Gods power then is infinit, it is diſperſed far and neere, and extends it ſelfe to all parts of the world, as the Scriptures doe manifeſt, and faith by experience makes vs feele.

Simile.

Simile.

Pſa. 47.1,2.

Verſ. 14. *All you aſſemble your ſelues and heare: which among thē hath declared theſe things? The Lord hath loued him, he will doe his will in Babell, and his *arme ſhall be againſt the Chaldeans.*

*Or, his worke.

God permits the Iewes to bring in their allegations.

NO doubt but the Lord directs his ſpeech to the Iewes, though hee vtters nothing heere which ought not to be knowne of all. But becauſe the heathen & prophane people had no eares, therefore hee ſummons not them to heare. Wee know that the Iewes had this priuiledge aboue other nations, that God manifeſted himſelfe to them: as it is ſaid in the Pſalme; God is knowne in Iudah, his name is great in Iſrael: Pſal.76.1. and 147. 19, 20. And thus their ſenſleſneſſe was the leſſe excuſable, in that they reiected their owne happineſſe. For whence ſprang this lightneſſe and inclination to apoſtaſie, but from the little or no regard they had of this ineſtimable treaſure of the heauenly doctrine? They well deſerued then to bee thus ſharpely chidden, and that he ſhould thus cloſely tax them for their malicious and manifeſt conſpiracies to darken the grace of God.

Now it ſeemes the Lord permits the Iewes to bring in their allegations which they had, as thoſe who truſting to the goodnes of their cauſe, dare thus defie their aduerſe partie: Bring in thy reaſons, and if thou haſt anie metall in thee, ſhew it. The Lord then prouokes them firſt, and bids them tell if they can, whether the gods of the Gentiles haue foretold any ſuch things or no. And this may alſo be applied to the Soothſaiers and Prognoſticators, who attributed to themſelues the knowledge of things to come, which they could not foreſee at all. And in the ſame ſenſe he repeates that which followes in the verſe inſuing: I, *euen* I haue ſpoken it. The ſumme comes to this then, that the Iewes wauer, yea and fall; becauſe they haue not well informed themſelues how ſingular a grace of God it is, to learne from his ſacred mouth, whatſoeuer is needfull to ſaluation. In the latter part of the verſe, hee recites one particular; namely, God had foretold the end of their captiuity in Babylon. True it is that he names not Cyrus as the diſpenſer of this benefite: but in ſpeaking of ſome certaine perſonage well knowne, he ſaith, God hath choſen him to ſurpriſe Babel by force.

Cyrus.

The word *To loue*, is not taken heere ſimply, but for ſome ſpeciall reſpect: and therefore he reſtraines it to the happy iſſue of his voyage. And ſo we may ſay that *Saul* was *beloued of God* for ſome priuate end; namelie, that hee might raigne for a time, and might haue the gift of prophecie: 1.Sam.10.10. But there is an higher matter to bee conſidered of touching the faithfull, whom God loues with an euerlaſting loue: for hee will neuer ſuffer them to be ſeparated from him. The Prophet then meant to ſay, that *Cyrus* ſhall vanquiſh Babylon, becauſe he ſhall vndertake that buſineſſe vnder Gods authoritie & leading; not of his owne motion, but after ſuch a manner, as God thruſts forward the blind and ignorant, whither him liſteth: or as hee vſeth ſometimes to ſerue his turne of men againſt their wils. For *Cyrus* is not praiſed for his *voluntary obedience*, but it is rather indeed an extolling of Gods ſingular prouidence, by which hee diſpoſeth of all ſorts of men to performe his will, and to execute his decrees.

Example.

Iohn 13.1. *Ier.*31.3.

By *arme*, (vnder a figure familiar amongſt the Prophets) we may vnderſtand his *worke*. And thus the ſpeech will runne better; *Hee ſhall execute his will againſt Babylon, and his worke againſt the Chaldeans.* And wee know that the Prophets are wont to ioine Gods counſell and worke together. Now he priuilie taxeth the Iewes for their ingratitude, in that they would not beleeue Gods promiſes, though hee pointed out the thing before them with his finger, and ſpake far otherwiſe then did the Chaplaines of the falſe gods. To conclude, hee meant to informe the Iewes, that the ſurprizing of Babel by the hand of *Cyrus*, ſhall bee *a worke* of the Lord, vnder whoſe direction all things ſhall bee ſo carried, that the Church in the end ſhall be deliuered.

Verſ. 15. *I*, euen *I haue ſpoken it, and I haue called him: I haue brought him, and his way ſhall proſper.*

HEe brings the Iewes againe to the prophecies, and attributes this honour vnto God, that hauing in fit time reuealed the thing, hee takes away all doubtings. Afterwards hee addes, that whatſoeuer was foretold, ſhall be confirmed. And thus there is a double force in the doubling of theſe words, I, *euen* I. As if he ſhould ſay; It is none but the God of Iſrael that hath ſpoken theſe things which are hidden, and to come: ſecondly, he being true, and one that neuer deceiues, he will vndoubtedly accompliſh whatſoeuer he hath promiſed. *Iſaiah* then propounds two ends here vnto himſelfe: Firſt, that the poore captiues ſhould wait for their deliuerance: ſecondly, being deliuered, that they ſhould acknowledge God to be the author of ſo excellent a benefit, and not to aſcribe it either to the arme of fleſh, or to haphazard. Now he ſhewes that *Cyrus* his good ſucceſſe in his enterpriſes, ſhall proceede from Gods *calling of him*. Not that he was worthy of ſo great a fauour, neither that he obtained it by his own induſtry and power; but in regard that the Lord vſed him as his *ſeruant* to deliuer his people. For where he called him his *beloued* in the former verſe, and heere ſaith that he hath *called* and *brought him*; I told you erewhile that it is not to bee referred to that loue of God, whereby he adopts vs for his children, *by calling* vs to himſelfe. *Cyrus* was neither *loued* nor *called* in this kind: for howſoeuer he were indued with excellent vertues, yet was he tainted with very odious crimes, as ambition, deſire of ſwaying Kingdomes, couetouſneſſe, crueltie, and many other vices: for his wofull and vnhappy end manifeſted ſufficientlie what

How Cyrus is ſaid to be loued and called of God: See Chap.45.3.

Cyrus had a miſerable end.

what he was. The Prophets meaning is then, that God will be fauorable to *Cyrus* in *proſpering* him outwardly: not to adopt, nor to ſhew him that fauor which he only communicates to his choſen. The cauſe muſt be conſidered then for which he giues him theſe titles, to wit, that he will vſe his miniſtrie for the deliuerãce of his Church, as we haue ſaid before.

Verſ. 16. *Come neere vnto me: heare you this: I haue not ſpoken it in ſecret from the beginning: from the time that the thing was,* I was there, and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath ſent me.*

* Or, done.

God rebukes the people for their ingratitude.

HE directs his ſpeech againe to the Iewes, and in commanding them to *draw neere*, he meetes them halfe way (as it were) gently to receiue them, and yet he couertlie taxeth their reuolt, ſhewing, that they were vnfit to entertaine wholeſome doctrine, vnleſſe they departed from their errors. Surely it was a deteſtable fault in them to be ſo farre ſeparated from God, with whom they ought to haue bin ſo neerely conioined: but their ſeparation cõſiſted not ſo much in diſtance of place, as in the want of conſent in affections: our *approching* then conſiſts in a readines to *heare*, hauing ſubdued our owne carnall reaſon. But this is a worke of his owne grace; for who will be readie to direct his heart vnto God, if himſelfe draw him not?

John 6.

I haue not ſpoken in ſecret.] The expoſitors expound this place diuerſlie. Some applie it to Ieſus Chriſt, whereas *Iſaiah* had no ſuch meaning: and it ſtands vs in hand to auoid all wreſted and conſtreined interpretations. Others referre it to the Prophet himſelfe: but this ſuites as badly as the former, for this ſpeech can agree to no man. I thinke then that *Iſaiah* brings in God ſpeaking, and blaming of the people touching their ingratitude, in that from the *beginning*, that is to ſay, ſince the day he began firſt to manifeſt himſelfe to their fathers, he hath not *ſpoken in ſecret*, nor obſcurely. Whence it followes, that the ignorance which is in them muſt needs be imputed to their owne malice, in regard they did wittinglie ſhut their eies againſt the cleare light.

Wreſted expoſitions are to be auoided.

When he ſaith *from the time, &c.* It ſignifies, that he performed that by his power which he had ſpoken with his mouth. Hee rightlie affirmes then that he gaue ſignes of his preſence, when in performing all things, he not only ratified the propheſies by the effects, but alſo to teach, ỹ thoſe things which men imagin to fall out by chance, were gouerned and directed by Gods ſpeciall prouidence. In a word, he puts them in minde of Gods ancient promiſes, and of the accompliſhment of them, to ſhew, that God will be alwaies like himſelfe. Thoſe which ſay that *Iſaiah* ſhall be *preſent* in ſpirit when the Lord ſhall bring againe his Zion, offer violence to the Prophets words, and are euery way farre wide from his intention.

And now the Lord and his ſpirit, &c.] Heere *Iſaiah* ſpeakes of himſelfe indeed, and applies this ſentence to the former doctrine, proteſting therein that God who ſpake *from the beginning*, ſpeakes alſo *by him*, ſo as they were to giue no leſſe credit to that which he now pronounced by the mouth of his ſeruant, then if himſelfe were there preſent in his owne perſon. Hence we may gather a profitable doctrine, to wit, that we are carefullie to thinke vpon all the miracles which the Lord hath done, to confirme our hearts in his truth. For it is no ſmall confirmation of our faith that the Lord hath had a remnant from the *beginning*, to whom he hath *manifeſted himſelfe*, inſtructing them, and making them aſſured promiſes, which he hath fulfilled, ſo as there neuer failed nor fell to the ground the leaſt iot of that which he hath ſpoken. For what hath he pronounced with his mouth that he hath not fulfilled with his hand in due and conuenient ſeaſon? As oft then as wee be ſurprized with doubtings, wee muſt haue our recourſe to theſe and the like examples, and thence conclude thus with our ſelues, God hath of old bin wont to keepe touch with his ſeruants: it is not ſince yeſterday that he hath *begun to ſpeake*: neither did he euer hold his people in ſuſpence by ambiguous or doubtful ſpeeches, but hath alwaies ſpoken perſpicuouſlie and plainely. Thus the Prophet ſhewes he vtters nothing from his owne braine, but was *ſent of God*, who hath ſhewed himſelfe iuſt in all his ſayings.

How wee ought to make our benefit of former miracles.

He mentions the *Spirit*, not to note out a thing diuers from God, ſeeing he is of one eſſence with him. For in one eſſence of God we acknowledge three perſons: but he names the *Spirit*, becauſe he is the only teacher and conductor of all the Prophets. S. *Paul* ſaith, That none can ſay Ieſus is the Lord, but by *the holy Ghoſt*: and by and by after he ſaith, that the gifts of God are diuers, and yet it is *one and the ſame ſpirit*, which works all things in all, 1. Cor. 12. 3. 4. In this place alſo we haue a manifeſt proofe of the diuinitie of the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe he *ſends the Prophets*, which appertaines to none but God, euen as Ambaſſadors are ſent by the only authoritie of the Prince. *Seeing the holy Ghoſt ſends the Prophets then, and directs and giues them power and efficacie, he muſt needs be God.* Beſides, hence we gather, that we are to abandon all ſuch as haue not this direction of Gods ſpirit, notwithſtanding they crake, they be ſent of God: I meane this troupe of popiſh wolues, who glorie in the titles of Paſtors, and Teachers, and impudentlie brag of their ſending, ſeeing they are whollie deſtitute not only of the holy ſpirit, but of his doctrine. For in vaine doe they boaſt that they are inſtituted and ſent of God, when they are vtterlie vnfurniſhed of thoſe gifts and graces of the *holy ghoſt* which are fit for the execution of ſuch a charge. Moreouer, it is too great a ſaucines in them to pretend the illumination of the ſpirit of Chriſt, ſeeing themſelues are whollie void of faith, and knows not a B frõ a battledore in the doctrine of ſaluation. There are horned Biſhops which ſit in the chaire, and God wot the moſt part of them as ignorant as beaſts: nay, there is not tenne of them a-

The holy Ghoſt of one eſſence with the Father.

Three diſtinct perſons in one eſſence.

A manifeſt proofe of the diuinitie of the holy Ghoſt.

Popiſh wolues will needs deck themſelues with the titles of paſtors and teachers.

Few of the horned Biſhops in the Papacie that know the firſt rudimẽts of religion.

among three hundred who haue so much as tasted the first rudiments of pietie, *Is any thing more absurd, then to say that such an assemblie is gouerned by the holy Ghost?*

Vers. 17. *Thus saith the Lord thy redeemer the holy one of Israel, I am the Lord thy God* * *which teach thee to profit, and leade thee by the way which thou shouldst goe.*

* Or, teaching thee profitable things, leading thee, &c.

This and the foure verses following, depend one vpō another.

I Ioine this verse with the foure verses ensuing, because they tend all to one end, in which God promiseth deliuerance to his people, yet in such wise, that he first shewes how they were brought into bondage by their owne fault, and that to the end they should not murmure in obiecting that it had bin better for them to remaine in the countrie, if the Lord meant to help them then to be brought back after they were led away. For a Physition deserues not praise so much for curing a disease, as for hindring and preuenting it. The Prophet preuents them, and saith, that this hapned through the peoples fault, for they might haue escaped this iudgement if they had but diligentlie attēded vnto Gods commandements, but they would not, therefore such an obstinacie well deserued such a punishment: for it was not the Lords fault that the affaires of the people succeeded ill, but they had reiected his fauor which was tendred vnto them, and yet he saith, the Lord will ouercome this rebellion by his great goodnes, because he is not minded his people should perish, though for a time he afflicts them.

Teaching thee profitable things.] By this he meanes, that *Gods doctrine* is such, that it is able to preserue his people in good state if they would constantlie follow the *rules* therein prescribed. Now the Lord takes paines *to teach vs*, not to procure his owne good, but ours. For what good are we able to do him? By his holy doctrine then he prouides for euery one of our saluations, that being rightly instructed by it, wee might reape the fruit thereof, which is, an *happie* and blessed life. But when by our vnthankfulnes we reiect the benefit freely offred, what remaines but that we should worthily perish? *Isaiah* then had iust cause to reproch the Iewes, that if they had not wittingly depriued themselues of the fruit of this doctrine, they should haue bin ignorant of nothing that tended to their *profit* and saluation.

Now if it bee affirmed touching the Law, that by it God *taught* his people *profitable things*: how much more may it be said of the Gospell, by which whatsoeuer is profitable and necessary, is fully reuealed vnto vs? And here also we see how execrable ỹ blasphemies of the Papists are, who auer, that the reading of the Scripture is dangerous and hurtfull, that they may dissuade the laitie (as they call them) from medling therewith. What? Dare they indeed giue the lie to God, who by the mouth of his holy Prophet pronounceth that they are *profitable*? See 2. Tim. 3. 16.

Papists giue God the lie.

Whether is it better we should beleeue God or them? Let them disgorge their blasphemies then as long as they will with an whorish forehead, yet ought not we to refraine the studie of them: for wee shall perceiue that *Isaiah* hath spoken the truth, if wee reade the holy Scriptures with feare and reuerence.

Guiding thy way.] These wordes shew yet more cleerly, the *profitablenesse* before mentioned. For the Prophets meaning is, that the way of saluation is set open to vs, if we *hearc* God speaking; because he is readie to leade vs through the whole course of our life, if we will submit our selues to his lore. And thus *Moses* protests that hee set before the people life and death: Deut 30. 19. Also, This is the way, walke in it. For the rule of a godly life is contained in the Law, the which cannot deceiue. I command thee this day, saith *Moses*, that thou loue the Lord thy God, that thou walke in his waies, and that thou keepe his commandements, ordinances, & iudgements, that thou maiest liue, that the Lord may blesse thee in the land whither thou goest to possesse it: Deut. 30. 16. The summe is, that such as are teachable, shall neuer bee destitute of light, vnderstanding, nor counsell.

Vers. 18. *Oh that thou haddest hearkened to my commandements! Then had thy* * *prosperitie been as the flood, and thy righteousnesse as the waues of the sea.*

* Or, peace.

IN regard the people might haue complained of their being led captiue, the Prophet to preuent such grudgings, shewes the cause why it came to passe; namely, because they reiected the doctrine of saluation, without reaping any benefit by it. No doubt but he had respect to *Moses* his song, where there are almost the same words repeated. Oh that they were wise, then they would consider their latter end! Deut. 31. 29. The particle *Lu* heere, signifies a wish, Oh that, or, Would to God. But the Lord not onely complaines that the Iewes lightly esteemed the good and *profitable* things offerd them: but he also bewailes their miserie, as a father doth that of his children. For he takes no pleasure in afflicting vs, neither would he shew himselfe seuere, but that wee constraine him thereto by our frowardnesse. God then is heere *moued vvith compassion* in beholding their ruin, who had rather wittingly perish, then to be saued: for he was readie to haue dealt all sorts of blessings liberally amongst them, if they by their owne rebellion, had not repelled and put him backe.

A preuentiō.

God takes no pleasure in our afflictions.

Now it were preposterous to enter into Gods secret counsell, and to inquire wherefore himselfe made not the externall word effectuall vpon them, by the worke of his holie Spirit. For the question is not heere of his power; but mans rebellion is heere onely reproued, that they may be left without excuse. Truely as oft as God calles vs to himselfe by his word, there is a full and absolute felicitie

Who art thou that disputest with God?

felicitie offered vs, which wee obſtinatelie reſiſt.

Wee haue told you before that the word *peace*, ſignifies all happy euents. It is then as if he had ſaid; Thou haddeſt had abundance of all good things, and ſhouldeſt neuer neede to haue feared any change, in regard the bleſſing of God vpon his ſeruants is a fountaine that can neuer bee drawne drie. As touching the word *inſtice*, ioined vnto peace, wee may take it for that which wee commonly call *thy right*. But I had rather vnderſtand it of a Commonwealth well gouerned, where all things are ruled orderly and well: as if hee ſhould ſay; All things had proſpered and had gone well with thee, and thou hadſt had a floriſhing State.

Tondroit.

Hee worthily ioines ſuch an eſtate with *peace*: for if good gouernement bee ouerthrowne, all goes out of frame; for it is not poſſible to inioy a right *peace*, where *inſtice* is wanting: that is to ſay, vnleſſe matters of ſtate be managed with equitie and vprightneſſe. If we loue peace then, let vs forthwith be inſtant with the Lord to obtaine this happie eſtate, which is bleſſed of him. Some deſcant heere vpon ſpirituall iuſtice, and vpon remiſſion of ſinnes: but they miſſe the marke, and ſtray quite from our Prophets meaning, who ſpeakes plainly and ſimply.

Not poſſible to inioy a comfortable peace where iuſtice is wanting.

Verſ. 19. *Thy ſeede alſo had been as the ſand, and* the fruit of thy bodie like the grauell thereof: his name ſhould not haue been cut off nor * deſtroied before me.*

*Or, the children.

*Or, aboliſhed.

THis alſo appertaines to an happy eſtate, namely, when poſteritie is increaſed: for by their helpe, the aged are comforted and refreſhed in their labours, and the aduerſaries repulſed. The Pſalmiſt, you know, compares ſuch *children* to arrowes ſhot from the hand of a mighty man, and pronounceth him bleſſed that hath his quiuer full of them: Pſal. 127.5. that is to ſay; who hath many ſuch children. In mentioning of *ſand*, it ſeemes he had reſpect to the promiſe made to *Abraham*; I will multiply thy ſeede as the ſtarres of the heauen, and as the *ſand* by the ſea ſhore: Gen. 22.17. Afterwards he repeates the ſame thing in diuers words, according to the cuſtome of the Hebrewes, calling *children* and *grauell*, that which he had called *ſeede* and *ſand*. In a word, hee ſhewes that the people hindered God, from cauſing them to feele and taſte the fruit of his promiſe.

Afterwards, comming to *the interruption* of this grace, hee plainly reprocheth them; namely, that themſelues had ſought their owne ruine and deſtruction; whereas God had multiplied them wonderfully by his power. For by the word *name*, hee vnderſtands the lawful eſtate of the people, which had alwaies floriſhed, if the courſe of Gods bleſſing had not been ſtopped.

And whereas he ſaith the people were *aboliſhed*, this muſt bee vnderſtood in reſpect of the land of Canaan, out of which Gods people being vomited, Leuit. 18.25.28. they ſeemed to bee baniſhed the houſe of their father. For the Temple whereof the Iewes were depriued, was a ſacrament vnto them of Gods preſence, and the land it ſelfe was a pledge vnto them of their heauenly inheritance. Being exiled thence then, they were in a maner excommunicated, and caſt out of Gods preſence, and had had no teſtimonies of his ſuccour left them, had not theſe promiſes relieued their miſeries. Now it is for vs to conſider well of this their miſerie: for being baniſhed farre from their Country, they had neither Temple, ſacrifices, nor aſſemblies. Now thoſe amongſt whom at this day there is no forme of a Church, vſe of Sacraments, nor preaching of the word, they ought to thinke that God hath in a manner caſt them out of his preſence. Let them learne then to call and cry inſtantlie with ardent praiers, that God would plant his Church in their coaſts.

Canaan a pledge to the Iews of their eternall inheritance.

Verſ. 20. *Goe yee out of Babel; flee yee from the Chaldeans with the voice of ioy: tell and declare this; ſhew it forth to the ends of the earth: ſay yee; The Lord hath redeemed his ſeruant Iakob.*

THis is the ſecond part of this complaint, by which the Lord proteſts that hee will deliuer his people, how vnworthy or ingratefull ſoeuer they be. For hauing told the Iewes that hee hath performed the office of a good teacher towards them, and that they would not lend their eares; ſo as by their owne default they were ſent into captiuitie: now in ſetting before them his inuincible patience, he addes, that he will not ceaſe to aſſiſt them, till hee hath drawne them out of their bondage. Hee commands them then to *goe out of Babylon* where they were captiues. Whence we gather, that how iuſt cauſe ſoeuer God hath to complaine of vs, yet by his ineſtimable goodneſſe, he is ready to ſuſtaine our miſeries, and to aid thoſe that are vnworthy; yea ſuch as haue frowardly reſiſted his grace.

Iſaiah ſpeaks of a thing to come, as if it were already come to paſſe.

That which is added touching the *voice of ioy*, ſerues to confirme this deliuerance: for hee meant to adde this confirmation to that promiſe, which was vtterly incredible. That he might remooue all doubtings then, hee highly commends this benefit.

Declare.] He expreſſeth the greatnes of that confidence which hee meant to erect in the hearts of the Iewes: for we are wont to publiſh that plainly and openly, whereof we haue good experience and aſſurance: but if wee doubt, we dare ſcarſe open our mouthes, but remaine mute and dumbe. Now *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of a thing to come with that reſolution, as if it were alreadie come to paſſe, that the people might in their hearts conceiue the more ſure and certaine confidence: and therefore hee vſeth this *commandement*, which hath much more efficacie in it, and moued their mindes more then if hee had told it them in bare termes.

The vſe the Iewes were to make of this commandement.

Verſ. 21. *And they weare not thir-*

turne, it was fit they ſhould be humbled to acknowledge that their deliuerance proceeded whollie from the meere grace and good will of God. And thus we ſee that the former reprehenſion tended to teach them, that it was the Lords hand that drew them out of Babylon as out of a graue, not for their deſerts, for they were well worthie to haue bin vtterlie deſtroyed.

Vſe to vs.

In that God ſpares vs then at this day, and mittigates his corrections; in that he remits our offences, and hath any reſpect at all vnto vs, theſe things whollie proceed from his free grace. Why ſo? Becauſe we ſhould learne to attribute none of theſe benefits to the merits or ſatisfactions of men. Here then the diſtinction of ỹ Sophiſters falles to the ground (as wee haue ſhewed in other places) touching the remitting of the puniſhment, which they affirme not to be free, becauſe we muſt make ſatisfaction for the ſame vnto God. But our Prophet teacheth, that God freely remits it, and that only for his *owne names ſake*. For he ſpeakes here of the puniſhment which he might iuſtly inflict vpon the Iewes. He had very good cauſe then to haue cõſumed them, if he had not reſpected the *maintenance of his owne glorie*.

Diſtinction of the Sophiſters.

Verſ. 10. *Behold, I haue fined thee but not as ſiluer: I haue choſen thee in the furnace of affliction.*

God ſo corrects his Church, that in the meane while he thereby procures her ſaluation.

THe Lord ſhewes, that he vſed ſuch meaſure in correcting his Church, that therewithall he prouided for their ſaluation. In the former verſe he ſaid that he *ſpared, or would ſpare them*, becauſe he reſpected his *glorie*: now he ſhewes that he hath *chaſtiſed* them in deed, yet ſo, that he did it for their good; for he corrected them, to *fine* them, but we are not wont to trie and fine that which we mind to caſt away: ſeeing then he had none other end, it followes that he did it to procure their benefit and ſaluation thereby. Beſides, he mentions this *triall* by way of preuention, leſt any ſhould obiect, that Gods loue little appeared in ſo ſharp afflictiõs. The Prophet, I ſay, doth in fit ſeaſon preuent ſuch a conceit, & tels them, that God hath skill enough to correct his Church in mercie, and yet not vtterly to forſake her.

Simile.

Correction would rather cõſume then refine vs, if God ſhould not moderate and ſanctifie them to vs.

Moreouer, he addes that he hath *not* fined vs as *ſiluer*, for then we ſhould haue bin vtterly conſumed. There is ſome puritie to be found in *ſiluer*, but in vs there is nothing but droſſe: and were it not that the Lord made vs *ſiluer*, we ſhould be burnt to aſhes, yea to nothing, euen as tow or flax. Corrections would draw from vs no puritie at all. The Lord in trying of vs then hath reſpect to our abilitie, leſt he ſhould paſſe meaſure, as Pſal. 103. 13. 14. then he makes our chaſtiſements profitable vnto vs by the worke of his owne ſpirit, which would otherwiſe proue mortall and deadly vnto vs.

To chuſe, is taken here to diſcerne: for we ordinarily make choice of that which we deſire to keepe, as wee haue ſaid Chap. 7. 15. where it is ſaid, that Chriſt ſhould eate butter and hony, till he had knowledge to *chuſe* the good, and refuſe the euill. He ſhewes then by this word what difference there is betweene the ſtripes wherewith the faithfull are ſmitten, and thoſe which the wicked are to ſuſtaine, wherewith in deed they ſhall be ouerwhelmed. But howſoeuer the Lord tries and ſmites vs, yet are we acceptable in his ſight, and he reſerues ſtill a fatherly affection towards vs, euen in the middeſt of our afflictions, and in the end he brings vs forth *bright as ſiluer*, and ſo makes our ſuffrings to become a ſacrifice of a ſweet ſmelling ſauor in his noſtrils. To conclude, his meaning is, that God ceaſeth not euen then to be good to his Church, whileſt he ſeemes to conſume her to nothing.

A Conſolation. *Pſal.* 34. 20. *Hab.* 3. 2. *Exod.* 3. 2.

Verſ. 11. *For mine owne ſake, for mine owne ſake will I do it: for how ſhould* my name *be polluted? ſurely I will not giue my glorie vnto another.*

A repetition of that he ſaid verſ. 9. with an interrogation added.

HE repeates that which he ſaid before, but he addes an interrogation, which the Hebrues are wont to vſe when they ſpeake of abſurdities, as heere, Can it be that my name ſhould be prophaned? The ſecond member, *I will not giue my glorie &c.* ſerues for an expoſition of this interrogation. *Iſaiah* then amplifies that which he ſpake before in few words, and flies an higher pitch in his ſtile; for it is not only a bare amplification of the former ſentence, but rather a beautifying and adorning of it for ỹ greater *confirmation* thereof. Now by theſe words he meanes that men as much as in them is, doe *profane Gods name*, and giue away his *glorie* vnto creatures; only the Lord in his admirable prouidence ſtops the courſe of this miſchiefe, and keepes his glorie vnblemiſhed. Although we by our fault then doe expoſe this glorie of God to contempt, yet will he preſerue it as long as he ſhall continue our protector. Hence we gather a very ſweet conſolation, to wit, that the Lord ioines his owne *glorie* with our *ſaluation*, as we haue often ſhewed you before.

I will not giue.] That is to ſay, I will not indure that any ſhould rob me of my glorie: but this had fallen out if the people had bin vtterly conſumed, then would they haue ſcorned the God of Iſrael; for the wicked were wont in the afflictions of the Saints to diſgorge theſe blaſphemies, *Where is now their God?* Pſal. 79. 10. Pſal. 42. 3. *Moſes* alſo alledgeth, that the Lord withheld his hand from deſtroying the people for the ſame cauſe: *I feare, ſaith the Lord, the furie of their aduerſaries, leſt they ſhould vaux proude, and leſt they ſhould ſay, our hie hand, and not the Lord hath done all this*, Deut. 32. 27. And queſtionleſſe, as oft as the Lord terrifies the faithfull, by manifeſting vnto them the ſignes of his heauie diſpleaſure, the only remedie then left vs is this, that he will yet remember his owne couenant of grace made with vs in Chriſt, leſt he ſhould proſtitute his holy name to the outrages and blaſphemies of the wicked. Neither did the Prophet only ſtirre them vp hereby to giue thanks

thanks to God, and to confeſſe that their proſperitie proceeded from his free mercie; but he did likewiſe put a forme of praier into their mouthes, and a ſhield of defence vpon the armes of the faithfull, wherewith they might repulſe all the fierie darts of the diuell.

Verſ. 12. *Heare mee, O Iakob, and Iſrael my called. I am, I am the firſt, and* *I am the laſt.

*Or, yet.

Chap 41. 4. & 44. 6. God changeth not, and therefore we are not conſumed as it is in Mal. 3. 6.

WE haue told you heeretofore why the Lord ſpeakes of his eternitie; namely, to teach vs that he is alwaies like himſelfe, and that wee ſhould not meaſure his power by the narrow ſcantling of our owne ell. He heere calles for *audience*, becauſe the onelie thing that deceiues vs, and makes vs wander after ſo many falſe opinions is, that wee haue *no eares* to *heare*. Where he ſaith Iſrael is his *called*: he oppoſeth it ſecretly againſt that reprobation, whereof hee ſpake in the beginning of the Chapter. For hee there ſhewed that the Iewes wrongfully vſurped this title, and falſly gloried therein; becauſe they ſhewed not themſelues to bee true Iſraelites in deed. But heere he declares that Iſrael is his owne *called*: as if a father in rebuking his ſonne, ſhould in anger call him *baſtard*; and yet being appeaſed, ſhould afterward terme him his *ſonne*. Thus the Lord ſhewes that the Iewes were growne ſo degenerate, that hee had iuſt cauſe to reiect them: and yet albeit their vnworthineſſe of that great honour he ſhewed them, he ſtill reſpects his owne *calling* of them, which they could not aboliſh nor make vnfruitfull by their malice or vnthankfulneſſe.

Simile

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The particle *yet* in this place, ſignifies a continuance: for the Prophet meanes nothing elſe but that God is alwaies like himſelfe: that is to ſay, he repents not, nor changeth not his mind, as men are wont to doe: and therefore he ſaith, that he is the *firſt* and the *laſt*. Now we haue alſo in theſe words to note, that *Iſaiah* ſpeakes not heere of God his eternall eſſence, but applies this doctrine to our vſe: ſignifying that he will be ſuch a one to vs, as he hath euer been in times paſt: as alſo that wee ſhould remember to ſeparate him from Idols; leſt our mindes being diſtracted by new inuentions, ſhould erre from his true feare.

Verſ. 13. *Surely mine hand hath laid the foundations of the earth, and my right hand hath ſpanned the heauens: when I ſhall call them, they ſtand vp together.*

As God is vnchangeable, ſo is he almightie.

THe Prophet ſhewes heere more plainly, what his meaning was in the former verſ. For hauing ſaid that God is alwaies one, and neither changeth his affection nor will towards vs, hee now magnifies and extolles his power, in regard of his viſible workes which wee daily behold. And thus the Lord comming forth of his Sanctuarie, doth after a ſort manifeſt himſelfe familiarly vnto vs in them.

Whether wee turne the wordes, my right hand hath *meaſured*, or, hath *ſuſtained*; the ſenſe will be alwaies alike: neither is it needfull that we ſhould ſtand much about the interpretation of the word *Tpaq*. For the word To meaſure, notes out the admirable wiſdome of God, in that hee hath ſo aptly proportioned all the parts of this faire *curtaine* of the heauens, that it ſhould neither bee higher nor lower from the earth then it is: but that they conſtantly keep the order preſcribed them of God: ſo as in this round and ample vaſtneſſe, wee can behold nothing deformed or miſplaced. If any had rather retaine the word *To vphold*, it is alſo a commendation of Gods ſingular wiſdome and power, who beares vp this infinit weight, and great maſſe of the heauens in their continuall motion, and yet keepes it from tottering or reeling from one ſide to another.

Note.

But the laſt member where hee ſaith, that all things *ſtand vp together* when he *cals* them; hath ſome more difficultie in it. For it is either to be referred to the firſt creation of the world, or to the perpetuall gouernement thereof. If we refer it to the firſt creation, the preſent tence of the verb To appeare, ſhould be taken for the future tence, thus; As ſoone as the Lord commanded them to appeare, they forthwith obeied, according to that in the 33. Pſalme, verſ. 9. *He ſpake the word, and it was done*. But if wee accept of this expoſition, the word *together*, which is added, ſeemes not to ſute well with the hiſtorie of the creation mentioned by *Moſes*. For the heauens and the earth were not created and adorned in an inſtant: Gen. 1. 2. Things were firſt intermingled and confuſed: then the Lord ſeparated them and placed them in order. But the ſolution is eaſie; for the Prophets meaning is nothing but this, that the Lord created all things by his onely will, and ſo formed heauen and earth, that they forthwith obeied his commandement.

1

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Obiect.

Anſ.

And yet for mine owne part, I willingly extend this ſentence to the perpetuall gouernment of the world. As if he ſhould ſay; Heauen and earth obeied Gods voice, and yeelded to his abſolute power: ſo as theſe creatures ſo farre remote one from another, willingly conſented and agreed together, with an incredible harmonie; neither more nor leſſe then if they were turned about with one wheele. And howſoeuer the ſpace bee wondrous great betweene earth and heauen aboue, yet the Lords voice was diſtinctly heard in euery part of them. There was no need of meſſengers then to teach or publiſh his will, but himſelfe in an inſtant executes the ſame at his pleaſure. Shall a man finde any Prince that *can haue all his ſeruants by and by about him as his call?* No, Gods power then is infinit, it is diſperſed far and neere, and extends it ſelfe to all parts of the world, as the Scriptures doe manifeſt, and faith by experience makes vs feele.

Simile.

Simile.

Pſa. 147. 1, 2.

Verſ. 14. *All you aſſemble your ſelues and heare: which among thē hath declared theſe things? The Lord hath loued him, he will doe his will in Babell, and his *arme ſhall be againſt the Chaldeans.*

*Or, his worke.

God permits the Iewes to bring in their allegations.

NO doubt but the Lord directs his ſpeech to the Iewes, though hee vtters nothing heere which ought not to be knowne of all. But becauſe the heathen & prophane people had no eares, therefore hee ſummons not them to heare. Wee know that the Iewes had this priuiledge aboue other nations, that God manifeſted himſelfe to them: as it is ſaid in the Pſalme; God is knowne in Iudah, his name is great in Iſrael: Pſal.76.1. and 147. 19, 20. And thus their ſenſleſneſſe was the leſſe excuſable, in that they reiected their owne happineſſe. For whence ſprang this lightneſſe and inclination to apoſtaſie, but from the little or no regard they had of this ineſtimable treaſure of the heauenly doctrine? They well deſerued then to bee thus ſharpely chidden, and that he ſhould thus cloſely tax them for their malicious and manifeſt conſpiracies to darken the grace of God.

Now it ſeemes the Lord permits the Iewes to bring in their allegations which they had, as thoſe who truſting to the goodnes of their cauſe, dare thus defie their aduerſe partie: Bring in thy reaſons, and if thou haſt anie metall in thee, ſhew it. The Lord then prouokes them firſt, and bids them tell if they can, whether the gods of the Gentiles haue foretold any ſuch things or no. And this may alſo be applied to the Soothſaiers and Prognoſticators, who attributed to themſelues the knowledge of things to come, which they could not foreſee at all. And in the ſame ſenſe he repeates that which followes in the verſe inſuing: I, *euen* I haue ſpoken it. The ſumme comes to this then, that the Iewes wauer, yea and fall; becauſe they haue not well informed themſelues how ſingular a grace of God it is, to learne from his ſacred mouth, whatſoeuer is needfull to ſaluation. In the latter part of the verſe, hee recites one particular; namely, God had foretold the end of their captiuity in Babylon. True it is that he names

Cyrus.

not Cyrus as the diſpenſer of this benefite: but in ſpeaking of ſome certaine perſonage well knowne, he ſaith, God hath choſen him to ſurpriſe Babel by force.

The word *To loue*, is not taken heere ſimply, but for ſome ſpeciall reſpect: and therefore he reſtraines it to the happy iſſue of his voyage. And ſo we may ſay that *Saul* was *beloued of God* for ſome priuate end; namelie, that hee might raigne for a time, and might haue the gift of prophecie: 1.Sam.10.10. But there is an higher matter to bee conſidered of touching the faithfull, whom God loues with an euerlaſting loue: for hee will neuer ſuffer them to be ſeparated from him. The Prophet then meant to ſay, that *Cyrus* ſhall vanquiſh Babylon, becauſe he ſhall vndertake that buſineſſe vnder Gods authoritie & leading; not of his owne motion, but after ſuch a manner, as God thruſts forward the blind and ignorant, whither him liſteth: or as hee vſeth ſometimes to ſerue his turne of men againſt their wils. For *Cyrus* is not praiſed for his *voluntary obedience*, but it is rather indeed an extolling of Gods ſingular prouidence, by which hee diſpoſeth of all ſorts of men to performe his will, and to execute his decrees.

Example.

John 13.1. *Ier.*31.3.

By *arme*, (vnder a figure familiar amongſt the Prophets) we may vnderſtand his *worke*. And thus the ſpeech will runne better; *Hee ſhall execute his will againſt Babylon, and his worke againſt the Chaldeans.* And wee know that the Prophets are wont to ioine Gods counſell and worke together. Now he priuilie taxeth the Iewes for their ingratitude, in that they would not beleeue Gods promiſes, though hee pointed out the thing before them with his finger, and ſpake far otherwiſe then did the Chaplaines of the falſe gods. To conclude, hee meant to informe the Iewes, that the ſurprizing of Babel by the hand of *Cyrus*, ſhall bee *a worke* of the Lord, vnder whoſe direction all things ſhall bee ſo carried, that the Church in the end ſhall be deliuered.

Verſ. 15. *I*, euen *I haue ſpoken it, and I haue called him: I haue brought him, and his way ſhall proſper.*

HEe brings the Iewes againe to the prophecies, and attributes this honour vnto God, that hauing in fit time reuealed the thing, hee takes away all doubtings. Afterwards hee addes, that whatſoeuer was foretold, ſhall be confirmed. And thus there is a double force in the doubling of theſe words, I, *euen* I. As if he ſhould ſay; It is none but the God of Iſrael that hath ſpoken theſe things which are hidden, and to come: ſecondly, he being true, and one that neuer deceiues, he will vndoubtedly accompliſh whatſoeuer he hath promiſed. *Iſaiah* then propounds two ends here vnto himſelfe: Firſt, that the poore captiues ſhould wait for their deliuerance: ſecondly, being deliuered, that they ſhould acknowledge God to be the author of ſo excellent a benefit, and not to aſcribe it either to the arme of fleſh, or to haphazard. Now he ſhewes that *Cyrus* his good ſucceſſe in his enterpriſes, ſhall proceede from Gods *calling of him*. Not that he was worthy of ſo great a fauour, neither that he obtained it by his own induſtry and power; but in regard that the Lord vſed him as his *ſeruant* to deliuer his people. For where he called him his *beloued* in the former verſe, and heere ſaith that he hath *called* and *brought him*, I told you erewhile that it is not to bee referred to that loue of God, whereby he adopts vs for his children, *by calling* vs to himſelfe. *Cyrus* was neither *loued* nor *called* in this kind: for howſoeuer he were indued with excellent vertues, yet was he tainted with very odious crimes, as ambition, deſire of ſwaying Kingdomes, couetouſneſſe, crueltie, and many other vices: for his wofull and vnhappy end manifeſted ſufficientlie what

How Cyrus is ſaid to be loued and called of God: See Chap.45.3.

Cyrus had a miſerable end.

what he was. The Prophets meaning is then, that God will be fauorable to *Cyrus* in *proſpering* him outwardly: not to adopt, nor to ſhew him that fauor which he only communicates to his choſen. The cauſe muſt be conſidered then for which he giues him theſe titles, to wit, that he will vſe his miniſtrie for the deliuerãce of his Church, as we haue ſaid before.

Verſ. 16. *Come neere vnto me: heare you this: I haue not ſpoken it in ſecret from the beginning: from the time that the thing was,* * *I was there, and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath ſent me.*

* Or, done.

God rebukes the people for their ingratitude.

HE directs his ſpeech againe to the Iewes, and in commanding them to *draw neere*, he meetes them halfe way (as it were) gently to receiue them, and yet he couertlie taxeth their reuolt, ſhewing, that they were vnfit to entertaine wholeſome doctrine, vnleſſe they departed from their errors. Surely it was a deteſtable fault in them to be ſo farre ſeparated from God, with whom they ought to haue bin ſo neerely conioined: but their ſeparation cõſiſted not ſo much in diſtance of place, as in the want of conſent in affections: our *approching* then conſiſts in a readines to *heare*, hauing ſubdued our owne carnall reaſon. But this is a worke of his owne grace; for who will be readie to direct his heart vnto God, if himſelfe draw him not?

John 6.

I haue not ſpoken in ſecret.] The expoſitors expound this place diuerſlie. Some applie it to Ieſus Chriſt, whereas *Iſaiah* had no ſuch meaning: and it ſtands vs in hand to auoid all wreſted and conſtrained interpretations. Others referre it to the Prophet himſelfe: but this ſuites as badly as the former, for this ſpeech can agree to no man. I thinke then that *Iſaiah* brings in God ſpeaking, and blaming of the people touching their ingratitude, in that from the *beginning*, that is to ſay, ſince the day he began firſt to manifeſt himſelfe to their fathers, he hath not *ſpoken in ſecret*, nor obſcurely. Whence it followes, that the ignorance which is in them muſt needs be imputed to their owne malice, in regard they did wittinglie ſhut their eies againſt the cleare light.

Wreſted expoſitions are to be auoided.

1 2 When he ſaith *from the time, &c.* It ſignifies, that he performed that by his power which he had ſpoken with his mouth. Hee rightlie affirmes then that he gaue ſignes of his preſence, when in performing all things, he not only ratified the propheſies by the effects, but alſo to teach, ỹ thoſe things which men imagin to fall out by chance, were gouerned and directed by Gods ſpeciall prouidence. In a word, he puts them in minde of Gods ancient promiſes, and of the accompliſhment of them, to ſhew, that God will be alwaies like himſelfe. Thoſe which ſay that *Iſaiah* ſhall be *preſent* in ſpirit when the Lord ſhall bring againe his Zion, offer violence to the Prophets words, and are euery way farre wide from his intention.

And now the Lord and his ſpirit, &c.] Heere *Iſaiah* ſpeakes of himſelfe indeed, and applies this ſentence to the former doctrine, proteſting therein that God who ſpake *from the beginning*, ſpeakes alſo *by him*, ſo as they were to giue no leſſe credit to that which he now pronounced by the mouth of his ſeruant, then if himſelfe were there preſent in his owne perſon. Hence we may gather a profitable doctrine, to wit, that we are carefullie to thinke vpon all the miracles which the Lord hath done, to confirme our hearts in his truth. For it is no ſmall confirmation of our faith that the Lord hath had a remnant from the *beginning*, to whom he hath *manifeſted himſelfe*, inſtructing them, and making them aſſured promiſes, which he hath fulfilled, ſo as there neuer failed nor fell to the ground the leaſt iot of that which he hath ſpoken. For what hath he pronounced with his mouth that he hath not fulfilled with his hand in due and conuenient ſeaſon? As oft then as wee be ſurprized with doubtings, wee muſt haue our recourſe to theſe and the like examples, and thence conclude thus with our ſelues, God hath of old bin wont to keepe touch with his ſeruants: it is not ſince yeſterday that he hath *begun to ſpeak*: neither did he euer hold his people in ſuſpence by ambiguous or doubtful ſpeeches, but hath alwaies ſpoken perſpicuouſlie and plainely. Thus the Prophet ſhewes he vtters nothing from his owne braine, but was *ſent of God*, who hath ſhewed himſelfe iuſt in all his ſayings.

How wee ought to make our benefit of former miracles.

He mentions the *Spirit*, not to note out a thing diuers from God, ſeeing he is of one eſſence with him. For in one eſſence of God we acknowledge three perſons: but he names the *Spirit*, becauſe he is the only teacher and conductor of all the Prophets. S. *Paul* ſaith, That none can ſay Ieſus is the Lord, but by *the holy Ghoſt*: and by and by after he ſaith, that the gifts of God are diuers, and yet it is *one and the ſame ſpirit*, which works all things in all, 1. Cor. 12. 3. 4. In this place alſo we haue a manifeſt proofe of the diuinitie of the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe he *ſends the Prophets*, which appertaines to none but God, euen as Ambaſſadors are ſent by the only authoritie of the Prince. *Seeing the holy Ghoſt ſends the Prophets then, and directs and giues them power and efficacie, he muſt needs be God.* Beſides, hence we gather, that we are to abandon all ſuch as haue not this direction of Gods ſpirit, notwithſtanding they crake, they be ſent of God: I meane this troupe of popiſh wolues, who glorie in the titles of Paſtors, and Teachers, and impudentlie brag of their ſending, ſeeing they are whollie deſtitute not only of the holy ſpirit, but of his doctrine. For in vaine doe they boaſt that they are inſtituted and ſent of God, when they are vtterlie vnfurniſhed of thoſe gifts and graces of the *holy ghoſt* which are fit for the execution of ſuch a charge. Moreouer, it is too great a ſaucines in them to pretend the illumination of the ſpirit of Chriſt, ſeeing themſelues are whollie void of faith, and knows not a B frõ a battledore in the doctrine of ſaluation. There are horned Biſhops which ſit in the chaire, and God wot the moſt part of them as ignorant as beaſts: nay, there is not tenne of them among

The holy Ghoſt of one eſſence with the Father.

Three diſtinct perſons in one eſſence.

A manifeſt proofe of the diuinitie of the holy Ghoſt.

Popiſh wolues will not ſo deck themſelues with the titles of paſtors and teachers.

Few of the horned Biſhops in the Papacie that know the firſt rudimẽts of religion.

among three hundred who haue ſo much as taſted the firſt rudiments of pietie, *Is any thing more abſurd, then to ſay that ſuch an aſſemblie is gouerned by the holy Ghoſt?*

Verſ. 17. *Thus ſaith the Lord thy redeemer the holy one of Iſrael, I am the Lord thy God* * *which teach thee to profit, and leade thee by the way which thou ſhouldſt goe.*

* Or, teaching thee profitable things, leading thee, &c.

This and the foure verſes following, depend one vpõ another.

I Ioine this verſe with the foure verſes enſuing, becauſe they tend all to one end, in which God promiſeth deliuerance to his people, yet in ſuch wiſe, that he firſt ſhewes how they were brought into bondage by their owne fault, and that to the end they ſhould not murmure in obiecting that it had bin better for them to remaine in the countrie, if the Lord meant to help them then to be brought back after they were led away. For a Phyſition deſerues not praiſe ſo much for curing a diſeaſe, as for hindring and preuenting it. The Prophet preuents them, and ſaith, that this hapned through the peoples fault, for they might haue eſcaped this iudgement if they had but diligentlie attẽded vnto Gods commandements, but they would not, therefore ſuch an obſtinacie well deſerued ſuch a puniſhment: for it was not the Lords fault that the affaires of the people ſucceeded ill, but they had reiected his fauor which was tendred vnto them, and yet he ſaith, the Lord will ouercome this rebellion by his great goodnes, becauſe he is not minded his people ſhould periſh, though for a time he afflicts them.

Teaching thee profitable things.] By this he meanes, that *Gods doctrine* is ſuch, that it is able to preſerue his people in good ſtate if they would conſtantlie follow the *rules* therein preſcribed. Now the Lord takes paines *to teach vs*, not to procure his owne good, but ours. For what good are we able to do him? By his holy doctrine then he prouides for euery one of our ſaluations, that being rightly inſtructed by it, wee might reape the fruit thereof, which is, an *happie* and bleſſed life. But when by our vnthankfulnes we reiect the benefit freely offred, what remaines but that we ſhould worthily periſh? *Iſaiah* then had iuſt cauſe to reproch the Iewes, that if they had not wittingly depriued themſelues of the fruit of this doctrine, they ſhould haue bin ignorant of nothing that tended to their *profit* and ſaluation.

Now if it bee affirmed touching the Law, that by it God *taught* his people *profitable things*: how much more may it be ſaid of the Goſpell, by which whatſoeuer is profitable and neceſſary, is fully reuealed vnto vs? And here alſo we ſee how execrable ỹ blaſphemies of the Papiſts are, who auer, that the reading of the Scripture is dangerous and hurtfull, that they may diſſwade the laitie (as they call them) from medling therewith. What? Dare they indeed giue the lie to God, who by the mouth of his holy Prophet pronounceth that they are *profitable*? See 2. Tim. 3. 16.

Papiſts giue God the lie.

Whether is it better we ſhould beleeue God or them? Let them diſgorge their blaſphemies then as long as they will with an whoriſh forehead, yet ought not we to refraine the ſtudie of them: for wee ſhall perceiue that *Iſaiah* hath ſpoken the truth, if wee reade the holy Scriptures with feare and reuerence.

Guiding thy way.] Theſe wordes ſhew yet more cleerly, the *profitableneſſe* before mentioned. For the Prophets meaning is, that the way of ſaluation is ſet open to vs, if we *heare* God ſpeaking; becauſe he is readie to leade vs through the whole courſe of our life, if we will ſubmit our ſelues to his lore. And thus *Moſes* proteſts that hee ſet before the people life and death: Deut 30. 19. Alſo, This is the way, walke in it. For the rule of a godly life is contained in the Law, the which cannot deceiue. I command thee this day, ſaith *Moſes*, that thou loue the Lord thy God, that thou walke in his waies, and that thou keepe his commandements, ordinances, & iudgements, that thou maieſt liue, that the Lord may bleſſe thee in the land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſſe it: Deut. 30. 16. The ſumme is, that ſuch as are teachable, ſhall neuer bee deſtitute of light, vnderſtanding, nor counſell.

Verſ. 18. *Oh that thou haddeſt hearkened to my commandements! Then had thy* * *proſperitie been as the flood, and thy righteouſneſſe as the waues of the ſea.*

* Or, peace.

IN regard the people might haue complained of their being led captiue, the Prophet to preuent ſuch grudgings, ſhewes the cauſe why it came to paſſe; namely, becauſe they reiected the doctrine of ſaluation, without reaping any benefit by it. No doubt but he had reſpect to *Moſes* his ſong, where there are almoſt the ſame words repeated. Oh that they were wiſe, then they would conſider their latter end! Deut. 31. 29. The particle *Lu* heere, ſignifies a wiſh, Oh that, or, Would to God. But the Lord not onely complaines that the Iewes lightly eſteemed the good and *profitable* things offerd them: but he alſo bewailes their miſerie, as a father doth that of his children. For he takes no pleaſure in afflicting vs, neither would he ſhew himſelfe ſeuere, but that wee conſtraine him thereto by our frowardneſſe. God then is heere *moued vvith compaſſion* in beholding their ruin, who had rather wittingly periſh, then to be ſaued: for he was readie to haue dealt all ſorts of bleſſings liberally amongſt them, if they by their owne rebellion, had not repelled and put him backe.

A preuentiõ.

God takes no pleaſure in our afflictions.

Now it were prepoſterous to enter into Gods ſecret counſell, and to inquire wherefore himſelfe made not the externall word effectuall vpon them, by the worke of his holie Spirit. For the queſtion is not heere of his power; but mans rebellion is heere onely reproued, that they may be left without excuſe. Truely as oft as God calles vs to himſelfe by his word, there is a full and abſolute felicitie

Who art thou that diſputeſt with God?

felicitie offered vs, which wee obſtinatelie reſiſt.

Wee haue told you before that the word *peace*, ſignifies all happy euents. It is then as if he had ſaid; Thou haddeſt had abundance of all good things, and ſhouldeſt neuer neede to haue feared any change, in regard the bleſſing of God vpon his ſeruants is a fountaine that can neuer bee drawne drie. As touching the word *inſtice*, ioined vnto peace, wee may take it for that which wee commonly call *thy right*. But I had rather vnderſtand it of a Commonwealth well gouerned, where all things are ruled orderly and well: as if hee ſhould ſay; All things had proſpered and had gone well with thee, and thou hadſt had a floriſhing State.

Ton droit.

Hee worthily ioines ſuch an eſtate with *peace*: for if good gouernement bee ouerthrowne, all goes out of frame; for it is not poſſible to inioy a right *peace*, where *inſtice* is wanting: that is to ſay, vnleſſe matters of ſtate be managed with equitie and vprightneſſe. If we loue peace then, let vs forthwith be inſtant with the Lord to obtaine this happie eſtate, which is bleſſed of him. Some deſcant heere vpon ſpirituall iuſtice, and vpon remiſſion of ſinnes: but they miſſe the marke, and ſtray quite from our Prophets meaning, who ſpeakes plainly and ſimply.

Not poſſible to inioy a comfortable peace where iuſtice is wanting.

Verſ. 19. *Thy ſeede alſo had been as the ſand, and* *the fruit of thy bodie like the grauell thereof: his name ſhould not haue been cut off nor* *deſtroied beforeme.*

*Or, the children.

*Or, aboliſhed.

THis alſo appertaines to an happy eſtate, namely, when poſteritie is increaſed: for by their helpe, the aged are comforted and refreſhed in their labours, and the aduerſaries repulſed. The Pſalmiſt, you know, compares ſuch *children* to arrowes ſhot from the hand of a mighty man, and pronounceth him bleſſed that hath his quiuer full of them: Pſal. 127.5. that is to ſay; who hath many ſuch children. In mentioning of *ſand*, it ſeemes he had reſpect to the promiſe made to *Abraham*; I will multiply thy ſeede as the ſtarres of the heauen, and as the *ſand* by the ſea ſhore: Gen. 22.17. Afterwards he repeates the ſame thing in diuers words, according to the cuſtome of the Hebrewes, calling *children* and *grauell*, that which he had called *ſeede* and *ſand*. In a word, hee ſhewes that the people hindered God, from cauſing them to feele and taſte the fruit of his promiſe.

Afterwards, comming to *the interruption* of this grace, hee plainly reprocheth them; namely, that themſelues had ſought their owne ruine and deſtruction; whereas God had multiplied them wonderfully by his power. For by the word *name*, hee vnderſtands the lawful eſtate of the people, which had alwaies floriſhed, if the courſe of Gods bleſſing had not been ſtopped.

And whereas he ſaith the people were *aboliſhed*, this muſt bee vnderſtood in reſpect of the land of Canaan, out of which Gods people being vomited, Leuit. 18.25.28. they ſeemed to bee baniſhed the houſe of their father. For the Temple whereof the Iewes were depriued, was a ſacrament vnto them of Gods preſence, and the land it ſelfe was a pledge vnto them of their heauenly inheritance. Being exiled thence then, they were in a maner excommunicated, and caſt out of Gods preſence, and had had no teſtimonies of his ſuccour left them, had not theſe promiſes relieued their miſeries. Now it is for vs to conſider well of this their miſerie: for being baniſhed farre from their Country, they had neither Temple, ſacrifices, nor aſſemblies. Now thoſe amongſt whom at this day there is no forme of a Church, vſe of Sacraments, nor preaching of the word, they ought to thinke that God hath in a manner caſt them out of his preſence. Let them learne then to call and cry inſtantlie with ardent praiers, that God would plant his Church in their coaſts.

Canaan a pledge to the Iews of their eternall inheritance.

Verſ. 20. *Goe yee out of Babel; flee yee from the Chaldeans with the voice of ioy: tell and declare this; ſhew it forth to the ends of the earth: ſay yee; The Lord hath redeemed his ſeruant Iakob.*

THis is the ſecond part of this complaint, by which the Lord proteſts that hee will deliuer his people, how vnworthy or ingratefull ſoeuer they be. For hauing told the Iewes that hee hath performed the office of a good teacher towards them, and that they would not lend their eares; ſo as by their owne default they were ſent into captiuitie: now in ſetting before them his inuincible patience, he addes, that he will not ceaſe to aſſiſt them, till hee hath drawne them out of their bondage. Hee commands them then to *goe out of Babylon* where they were captiues. Whence we gather, that how iuſt cauſe ſoeuer God hath to complaine of vs, yet by his ineſtimable goodneſſe, he is ready to ſuſtaine our miſeries, and to aid thoſe that are vnworthy; yea ſuch as haue frowardly reſiſted his grace.

Iſaiah ſpeaks of a thing to come, as if it were already come to paſſe.

That which is added touching the *voice of ioy*, ſerues to confirme this deliuerance: for hee meant to adde this confirmation to that promiſe, which was vtterly incredible. That he might remooue all doubtings then, hee highly commends this benefit.

Declare.] He expreſſeth the greatnes of that confidence which hee meant to erect in the hearts of the Iewes: for we are wont to publiſh that plainly and openly, whereof we haue good experience and aſſurance: but if wee doubt, we dare ſcarſe open our mouthes, but remaine mute and dumbe. Now *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of a thing to come with that reſolution, as if it were alreadie come to paſſe, that the people might in their hearts conceiue the more ſure and certaine confidence: and therefore hee vſeth this *commandement*, which hath much more efficacie in it, and moued their mindes more then if hee had told it them in bare termes.

The vſe the Iewes were to make of this commandement.

Verſ. 21. *And they weare not thir-*

ſtie: he led them through the wildernesse: he cauſed the waters to flow out of the rock for them: for he clane the rock, and the waters guſhed out.

Iſaiah puts thē in minde of their firſt paſſage out of Egypt, to correct their infidelitie.

IN regard the Iewes ſaw no way open to returne home, and that there lay betweene many great and vaſt wildernesses, the Prophet alledgeth Gods power, from whence he propounds ſome examples, that ſo the Iewes might be diſpoſſeſt of all feare & doubtings. He would haue them then to conſider, whether God was not ſufficientlie able to deliuer their fathers out of Egypts bondage, and to bring them through horrible *deſerts*: in which notwithſtanding he furniſhed them with viands, water, and all other neceſſaries, Exod. 16. and 17. If he were able to do the one, why ſhould they miſdoubt his abilitie concerning the other? The Iewes here according to their maner coine fond fables, and inuent ridiculous miracles which were neuer done nor heard of. And this they doe, not ſo much of ignorance, as of impudencie, whereby they giue themſelues libertie to publiſh any thing that may carrie a faire ſhew, though it be vtterlie ſenſeleſſe. But our Prophets meaning was to put them in mind of that firſt paſſage out of Egypt, and of the miracles which the Lord then did. For whē the Prophets meane to extoll Gods works, it is their cuſtome (as we haue often ſhewed) to mention this firſt deliuerance. And thus *Dauid* ſetting forth the victories he obteined, ſaith, that the mountaines trembled and ſhooke, the ayre cleft in twaine, and the Lord appeared from heauen, which he neuer ſaw notwithſtanding, Pſa. 18. but he therein followes the deſcription of the deliuerance out of Egypt, to ſhew, that God was the author of it, and that he alſo fortified and guided him to ouercome his enemies, and that his power was no leſſe manifeſt in this victorie, then in thoſe wonderfull ſignes and miracles.

Fables inuēted by the Iewes.

And thus the Prophet now would haue the people conſider of theſe wonders of old, to correct their incredulitie, & not to be tempted with diffidence: for it was the cuſtome of Gods faithfull ſeruants to caſt their eies alwaies vpon this deliuerance, that by the remembrance of ſo great a benefit, they might confirme euery mans heart in faith and hope. We haue alſo told you before that they were from age to age to feele the fruit of this redemption, that the Lord by a continuall progreſſe might ſtill be acknowledged the protector of that people whom he had ſo redeemed at the firſt. Our Prophets meaning is then, that the Lord will eaſily ouercome all impediments, and will ſet open the paſſages that are ſhut, will furniſh them with *vvater* in abundance that they faint not for thirſt, for he will worke for them *as in old time* he did for their fathers, when extraordinarilie he cauſed *vvaters to iſſue out of the rock*, they making their account to periſh for thirſt. Exod. 17.6. and therefore there was no cauſe why they ſhould call the aſſurāce of their returne into queſtion, if they would but only meditate of that power of God wherof themſelues by experience had taſted.

Verſ. 22. *There is no peace, ſaith the Lord, to the wicked.*

A preuention in regard of hypocrites.

SOme incloſe theſe words, *ſaith the Lord*, in a parenthesis; but we may keepe this order in the text, to wit, *That the Lord denies the peace to the vvicked, vvhereof they are vnworthie.* Now this is expreſly added, leſt the hypocrites according to their wont, ſhould conceiue any vaine hope in theſe promiſes, for he ſaith, they belong nothing at all to ſuch, that he might whollie exclude them from all hope of ſaluation. But it ſeemes *Iſaiah* reſpected ſome other thing, for in regard the greateſt part of the people ouerflowed in impietie, and reiected this benefit, many infirme and weake ones might ſtagger, and be offended at their multitudes: for at this day there are many weake conſciences troubled, when they ſee the doctrine of ſaluation contemned by the greater part of the world. Seeing then there were many in great danger of ſtumbling, he turnes their minds from this temptation, that the multitude of the wicked and vnbeleeuers (who reiected Gods grace, and this happie eſtate mentioned verſe 18. 19.) might not trouble them, but rather without gazing vpon ſuch kinde of perſons, might comfortablie imbrace and poſſeſſe this benefit themſelues.

THE XLIX. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Heare ye me, ô Iles, and hearken ye people from farre, The Lord hath called me from the womb, and made mention of my name from my mothers belly.*

From the treatiſe of their redemption, he comes to ſpeake of Chriſt.

HAuing diſcourſed of the redemption to come, hee now deſcends to ſpeake of Chriſt, vnder whoſe leading, the people were deliuered from the captiuitie of Babylō, as in old time they were out of Egypt. Now it was needful the former propheſie ſhould be confirmed with this preſent doctrine: for they would hardly haue bin drawne to expect this redemption from the Lord, had he not ſet Chriſt Ieſus before their eies, in whom all Gods promiſes are Yea, and Amen, 2. Cor. 1. 20. who only alſo is able to cheere vp and refreſh the fainting ſpirits: for wee are no leſſe to looke for temporall ſaluation from him, then that which is eternall. Adde, that the Prophets are wont in ſpeaking of the reſtauration of ℣ Church euer to mention Chriſt, not only becauſe he is the miniſter thereof, but alſo becauſe our adoption is grounded vpon him. The Iewes who haue any ſparke of

All the promiſes are Yea and Amen in Chriſt.

1 2

found

ſound iudgement do confeſſe, that this place is to be vnderſtood of Chriſt only. But all haue not kept the order which we haue noted. For the Prophet ſpeakes not of Chriſt at the firſt brunt, but vſeth this *preface*, for without it the people could looke for no redemption, in regard their reconciliation with God depéded thereupon. Now that it might haue the greater efficacie, he brings in Chriſt himſelfe ſpeaking, not only to the *Iewes, but to the nations beyond the ſeas*, and to the ſtrangers farre remote from the common wealth of Iſrael, who are ſpecified heere vnder this word *iles*, as we haue ſhewed in another place.

The Lord hath called me from the vvomb.] Some aske what this *vocation* is? for ſeeing we were *elected in Chriſt* before the foundations of the world, Epheſ.1.4. it followes that he is *before vs*, becauſe he is *the beginning and foundation of our election*. It ſeemes the Prophet therefore hath ſpoken leſſe then the thing imports, in affirming that Chriſt *was called from the womb*, ſeeing he was before all time. But the anſwer to this is eaſie, for the queſtion is not heere touching Gods eternall election, whereby we are adopted for his children, but only of the eſtabliſhing and conſecration of Chriſt ordeined to this office, that wee ſhould not thinke he intruded himſelfe thereinto at randon. For no man takes this honor to himſelfe, but he that *is called of God*, as was Aaron, Heb.5.4.5. So Chriſt tooke not vpon himſelfe the office of the high Prieſt, but he which aduanced him to it, ſaid, *Thou art my ſonne, this day haue I begotten thee*, Pſal.2.7.

Chriſt thruſt not himſelfe into his office without a calling.

Moreouer, the Prophet defines not of the beginning of time, as if God had then begun to call him from the womb, but it is as if he ſhould haue ſaid, Before I came out of my mothers womb, God ordeined me to this office, as S. *Paul* ſaith, That God had choſen him from his mothers womb, Gal.1.15. though notwithſtanding he had elected him alſo frō before the foundations of the world. It is alſo ſaid of *Ieremiah*, Before I formed thee, I knew thee, Iere.1.5. In a word, the ſumme is, that Chriſt tooke our fleſh by the ordinance of his Father, that he might fulfill the worke of our Redemption vnto which he was deſtinated. Hereunto appertaines the laſt member of the verſe, for *the mentioning of his name*, ſignifies as much as a familiar knowledge of him. He ſeparates him then from out of the common ranke of men, becauſe he is choſen to a rare and ſingular piece of ſeruice.

Verſ. 2. *And hee hath made my mouth like a ſharpe ſword: vnder the ſhadow of his hand hath hee hid mee, and made me a choſen ſhaft, and hid me in his quiuer.*

Twō ſimilitudes expreſſing the efficacie of his doctrine.

HE vſeth two ſimilitudes; to wit, the *ſword* and *quiuer*, to expreſſe the efficacie of his doctrine: and then he ſhewes to what end he was called and dignified with ſo noble a title; namely, that he might *teach*: for that is it he ſignifies by the word *mouth*. Chriſt then was not ſent of the Father to conquer by force of armes, as earthly Princes doe; but his conqueſt is obtained by the ſword of the Spirit; that is to ſay, by preaching the whole counſell of God, in which hee will be ſought and knowne: for he is not to be found elſewhere. Now hee ſhewes what the force of his *mouth* is; that is to ſay, of the doctrine which proceedes out of his mouth, when he compares it to a *ſharpe ſword*. For the word of God is liuely in operation, and more piercing then all two edged ſwords: *for it diuides betweene the ſoule and the ſpirit, and the ioints and the marrow; and is a diſcerner of all the intents of the heart*: Heb.4.12. He compares it alſo to an *arrow*, becauſe it not onely hits *neere*, but alſo a *farre off*, and comes euen to them who ſeeme far remote.

Chriſt conquers not by force of armes, but by the ſword of the ſpirit.

Pſal.45.5.

But after *Iſaiah* hath ſpoken of the efficacie of his doctrine, hee addes, that God will maintaine both Chriſt and it by his power: ſo as nothing ſhall be able to hinder the courſe thereof. For as ſoone as Chriſt opens his *mouth*; that is to ſay, as ſoone as the Goſpell begins to be ſincerely preached, the aduerſaries band themſelues on all ſides, and infinit enemies conſpire how to ſuppreſſe it. So as this efficacie whereof he ſpeakes, and which hee attributes to his doctrine, would not ſtand, vnleſſe Gods protection and *ſhadow* came betweene, to abandon the aduerſaries.

God will maintaine both Chriſt and his doctrine. The Goſpell no ſooner preached, but it is oppoſed by enemies.

But he ſpeakes not heere onely of Chriſt, but of the whole body of his Church. I grant we muſt beginne at the head, but frō thence we muſt deſcend to the members, and apply it to all the Miniſters of the word; which is heere ſpoken of Chriſt, in regard this efficacie of the word is giuen them, that their voice ſhould not beate the aire in vaine, but that it ſhould enter to the pricking of the heart: Acts 2.37. The Lord alſo cauſeth the trump of his word to ſound, not in one place onely, but to the vtmoſt ends of the earth. Laſtly, in regard, the Lord faithfully keepes them vnder the *ſhadow of his hand*, though they be ſubiect to many reproches, and that Satan on euery ſide aſſailes them; yet they breake not off their courſe, which experience might well haue taught vs. For there is not one of vs, but we had long ſince been vtterly rooted out by the ſecret and open practiſes of our enemies, had not the Lord been our *defence*. And truly I cannot but wonder, that any one Miniſter of the Goſpell ſhould ſtand ſafe, in the midſt of ſo many & ſo great dangers. But the cauſe is, the Lord keepes them vnder the *ſhadow of his hand*, and *hides* them as *ſhafts in his quiuer*, that they ſhould hot be hurt nor deſtroied of their enemies.

A miracle that a faithfull Miniſter ſhould ſtand.

Verſ. 3. *And he ſaid vnto me; Thou art my ſeruant Iſrael; for I will be glorious in thee.*

This verſe depends vpō the former.

THis verſe muſt be ioined with the former. For heereby it appeares, that he ſpeakes not of one man, but of the whole people: which the expoſitors haue not conſidered: for this place neither ought to be reſtrained

to

to Christs person, nor yet referred to *Israel* onely. But we must heere obserue the course of the Scriptures. When the body of the Church is mentioned, then Christ is placed in the middle, as it were, who vnder him comprehends the children of God. Wee heare what Saint *Paul* saith; The promises were made *to Abraham, and to his seede*. He saith not to his *seedes*, as *speaking of many*: and to thy *seed*, which is *Christ*: Gal. 3. 16. For he comprehends not the multitude of children which came of *Abraham* according to the flesh, seeing all were not partakers of this blessing. *Ishmael* was reiected: Gal. 4. 30. *Esau* was hated: Mal. 1. 3. and many others were cut off.

Ishmael reiected. Esau reprobated.

When the people were deliuered from vnder the captiuitie of Babylon, the number of those which returned were very smal; for the greatest part reiected this excellent benefit of God. Where was this *seede* then? Euen in Christ who is the head, and vnder him containes the rest of the members: for in him, by an inseparable band, is the whole seed assembled and knit together in one. And in the same sense that *Isaiah* hath noted out Christ vnder the name of *Israel*, so also hath he comprehended the whole body, as the members vnder the head. Which is no new thing. For when *Paul* speakes of that vnion which is betweene Christ and the Church, hauing set it forth vnder the similitude of a mans body, he addes, *euen so is Christ*: 1. Cor. 12. 12. And in this place *the name of Christ* is attributed vnto *Israel*: that is to say, to the whole companie of the faithfull, which are vnited to Christ as the members to the head. Afterwards, the Lord giues this title to the Church, which is the spouse of Christ, as the wife is dignified with the name and title of her husband.

The vnion which is betweene Christ and his Church.

Now he calles Israel his *seruant*: that is to say, his handmaid the Church; for shee is the pillar and ground of truth, because hee hath committed his word vnto her, as a pledge to keepe; that by her ministerie it may be published thorowout the world: 1. Tim. 3. 15. In the latter part of the verse, hee shewes what the end of this ministry is, and why those that preach the Gospell are called thereunto of God; to wit, that they make his *glory* by all meanes to shine cleere in respect of themselues, and to aduance it also among others. Which Christ teacheth in the Gospell saying; Father, *glorifie thy Sonne*, that thy Sonne also *may glorifie thee*: Iohn 17. 1. But doth not God shew vs a singular fauour, when he appoints vs, base and vile wretches, to be procurers of *glory* vnto him? Oh! let this quicken vs vp to obey him carefully, and to imploy our selues faithfully in his seruice. And yet the Prophet meant to expresse somewhat more, namely, that howsoeuer Satan and his imps lay all the plots they can, yet Gods power shall ouerthrow them all: so as Christ shall triumph notwithstanding *gloriously*, and God his maiestie shall shine most bright in his Gospell still.

Vers. 4. *And I said; I haue laboured in vaine, I haue spent my strength in vaine and for nothing: but my iudgement is with the Lord, and my worke with my God.*

THe Prophet addes a grieuous complaint heere, in the name of the Church; yet so, as he begins at the head, as we haue said before. Christ then with his members complaines, that he hath in a manner vtterly *lost his labour*: for after hee hath greatly praised and commended the efficacie of that word which issueth out of his mouth, vers. 2. now he shewes that it hath done little or no good notwithstanding: so as this *glory* which God requires to shine in the ministrie of his word, appeares very little. For Christ saith, he hath *laboured in vaine*, because men wil not repent, nor turne to God by the preaching of the heauenly doctrine. It was to great purpose that the Prophet added this. First, to teach vs that this fruit whereof he spake, shall not alwaies appeare in the eies of men; for otherwise we should be readie to call the truth of Gods word into question; and would also be brought to doubt, whether this doctrine, which is reiected of so many with such impudencie, were the word of God or no. Secondlie, that we might bend all our forces with inuincible constancie to performe our duties, and to commend the successe of all our labours vnto the blessing of God, who will not suffer it to be fruitlesse in the end. And thus the Prophet meant to meete with a dangerous temptation, that by the rebellions of men, we should not faint in the middle of our course. And truly *Christ so begins heere with a complaint, that he yet comforts himselfe by and by*, knowing that nothing shall be able to direct him from the performance of his charge. And the text would be somewhat plainer, if wee reade it thus: *Although my trauaile be in vaine, and that I haue spent my selfe without fruit; yet it sufficeth that my worke is approued of my God.* Vnto which appertaines that which is added; *but my iudgement is before the Lord.*

A bitter complaint.

Why this complaint is added.

Albeit then the fruit of our labours appeare not *before vs*, yet must it content vs that they are done *before that God* whom we serue, and to whom our seruice is agreeable. For Christ exhorts and incourageth the faithfull Ministers to fight valiantly, vntil they haue ouercome this temptation: so as, setting light by the malice of men, they cheerfully goe on still in their calling, without suffering discontentments or carelesnesse to hinder their course. If the Lord haue a purpose then to try our faith and patience, so farre as that it shall seeme we labour in vaine, yet must wee satisfie our selues with the testimonie of a good conscience. But if this consolation take no place in vs, then is it certaine that we are not carried forwards with a pure affection: neither doe wee serue God in this function, but the world and our owne ambition. Wherefore it is needfull for vs to haue our recourse to this sentence in such temptations.

An incouragement for Ministers.

In the meane while wee may note that the whole world, is accused heere of ingratitude, both

The whole world taxed of ingratitude.

both by Chriſt and his Church: who ſo *complaine before God, that notwithſtanding they expoſtulate with the world,* in regard the doctrine of the Goſpell, *which is ſo effectuall in it ſelfe, worketh no better effects in the inhabitants therof.* But this fault wholly reſteth in mens vnthankfulneſſe and obſtinacie, who reiect the grace which God offers them, and chuſe wittingly to periſh, rather then to be ſaued. They therefore which charge the Goſpell of vnfruitfulneſſe, and wickedly belie and ſlander the bleſſed truth, ſcoffing at our labours as being idle and vnprofitable, and babble that it is the cauſe of commotions, and ſets men together by the eares; let them now come forth and accuſe *the Sonne of God*: let them conſider well with whom they haue to doe, and what profit their impudencie will bring them in the end. For men are in all the fault, in that themſelues make fruſtrate and void, the preaching thereof, as much as in them lieth. But the faithfull Miniſters who are vexed in their ſoules to ſee men periſh ſo miſerablie by their owne fault, who alſo waſt and kill themſelues with ſorrow when they haue triall of ſuch an obſtinacie, ought notwithſtanding to arme themſelues with this conſolation, and not to be ſo diſquieted as to caſt down the bucklers, though at ſometimes it ſeemes beſt for them ſo to do. Let them rather meditate that Chriſt is partaker with them in this their burthen: for he ſpeakes not only of himſelfe, as we haue ſaid before, but of all his faithfull ſeruants, who heere in all their names, as a carefull protector, enters their accuſation for them. Let them therefore reſt themſelues vpon his defence, and leaue the maintenance of their cauſe vnto him. Let them make their appeale (as *Paul* doth) *to the day of the Lord.* 1. Cor. 4. 4. and neuer ſtand to breake their braines about the lies, ſlanders, and outrages of their enemies; for as their *iudgement is before the Lord,* though the vnthankfull world diſgrace them an hundreth times, ſo will God be the faithfull approuer and rewarder of their ſeruice. Contrariwiſe, let the wicked, prophane contemners of the word, and all hypocrites tremble; for when Chriſt ſhall accuſe them, all their defences will not be worth a ruſh, neither ſhall any be able to abſolue them from his iuſt ſentence of condemnation. We muſt looke to it then that the fruit which ſhould come of the Goſpell, periſh not by our fault, for God manifeſts his glorie, that we may be made the diſciples of Ieſus Chriſt, and bring forth much fruit, Iohn 15. 8.

A caueat for ſcorners.

The Miniſters appeale.

Tremble and ſinne not ye prophane contemners of the word.

Verſ. 5. *And now ſaith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his ſeruant, that I may bring Iaakob againe to him (though Iſrael be not gathered) yet ſhall I be glorious in the eies of the Lord, and my God ſhall be my ſtrength.*

A cõfirmatiõ ioined with a more ample conſolation.

HE confirmes the former ſentence, and ſets before vs a more full conſolation by a repetition of the duties of his calling, and the teſtimonie of his owne conſcience. And this ought to be a ſtrong tower for vs to run vnto; for nothing diſquiets nor troubles our minds more, then when we be vncertaine vnder whoſe leading it is that we enterpriſe this or that. *Iſaiah* therefore brings vs to the certentie of our vocation. Firſt then the faithful Miniſters ſay with Chriſt their Prince and Captaine, that *God hath formed* them, in regard he alwaies endues them whom he ſends and calles to the office of teaching, with neceſſarie gifts, for they draw all the graces wherewith they are furniſhed from the only fountaine of grace the holy Ghoſt. Thus then in the firſt place God hath ſet his ſeale vpon Chriſt: next vnto him, vpon all his Miniſters, whom according to their meaſure he fits and prepares, that they may haue wherewithall to execute their charge. Therewithall he ſets downe the end of their calling: for the Apoſtles and teachers of the Church are ordeined and ſent to *gather* the ſcattered flock of Chriſt together, that all his ſheep may be folded vnder him into one bodie. For there is a wofull ſcattering in the world, but in Ieſus Chriſt all are gathered in, as S. *Paul* ſaith Epheſ. 1. 10. other band of vnitie there is none.

As touching the word created, or *formed,* many triſle in deſcanting about the humane nature of Chriſt, which indeed was created: for it is more cleare then the Sunne at noone day that this *creation* is to be referred to his office.

Though Iſrael be not called.] The Iewes reade this by an interrogation, Shall I not bring Iacob againe, and ſhall not Iſrael be gathered? But this reading is conſtreined, neither do they conſider of the Prophets meaning, but as much as in them is, corrupt the text, that they might couer the ſhame of their nation. Others expound, He ſhall not be loſt: or, He ſhall not periſh. For the verb *Aſaf* ſignifies, to truſſe vp; for, they gather together that which is to be kept, or to be conſumed: and ſo when we ſpeake of one that is dead, we commonly ſay, he is truſſed vp.

This ſenſe agrees not ill, I am ſent, that Iſrael periſh not, but I had rather follow another expoſition. Although all Iſrael be not gathered, yet ſhall I be glorified: for in this place we may ſee that two contraries are oppoſed one to another. If the Miniſters of the word be ordeined to ſaue men, it is a great honor to them when many are brought to ſaluation; if not, it makes them abaſhed and aſhamed: for S. *Paul* calles thoſe whom he gained to Chriſt, *his ioy, and his crowne,* Phil. 4. 1. 1. Theſſ. 2. 19. Contrariwiſe if men periſh, we beare ſhame and diſgrace by it, in regard it ſeemes God curſeth our labors, in that he vouchſafeth vs not that honor, as to be the aduancers of his kingdome by our Miniſtrie. Notwithſtanding our Prophet affirmes, that ſuch as haue ſerued Chriſt in this office, ſhall be *glorified:* for he comprehends the members vnder the head (as we haue oftẽ ſaid before.)

Will not Iſrael be gathered then? yet ſhall Chriſtes Miniſtrie loſe no iot of glorie thereby. For if men be not *gathered,* the burthen will lie whollie vpon their owne necks. In which

which ſenſe Saint *Paul* affirmes, that although the preaching of the Goſpell be a ſauour of death vnto death in the reprobates, yet euen that is a ſweete ſauour vnto God, who by the meanes of preaching, will make the wicked the more without excuſe. God is glorified double, if the effect anſwer his deſire. But, if the Miniſters of the word, hauing omitted no part of their duties, ſhall (to their griefe and ſmart I confeſſe) ſee no fruits to come of their labours; yet let them not repent that they haue beerein pleaſed God, whoſe approbation is heere oppoſed to all the peruerſe iudgements of the world. As if the Prophet ſhould ſay; Be it that men abhorre you, and charge you with many faults; yet muſt you ſwallow this, and much more too with patience: for God hath another end, and will crowne your patience with glorie and honour, which the wicked ſo proudly and ſcornefullie deſpiſe.

He addes in the ſame ſenſe, that it ought to ſuffice them that God is their *ſtrength*, to the end that neither the multitude nor power of their enemies doe aſtoniſh them, ſeeing in *their God* conſiſts *their ſtrength*.

Verſ. 6. *And hee ſaid; It is a ſmall thing that thou ſhouldeſt be my ſeruant, to raiſe vp the tribes of Iakob, and to reſtore the deſolations of Iſrael: I will alſo giue thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou maieſt bee my ſaluation to the end of the world.*

HEe goes on further and ſhewes, that the labours of Chriſt and of all his ſeruants, ſhall be glorious indeede; not onely before God, but alſo before men. For howſoeuer they be eſteemed vaine and vnfruitfull in the beginning, yet in the end the Lord will cauſe them to bring forth fruit contrary to all the opinions of men. It was enough that in the firſt place God approued their labours: but in that he now addes, that the ſame ſhall not proue vnprofitable, no not in regard of men: this ought to bee as a ſpurre to put life into them, and much to comfort their comfortleſſe ſpirits. Whence it followes, that wee ought to hope that the iſſue of that which is committed into Gods hands, ſhall be good, becauſe the bleſſing which hee promiſeth to our labours, ſhall in the end appeare; ſo farre forth, as he ſees it expedient, and for his own glory.

Beſides, he addes that this labour ſhall not onely fructifie among the people of *Iſrael*, but among the *Gentiles* alſo: which (bleſſed be our God) is now come to paſſe. Nay, more then that; for ſeeing the Iewes with an obſtinate hardneſſe, became ſo graceleſſe as to reiect Chriſt; the Gentiles are now grafted into their ſtocke. And thus Chriſt is appointed of God to be *a light vnto the Gentiles*, and his ſaluation manifeſted to the vtmoſt parts of the world.

This conſolation then was very neceſſarie, as well for the Prophets, as the Apoſtles: Acts 13.47. For they had but too wofull and dailie experience more and more, of the frowardneſſe of the Iewes. In which regard, they might haue called the certainty of theſe promiſes into queſtion, ſeeing ſo little fruit of them appeared. But vnderſtanding that Chriſt was alſo *ſent to the Gentiles*, they were not ſo vnwilling to goe thorow thicke and thin, as otherwiſe they would haue been. I grant it was a thing incredible; nay, prodigious: but thus the Lord is wont to worke far aboue the reach of mans reaſon. Saint *Paul* calles it a ſecret hidden, Eph. 3.9. from the foundations of the world, and is yet vnknowne to the very Angels: 1. Pet. 1.12. further forth then it is manifeſted vnto them by the Church: Eph. 3.10. Thus then, although the Iewes were once the onelie wiſe people vnder heauen, Deuteronomie, 4.6. yet they are heere matched with the *Gentiles*: neither is there anie more diſtinction now betweene them before God: Rom. 10.12.

The Rabbines reade this verſe by an interrogation; *Is it a ſmall thing?* As if he ſhould ſay; that it is enough, and that nothing greater nor further is to be required. But they doe maliciouſly peruert the natiue ſenſe of the Prophets words; and make themſelues belieue, forſooth, that they ſhall one day become Lords ouer the Gentiles, and raigne ouer all nations. But the true meaning is, that this ſhall be an excellent and glorious worke in it ſelfe, when God ſhall reſtore and reeſtabliſh the Tribes of Iſrael. And yet this worke ſhall be much more glorious, in reſpect that he will ioine the Gentiles to the Iewes, that they may with one mouth and heart, profeſſe the name of one Chriſt. He ſpeakes not in this place of the reiection of the ancient people then; but of the increaſing of the Church, when Iewes and Gentiles ſhall be made one body. I grant that after the Iewes fell away from the couenant of grace, the Gentiles ſupplied their emtie place: ſo as their reuolt was the cauſe that thoſe which were ſtrangers before, were now made children by adoption. But heere (as in many other places) *Iſaiah* foretelles that the Church ſhall haue a large extent, when the Gentiles ſhall be receiued in, and made one body with the Iewes.

Now albeit the word *lights*, may be vnderſtood ioy and felicitie, yet I doubt not but the Prophet reſpects the doctrine of the Goſpell, which giues light to our vnderſtandings, and pulles vs out of darkneſſe. Hee alſo ſaith, that this light which Chriſt ſhall bring, ſhall be *ſaluation*: for as Chriſt is called the way, the truth, and the life, becauſe we obtaine life by the knowledge of the truth: ſo in this place he is called the *light* and *ſaluation* of the Gentiles, becauſe hee inlightens our mindes by the doctrine of the *light* of the Goſpell, that he may bring vs to *ſaluation*. Let vs obſerue theſe two things then: firſt, that our eies are opened by Chriſts doctrine: ſecondlie, that wee which were dead, ſhall be raiſed vp to life; or rather, that life is reſtored vnto vs.

Verſ. 7.

Verſ. 7. *Thus ſaith the Lord the redeemer of Iſrael, and his holy one, to him that is deſpiſed *in ſoule, to a nation that is abhorred, to a ſeruant of rulers; Kings ſhall ſee and ariſe, and Princes ſhall worſhip, becauſe of the Lord that is faithfull: and the holy one of Iſrael which hath choſen thee.*

*Or, in himſelfe.

ISaiah goes on with the ſame argument, that the people might conceiue a better hope in their minde, touching their eſtate & condition, when they ſhould ſee themſelues afflicted vnder ſo many tedious calamities. And the rather to confirme his ſaying, hee calles God, who promiſed to performe theſe things, *the redeemer of Iſrael.* But may ſome obiect; How can theſe things ſtand together; that God ſhould bee called the redeemer of his people, whom he ſuffered to be ouerwhelmed with miſeries? For where was this *redemption* and *ſanctification* become, ſeeing the people had iuſt cauſe to complaine of their pouertie and calamities? I anſwere, that the memorie of that which had fallen out long before, is heere propounded and ſet before them, to miniſter vnto them matter of hope and truſt. For the Iewes being preſſed with deſpaire, the Prophet preuents it by aduertiſing them, that that God which in times paſt had deliuered their fathers, is now no leſſe almightie then he was then. Albeit then for a time, hee withdraw the light of his countenance from them, to exerciſe and trie their faith, yet hee commands them not to caſt away their confidence, becauſe their certaine and full redemption is in his hands: and yet they were heerein to looke farre aboue the reach of humane reaſon. This therefore is a very exeellent place: out of which we may gather how carefully we ought to beleeue God when he ſpeakes, albeit he doe no forthwith accompliſh that which hee hath promiſed, but ſuffers vs to languiſh vnder afflictions a long time.

Obiect.

Anſ.

We muſt not ceaſe to beleeue, though God for a time deferre his promiſe.

Some tranſlate the word *Vile*, Contemned: others, Contemptible; which I approoue of. But this augments the miſerie of the people, when the Prophet calles them deſpiſed * *in ſoule*: for many are deſpiſed of others, who notwithſtanding are worthy of honour, in regard of the graces wherewith they be indued: or being puffed vp with pride, ceaſe not with an higher contempt, to treade vnder their feete the contempt of others. But *Iſaiah* affirmes, that the Iewes are not more deſpiſed and contemptible in the eies of others, then they are in their owne. Thus then hee notes out an exceeding ignominie and low eſtate; therewithall comprehending the affliction of the Spirit: to teach them that God ſhall come in fit time to ſuccour them, when they ſhall be throughly humbled.

*Or, In himſelfe.

I ſee no reaſon why ſome haue changed the number in the word *nation*, ſeeing the Prophet vſeth the ſingular number *Goi*; it being certaine that he addreſſeth his ſpeech to the poſteritie of *Abraham*. Afterwards he cals them *ſeruants of rulers*: as if he ſhould ſay, that mightie tyrants oppreſſed them: for by the word *Moſchelim*, he meanes thoſe that haue ſo much force and power, that it is an hard matter to eſcape their hands.

When he ſaith that *Kings ſhall ſee*, he ſpeaks in high and glorious termes of the deliuerie of his people; but in the meane while, hee is contented they ſhould bee tried in the furnace, to proue their faith and patience: for where were the triall of faith, if God ſhould forthwith giue that which he hath promiſed, (as we ſaid before.)

In the word *Princes*, there is a repetition much vſed among the Hebrewes. But we will ſpeake it thus ſhortly; *Kings* and *Princes ſhall ſee*, they ſhall *ariſe*, and *bow downe*.

By the verbe To bow downe, he expounds what he meant by ariſing: for wee riſe vp to giue honour. The ſumme is, that the greateſt Princes of the world ſhall bee awakened to confeſſe that the reſtauration of the Church is an excellent worke of God, and worthy of reſpect and reuerence.

Becauſe the *holy one* of Iſrael who hath choſen thee, is *faithfull*. See the cauſe of this great aſtoniſhment, touching the honour which Princes ſhall performe to God; to wit, becauſe they ſhall acknowledge his *faithfulneſſe* and conſtancie in his promiſes. For the Lord would not be acknowledged *faithfull* from a bare and naked imagination, but from experience it ſelfe; to wit, in the preſeruation and protection of his people, whom hee hath adopted. Hence therefore let vs learne not to iudge of Gods promiſes by our preſent eſtate, but by his truth and faithfulneſſe: ſo as when we perceiue nothing but death and the graue to compaſſe vs round, yet wee may remember this ſentence, by which the Lord calles vs to him, euen the vile and *contemptible*.

God would not be held to be faithful by a bare imagination, but from good experience.

1 Cor. 7. 6.

Hence alſo wee are to conſider how glorious and admirable a worke the deliuerance of the Church is, in that it conſtraines *Kings*, be they neuer ſo proud (thinking nothing be it neuer ſo excellent worthy to behold them) *to behold*, to admire, yea and to honour, and reuerence the Lord, whether they will or no. This new and extraordinary worke then, is heere greatly recommended vnto vs in this behalfe. For not to mention ancient hiſtories, by what meanes hath God deliuered vs, out of that wofull tyrannie of Antichriſt? Truly wee were as thoſe that dreame, as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, Pſal. 126. 1. eſpecially if wee doe but ſeriouſly conſider of the thing it ſelfe: for the Lord hath wrought a miracle in bringing vs to doe homage vnto Chriſt.

In the end of the verſe, the Prophet repeates that which he touched before; to wit, that this people were ſet a part to bee the Lords. But in *election* we muſt ſeeke the beginning of *ſanctification*: for the people were the *holy* inheritance, becauſe God had vouchſafed of his meere grace to *chuſe* them. *Iſaiah*, then means *that ſecret will of God*, from whence *ſanctification* flowes; that *Iſrael* might not thinke they were *choſen* for their own deſerts.

As if he had said, The Lord which hath *elected* thee shewes, that thou art so indeed by the effects. As wee ought then to acknowledge Gods *faithfulnes* and truth in our saluation, so must we attribute this *saluation* only to our *free election*. And yet it behoues euery one that will partake in so great a benefit, to be a portion of the true *Israel*, that is to say, of the Church, out of which there is neither *truth* nor *saluation* to be found.

Neither truth nor saluation out of the Church.

Verſ. 8. *Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time haue I heard thee, and in a day of saluation haue I succored thee, and will preserue thee, and giue thee for a couenant of the people, that thou mayst raise vp the earth, and obteine the inheritance of the desolate heritage.*

FRom this verse we may yet more clearely gather that which we haue handled in the beginning of this Chapter, to wit, that the Prophet so speakes of the whole body of the Church, that he begins at the head thereof. And this, as I haue said, ought to be well obserued, for the expositors haue bauked it, and yet without it we shall not be able to make these verses to cohere. S. *Paul* plainly shewes this, in applying this very sentence to the whole Church, 2. Cor. 6. 2. But yet that which followes, *I will giue thee for a couenant of the people*, suites to none but Christ only. How shal we make these things agree then? To wit, if we shall consider that Christ is not so much his owne as ours. For he was not borne; neither died he, nor rose againe for himselfe. He was sent for the saluation of his people. He seeks nothing at our hands: for he stands in neede of nothing. Thus then, God makes his promises to ỹ whole Church: and Christ, who is as it were the suretie or pledge betweene both, receiues these promises, and procures nothing to himselfe by them, but altogether for the Churches behoofe, for whose saluation he was sent. He speakes not then of Christ, as singling him out by himselfe, but as of one that is ioined and made one with his Church for euer. It is an inestimable fauor then which the father shewes vs when he *heares* his sonne for our sakes: yea, that he directs his speech to his sonne whilest he is speaking of our saluation. For by this we may perceiue how neere the coniunction is betweene Christ and vs. He represents our person. He hath nothing which is not ours: and is heard of his Father in respect of vs.

Christ not so much his owne as ours.

Our vnion with Christ again noted.

By the *acceptable time*, the Prophet meant to keepe the faithfull within their bounds, that they should not be too eager in their desires, but might patientlie wait the Lords leisure euen till his prefixed time were come, in which sense S. *Paul* calles the comming of Christ the fulnes of time, Gal. 4. 4. He would haue them then to depend vpon the will of God, and in the meane while to beare his wrath with a quiet and meeke spirit. Moreouer, albeit the Prophet meant to exhort the faithfull to patience, and to learne to subdue their wills to the will of God, yet he therewithall teacheth, that our saluation flowes from the free fauor of God. For his free *accepting* of vs is the foundation of our saluation. And saluation is the effect of this grace. We are saued because we please God; not for our owne merits, but of his meere goodnes. And yet withall he shewes that our saluation is certaine, in that we haue so sure a pledge of Gods grace: for in assuring vs of his fauor, he remoues all doubtings.

This place serues to set forth the commendation of Gods word, without which, there is no enquiring after saluation: as also S. *Paul* saith, 2. Cor. 6. 3. where he shewes that Gods fauor is plainely manifested vnto vs in the preaching of the Gospell, so as that which is written heere touching the *day of saluation*, is thereby accomplished. Thirdly, the Prophet admonisheth vs, that when the Gospell is sent to any place, there God discouers a sure pledge of his fauor, and good will. For is it not euident that he pities vs, when he so graciously allures vs to himselfe? He might let vs erre in darknes without this light, but it comes vnto vs only from his free grace, that so he might remoue all doubtings and stumbling blocks out of our way. Let vs lay it vp in our hearts then, to wit, that this mercie whollie depends vpon God his free will.

No saluation without the word.

Where God sends his Gospell, there he discouers a sure pledge of his fauor.

If it be asked, why the Lord hath illuminated vs rather in this time then in any other: We must answere, *Because it was Gods good pleasure* so to haue it. For S. *Paul* in the place before alledged, brings vs to this point. Behold now *the acceptable time*, behold now *the day of saluation*; which place will help vs much to vnderstand the Prophets meaning, that so wee may learne to ioine Gods free *accepting* of vs, and our *saluation* together. A pledge of which fauor we haue in the preaching of the Gospell.

Quest.

Ans.

We are also to note that these prophesies were not to be restrained to a certaine time, seeing they appertaine to the Church to the worlds end. For when wee begin at the redemption out of Babylon, we must come forward til the redemption purchased by Christ, of which the first deliuerance was but as it were a preparatiue. And seeing there are still certain reliques of this seruitude remaining, it must continue to the worlds end, at which time all things shall be restored, and set againe into their perfect estate.

These prophesies appertaine to the vse of the Church to the worlds end.

Three redemptions.

I will giue thee for a couenant.] Hence it appeeres, that whatsoeuer was said of Christ before, was not promised in regard of his owne particuler profit, but for our sakes. For he was ordeined to be the pledge of the couenant, because the Iewes by their sinnes made a diuorce between God and them, who had contracted a perpetuall couenant with them. The *renuing of this couenant* then, which was broken or disanulled, *is attributed vnto Christ*. In which regard, that which *Paul* saith, Ephes. 2. 14. and 17. is to be noted: Christ is our peace which hath made of both one, and hath preached peace as well to those that are far off, as to those that are neere. But our Prophet had a speciall eie to that horrible dissi-

pation

pation, which none but Chriſt alone was able to remedie. It remaines now then, that we apply this grace to our vſe: wee (I ſay) who were ſtrangers and enemies, far from the couenant of grace in reſpect of the Iewes, before the Goſpell was publiſhed; without which, we had neuer taſted of our reconciliation with him. Chriſt then was giuen *for a couenant* to the *people*, becauſe there was no other way to come vnto God, but through him. The Iewes were then the onely people; but the partition wall being broken downe, all, both Iewes and Gentiles haue bin gathered into one body.

Why Chriſt was giuen for a couenant to the people.

That thou ſhouldeſt raiſe vp the earth, which was *deſolate*. For the returne of the people was as a new creation: as wee haue ſhewed elſewhere. Vnto which alſo appertaines the words of the Prophet, that we might know there is nothing but a wofull waſte and ſcattering in the world: for Chriſt is ſent to *raiſe vp* that which was deſtroied and fallen to the earth. If all things ſtood in a perfect eſtate, then he ſhould be ſent to vs in vaine. Wee ought therefore diligently to conſider of our eſtate: for in our ſelues we are ſtrangers from God, and excluded from all hope of ſaluation; but Chriſt hath *raiſed* vs vp together with him, and hath reconciled vs to his heauenly Father. Beſides, *Iſaiah* addes the benefits which we obtaine by Chriſt, after wee be reconciled.

Verſ. 9. *That thou maieſt ſay to the priſoners; Goe forth: and to them that are in darkneſſe; Shew your ſelues, they ſhall ſeeke in the waies, and their paſtures ſhall bee in all the toppes of the hilles.*

Neither light, liberty, nor ſuccour out of Chriſt.

BEhold heere a deſcription of the change, that happens at Chriſts comming. Notwithſtanding it is very ſure that the Prophet meant in this place, to giue ſome conſolation to the Iewes, things being then in ſuch a deſperate ſtate, to the end their reſtauration might not ſeeme incredible; no, not albeit they lay in *darkneſſe* of death. Yet in generall termes, he ſhewes wherein the office of Chriſt conſiſts; to wit, in reſtoring the *deſolate heritage*: verſ. 8. For before his comming, we lie *maimed* hand and foote vnder a miſerable ſlauerie, and are plunged into the *darkneſſe* of hell. By theſe two ſimilitudes then he ſhewes, that wee are wrapped in all ſorts of miſeries, as long as Chriſt is abſent from vs. For by *darkneſſe*, he excludes vs from all the benefits which appertaine to Chriſts kingdome as faith, righteouſneſſe, holineſſe, truth, and the like graces: wee are in darkneſſe then, till Chriſt ſay; *Shew your ſelues*: we are *bound*, till he cry, *Goe forth*. Now there is great weight in the clauſe; *That thou maieſt ſay*: for hee ſhewes that the preaching of the Goſpell, is the meanes by which we are deliuered. If we then deſire the *libertie* and the *light* of Gods kingdome, let vs hearken vnto the *voice* of Chriſt, for elſe we ſhall be oppreſſed vnder the perpetuall tyrannie of Satan.

Where is now the libertie of our free will? For whoſoeuer attributes to himſelfe light, reaſon, or vnderſtanding, can neuer haue part in this deliuerance by Chriſt. Why ſo? Becauſe *libertie* is promiſed to none but to ſuch as acknowledge themſelues *captiues*; nor *light* and ſaluation to any, but to ſuch as confeſſe themſelues to ſit in *darkneſſe*.

Free will.

No libertie but to ſuch as feele their captiuity: nor light, but to ſuch as confeſſe they ſit in darkneſſe.

Moreouer, in that he promiſeth Gods children that their *paſtures* ſhall bee in *all waies*, and in *all high places*: by theſe ſimilitudes hee ſhewes, that thoſe who are vnder the protection of Chriſt, ſhall fare well: for he is a vigilant and carefull ſhepheard, and furniſheth his flocke with all things neceſſarie: ſo as nothing can bee wanting vnto them, that appertaines to their ſoueraigne good. This aduertiſement was of great vſe for the Iewes, in that time in which they were to paſſe thorow hot & ſcorched paths, and to come at length into a land waſted and deſolate. The Prophet therefore ſaith; that albeit humane helpes ſhould faile, yet God of himſelfe is rich enough to ſupply all their wants. This is the reaſon why the Spirit of God delights ſo much in comparing the faithfull to *ſheep*; that feeling their owne weakneſſe, they might willingly and wholly ſubmit themſelues to bee gouerned vnder the protection of this good ſhepheard: Iohn 10.11.

But withall it is very likely that the faithfull are admoniſhed not to affect great delicates, for they ſhall neuer taſte of ſuch abundance, but they ſhall feele many wants mingled therewith. Beſides, it is not fit they ſhould bee pampered or full fed, in regard they are ſubiect to many dangers: for wee know that the *waies* are fraught with theeues and enemies, and the *tops of the mountaines* are for the moſt part barren and dry. The Church of Chriſt is ſo *defended* then, that ſhe is neuer far from aſſaults *and outrages of enemies*, and ſo *repleniſhed*, that yet *ſhe dwelles in waſte and terrible deſerts*. But howſoeuer her enemies inuiron her on euery ſide, yet the Lord protects her from their violences. If we be in hunger or want, he is ready to furniſh vs with all neceſſaries in abundance, and to nouriſh and ſuſtaine vs: yea, in theſe neceſſities, we better perceiue the care he hath of vs, then if wee were in a place of the greateſt ſafetie.

The faithfull muſt learne to want, as well as to abound.

Note.

See verſe 10.

Verſ. 10. *They ſhall not be hungrie, neither ſhall they be thirſtie, neither ſhall the heate ſmite them, nor the Sunne: for hee that hath compaſſion on them, ſhall leade them, euen to the ſprings of waters ſhall he driue them.*

THe Prophet confirmes that which was ſaid in the former verſe; to wit, that God hath prouiſion ready to ſuſtaine the Iewes in the way; ſo as no neceſſaries ſhall be wanting vnto them. And no doubt hee puts them in mind of that time in which their fathers were readie to periſh in the deſert for want of foode; in which neceſſitie, God gaue them

A confirmation of the former verſe.

Manna from heauen the ſpace of forty yeers: Exod. 16.35. Alſo in ſpeaking of the ſhadow againſt the *heat*, it is certaine that he hath reſpect to the pillar of a clowd, wherewith the Lord couered them by day, to the end they ſhould not bee parched vp with the heate of the Sunne: Exod. 14.21. For the Prophets are wont, as we haue ſaid, to mention the peoples departure out of Egypt, as oft as they were to confirme their harts in the aſſurance of Gods goodneſſe, either towards all in generall, or towards any one in particular. In that hee mentions the *ſprings of waters*, he alſo alludes to thoſe waters which iſſued out of the rocke, when the people were almoſt dead for thirſt. For theſe things fell not out in the deliuerance of Babylon, but in putting them in remembrance of former benefits, the Prophet ſets before them the power of God, which hath alwaies bin ſufficient to procure the ſaluation of the Church.

Verſ. 11. *And I will make all my mountaines as a way, and my paths ſhall be exalted.*

God the Churches companion in her pilgrimage, prouiding her of all neceſſaries.

HEheere expreſſie and fitly mentions the peoples returne: for to what purpoſe ſhould hee promiſe ſuch felicitie vnto the Church, vnleſſe they had been reſtored to their firſt libertie? Hee ſignifies then that all obſtacles and impediments ſhall be remoued, which might any way hinder their paſſage: and that the *mountaines*, the toppes whereof might ſeeme impoſſible to be climbed, ſhall be made paſſeable and eaſie to bee attained. In a word, that hee will make all rough and hillie places ſmooth, that they may with eaſe returne into Iudeah. When the Church then was to bee reſtored to her perfect eſtate, no lets whatſoeuer, were they neuer ſo great, were able ſo to ouermatch the Lord, but that in the end hee would eaſily ouercome them all.

And in that he calles them *his* mountaines; it is to ſhew, that he hath not onely power to command them to giue his people way; but he further expreſſeth, that it ſhall be himſelfe who will bring the Iewes home; no leſſe then if he went in perſon before them. He carried them vp (ſaith *Moſes*, Deut. 32.13.) to the high places of the earth, when they paſſed thorow the wilderneſſe. Alſo he ſaith, that the Lord went before the Iſraelites, when they departed out of Egypt: Exod. 13.21. Heere we ſee then what ſingular loue the Lord beares to his Church, in that hee vouchſafeth to be *a companion vnto her in her iourney*, and takes vpon him the whole care touching her neceſſarie prouiſion therein: ſo that in ſuccouring her, he ſeemes to prouide for himſelfe.

Verſ. 12. *Behold, theſe ſhall come from farre: and loe theſe from the North, and from the Weſt, and theſe from the land of Sinim.*

WHereas ſome think the Prophet notes out heere the foure quarters of the world, it hath no great likelihood. And yet I reiect not this opinion altogether, becauſe it is probable, & agrees with many other texts of Scripture. Firſt hee ſaith, theſe ſhall come *from farre*: then hee addes ſome particulars, for an expoſition of the generall ſentence. In ſtead of *Sinim*, ſome reade *Siniim*: and the Hebrewes themſelues reade it diuerſly. Saint *Ierom* thinkes it is meant of the ſouth part from Mount Sinai, lying towards the South. And this is the moſt receiued opinion. Others thinke it to be the name of a citie or region, called Sienes, ſituated towards the turning of the Sunne, when it is at the higheſt. But theſe opinions make nothing for the explanation of our Prophets meaning, which is cleere and manifeſt in it ſelfe. For doubtleſſe hee ſpeakes of ſuch as were *farre remote*, and ſcattered in diuers quarters, whether they were to be gathered in frō the North parts, or beyond the ſeas. *Iſaiah* then ſo promiſeth the returne from Babylon, that therewithall hee alſo extends this prophecie to Chriſts time: as wee may eaſilie gather from that which we haue ſaid, Chap. 36.6. For we muſt ſtill hold this principle, that the ſecond birth of the Church vnder the Kingdome of Chriſt, is heere deſcribed: for he not onely promiſeth that the Iewes ſhall returne to Ieruſalem to reedifie the Temple; but that thoſe alſo, who before were ſtrangers from the Church, ſhould be gathered from out of all quarters of the world.

Iſaiah ſo prophecieth the Iewes returne, that therewithall he alſo comprehends the kingdome of Chriſt.

S. Ierom.

A principle.

Verſ. 13. *Reioice, O heauens, and be ioyfull, O earth: breſt forth into praiſe, O mountaines; for God hath comforted his people, and will haue mercy vpon his* *afflicted.*

*Or, poore.

A thankſgiuing, in which is included a confirmation of the former promiſes.

THough hee exhorts and ſtirres vp all the faithfull to thankſgiuing: yet hee hath a ſpeciall drift to confirme that promiſe, which otherwiſe in it ſelfe ſeemed doubtfull. For our conſciences wauer, and are perplexed in affliction: ſo as it is an eaſie matter to ſettle them firmely vpon the truth of Gods promiſes. In a word, either men ſtagger, tremble, fall, or vtterly deſpaire. For if the leaſt feare, diſtreſſe, or affliction doe but ariſe, much adoe there is to faſten any conſolation vpon vs. For this cauſe we haue neede to haue our faith *confirmed* by all ſorts of arguments. See the reaſon then why *Iſaiah* ſpeakes ſo glotiouſlie of the benefite of this deliuerance; namely, to the end that the faithfull, who ſaw nothing round about them but ruine and death, might notwithſtanding bee of good comfort, and in hope to wait for an happie change. *Hee ſets the deliuerance therefore before their eies, as if it were alreadie accompliſhed*; that ſo they might haue all *matter of ioy and reioicing*: though at that time there appeared nothing but cauſe of ſorrowe and mourning.

As oft as the Lord therefore promiſeth anie mercie, let vs euer bee mindfull to ioine *praiſe* and thankſgiuing thereunto, though we ſee not the accompliſhment thereof: that ſo

Praiſes muſt be ioined to the promiſes.

ſo wee may the better *vvaken our drowzie ſpirits:* next, let vs lift vp our eies alſo to Gods power, by which he ouerrules all creatures both in heauen and in earth: for he no ſooner beckens with his finger, but they all ſtand vp together, as it is in Chap.48.13. to fulfill his commandement. If the ſignes of his admirable power then do euery where appeere, ſhall wee thinke he will not make the ſame much more glorious and admirable in the ſaluation of his Church? Vnder this figure then *Iſaiah* teacheth, that neither *the heauens, nor the earth* can yeeld a more acceptable ſeruice vnto God, then when they ioine and combine themſelues together to aide the Church.

Moreouer, that the faithfull ſhould not ſinke vnder the weight of the calamitie, before he promiſeth that God will *comfort them,* he exhorts them quietly to ſuſteine their ſorrowes. For by the word *poore,* he ſignifies that the Church in this world is ſubiect to many afflictions. Therefore that we may be fit to partake of Gods mercie, let vs learne vnder the croſſe, and vnder many miſeries, teares, and grones, to wait till we attaine vnto the poſſeſſion of it.

Verſ. 14. *But Zion ſaid, The Lord hath forſaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.*

A correction of the Iewes infidelitie.

THe Lord minding further to amplifie his grace, complaines that the hearts of the Iewes were ſo cloſed vp, that they had almoſt diſcouraged him, had not his infinite bountie ſurmounted all their peruerſe imaginations. Yet therewithall he indeuors to correct this vice, that they might ioyfullie imbrace, and (as it were) ſee the promiſed deliuerance before hand which was offred them: as alſo that ſeeing his forwardnes to ſuccor them, they on the contrarie might prepare themſelues to hope well. But this doctrine doth now alſo appertaine to vs, for when God deferres his help, all of vs for the moſt part are too much perplexed, wee thinke by and by God hath forſaken and reiected vs. And thus diſpaire eaſily preuailes, vnleſſe we be wiſe to preuent the ſame betimes: which we ought to do, leſt we be bereaued of Gods grace. Truly our infidelitie manifeſts it ſelfe to the vtmoſt in ſuch doubts, in that we neither quietly reſt vpon Gods promiſes, nor patientlie beare his corrections, which leade vs to repentance: nor yet the triall of our faith, by which he diſpoſeth vs to mortification: neither any other afflictions, which he vſeth for our humiliation. For God iuſtlie complaines of the Iewes, who by their diſtruſt reiected his ſaluation offred, and could not indure to ſtaie of his help. Now he reſtraines not this only vice to a few, but comprehends alſo the whole Church, to ſhew that he will be liberall and beneficiall towards the Iewes farre aboue the meaſure of their faith: yea, he will oppoſe himſelfe againſt their incredulitie, that he with his ſaluation may paſſe through all the lets and impediments which ſtand in his way. Let euery one of vs beware then how we flatter or ſooth vp our ſelues in this vice, for the Lord pleades againſt his *Zion,* that is to ſay the whole Church, *becauſe ſhe vſeth ſuch ſpeeches as ſauour and proceed from a (bitter) roote of diſtruſt.*

Verſ. 15. *Can a woman forget her child, and not haue cõpaſſion of the ſonne of her womb? though they ſhould forget, yet will not I forget thee.*

An exhortation, full of ſweet conſolation.

TO correct this diſtruſt, to the complaint he addes an exhortation ful of ſweet conſolation. For by a very fit ſimilitude he ſhews what great care ỹ Lord hath ouer his Church in comparing him *to a mother,* whoſe *entire affection* and care is ſo great towards *her child,* that the fathers loue in compariſon thereof is as nothing. He propounds it not then, you ſee, in the example of a father, which notwithſtanding is often vſed: Deut.32.6. 2.Cor. 6.18. but that he might the better expreſſe his ſingular loue, he rather compares him *to a mother:* and he names not children only, but *the fruit of the vvomb,* to which vſuallie the woman beares much greater affection. For the loue that a mother beares towards the little one which ſhe nouriſheth and ſuckleth at her breſt, is almoſt vnutterable. Alſo what care doth ſhe vſe, euen to ſpend many nights together without ſleepe, by reaſon of the frowardnes of the childe! And to ſpeake all in a word, ſhe ſpares not to waſt and conſume her ſelfe dayly, ſo as *her loue* makes her cleane *forget herſelfe.* And this care wee ſee is not only in the reaſonable creatures, but in the vnreaſonable alſo: yea, euen in wilde beaſts, who yet are gentle and louing in this behalfe, howſoeuer otherwiſe they be of cruell and fierce natures.

Now in regard women ſometimes proue more vnnaturall then wilde beaſts, yea, and ouercome them in crueltie, by neglecting *the fruit of their bodies,* the Lord addes, that if this ſhould fall out, that yet he will *neuer forget his people.* For the firme and vnmoueable affection he beares vs, farre ſurmounts the vehement loue and amitie of all fathers and mothers in the world. Let vs then call to minde what Chriſt ſaith, Math.7.11. If you which are euill can giue good things to your children, how much more will your heauenly father? Is it poſſible that he ſhould emptie himſelfe of this fatherly affection? No verily. Men which are of peruerſe natures, and loue themſelues, yet will not neglect their children, and will the Lord (the fountaine of mercie, who needs nothing, but giues to all men liberallie, and hath not the leſſe) neglect his Church? Wherefore howſoeuer it falles out ſometimes that mothers reiect and forſake their children (which yet is prodigious) yet notwithſtanding, God, who loues his children with a ſtable, conſtant, and perpetuall loue, will neuer reiect them. To conclude then, our Prophet heere ſets out the ineſtimable care of God, who watcheth night and day for our ſaluation, to aſſure vs, that he will neuer leaue nor forſake vs, though we be toſ-

Chap.27.2.3 Hebr.13.5.

sed to and fro with many and great calamities.

Vers. 16. *Behold, I haue grauen thee vpon the palmes of* mine *hands: thy walles are euer in my sight.*

Gods loue to his Church set forth by another similitude.

BY another similitude he sets forth this inestimable care that God hath ouer vs. We vse to say, in our common prouerb, That one hath that vpon his fingers ends, which is seriouslie imprinted in his memorie. And when *Moses* commands a dayly meditation in Gods law, he saith, Thou shalt bind them vpon *thine hands*, Deuter. 6.8. that so they might alwaies haue Gods commandements before their eies. Heere our Prophet vseth the same similitude, as if he should say, I can no sooner looke vpō my hands, but I behold thee there: I beare thee so ingrauen vpon my heart, that nothing is able to blot out the remembrance of thee: In a word, I can not forget thee, but I should also forget my selfe. True it is that GOD hath neither *hands*, nor any bodily shape: but thus it pleaseth the holy Ghost to stoupe downe to our slender and weake capacities, that he might the better set forth the infinite loue which he beares vs. And because the Church is in many places called the Temple, or Citie of God (whence also comes that similitude of building so much frequented in the scriptures, Psal. 102.16. Ier. 24. 6. Math. 16.18.) therefore the Prophet brings in the similitude of *walles*: by which hee notes out the quiet and peaceable estate of the Church: as if he should say, I will alwaies see that Ierusalem shall florish, and be in good plight. Whence also we obserue, that heere is set forth vnto vs a right order of gouernment and discipline, whereof the Lord will be the perpetuall protector and defender, as himselfe heere protests. Let vs also remember that this propheſie tooke place in that wofull desolation when the walles of Ierusalem (which were the liuely image of the Church) were throwne downe, the Temple raced, good gouernment abolished, and in a word, when all things were out of ioint, and almost brought to vtter confusion: for he promiseth that all the Churches priuiledges shall forthwith be restored to their first perfection.

A right order of discipline described.

Ierusalems walls a liuely image of the Church.

Vers. 17. *Thy builders make haste: thy destroyers, and they that haue made thee waste, are departed from thee.*

An amplification of the former vers.

HE amplifies that which he touched in briefe in the former verse: for his speech might haue bin esteemed ridiculous & vaine, concerning this continuall care that God hath ouer the Church, and her walles, which he now suffered to be raced to the very foundations. For this cause, I say, he addes an exposition, to wit, that it is ruinated indeed, but ere long it shall be reedified anew.

The right way to re-paire the Churches ruines.

From this word *builders*, wee may gather wherin the right way of repayring the church consists; namely, if the Lord bee pleased to send forth *master Carpenters and Masons to frame it anew*. Secondly, in driuing out the *destroiers*, which build not, but breake downe. For albeit God can build vp his church without the helpe of men, yet is he pleased to vse their labours: and howsoeuer he finisheth the whole building himselfe alone, by the secret worke of his holy Spirit, yet hee blesseth the indeuors of his seruants, that the same should not become altogether vnfruitfull. To him we must pray, and from him alone wee must expect workemen; for hee is able to fit them with gifts and graces, and to appoint out to euery one his taske, as Saint *Paul* saith, 2. Cor. 3.5. Thus wee are then, not onely to pray that God would send forth labourers into his harueſt, but also that he would furnish them with power and efficacie, that they may not bestow their paines in vaine. Is the doctrine of the Gospell then preached with some fruit? It comes to passe by the singular goodnesse of God. *Mat. 9.38.*

But this were not enough, vnlesse he therwithall should driue *farre off* the *destroiers*: for Satan inuades and assaults the Church by infinit waies: neither wants hee his suppostes and catchpoles, who imploy all their forces either to slake, hinder, or ouerthrow the Lords building: and therefore we ought continually to pray, that God would still defeate all their enterprises. But if that good be not done, which we desire, let vs accuse our selues and our owne ingratitude; for the Lord is readie to bestow his benefits vpon vs in great abundance.

Vers. 18. *Lift vp thine eies round about, and behold; all these gather themselues together, and come to thee: As I liue, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely put them all vpon thee as a garment, and gird thy selfe with them like a bride.*

The Church is exhorted to behold her glory in the middest of her greatest ruines.

HE awakens the Church by setting her deliuerance before her eies, to the end she might view this so glorious a worke, & might *behold the troopes of men* which should flow in vnto her on euery side. Now as this *gathering together*, serued to sustaine the mindes of the faithfull in captiuitie: so was it their duties, who saw it accomplished indeede, to render thanks vnto God. Whence it appeares, that this prophecie was of good vse in both the times; as well whilest their deliuerance was yet hidden vnder hope, as when it was ratified by the effects. And albeit also he speakes to the Church in generall, yet this speech belongs to euery one in particular: that so, all generally, and euery one particularly, might imbrace these promises.

When hee commands them to *lift vp their eies*, it is to shew, that the cause which mouet vs to faint, is, in that we doe not so diligentlie obserue the work of the Lord as we ought; but suffer our eies to bee couered as it were with a vaile, by reason whereof, wee cannot see three paces before vs. Thence also it comes,

comes, that we can hardly conceiue any hope, but are euer and anon plunged into deſpaire, when the leaſt troubles ariſe.

Vſe to vs.

Now if this bee ſaid of the whole Church, let euery man examine his owne heart, and ſee how ſubiect he is to this vice; and let him euer ſtirre vp, yea awaken his ſpirits, to behold the workes of the Lord, and to reſt himſelfe vpon his promiſes with his whole heart.

In that he ſaith, the children of the church ſhall be *gathered*, the meaning is, to bee one bodie with Chriſt, and as one fold vnder one ſhepheard, we muſt be gathered into one lap of the Church. For Chriſt holds none other to be in the number of his ſheepe, but ſuch as are ioined into one body by the vnitie of one faith: Iohn 10. 16. *Whoſoeuer shee would bee accounted among Gods children, let him be a childe of the Church: for as many as are ſeparate from her, ſhall alwaies bee held as ſtrangers before God.*

Chriſt holds none for his ſheepe, but ſuch as are made one with him by faith.

As a garment, or, *ornament.*] The Prophet ſhewes wherein the chiefe ornament of the Church conſiſts; to wit, in hauing many children gathered into her lap by faith, and gouerned by the Spirit of God. Behold the true beautie; behold the glorie of the Church; which otherwiſe is deformed, and ill fauoured, yea torne and rent in pieces, if ſhe be deſtituted *of theſe ornaments.* Heereby we ſee that the Papiſts haue great skill in diſcerning of the right ornaments of the Church: for they pleaſe themſelues in nothing but crucifixes, paintings, images, ſtately buildings, gold, precious ſtones, and glorious veſtments: that is to ſay, in bables and puppets, fit for little children. But the true dignitie and glorie of the Church is all inward: Pſal. 45. 13. becauſe it conſiſts in the gifts and graces of the holy Ghoſt; in a word, it conſiſts in faith, and in good workes. Whence it followes, that ſhe is then clothed with royall robes, when people being knit together by faith, doe aſſemble into her lap, and worſhip God in ſpirit and in truth.

Wherein the chiefeſt ornament of the Church conſiſts.

With what ornaments the Church of Rome deckes her ſelfe.

Faith and good workes the beauty of the Church.

Now that this promiſe might haue the greater weight, the Lord addes an *oath*, that he might draw vs to credit the ſame; to the end that when the Church (as we thinke) is at the very pits brinke, we ſhould then wait and expect her reſtauration. Which doctrine, if euer there were neede of it, it is now much more. For whither ſoeuer we turne our eies, what ſee wee elſe but horrible deſolations? What are we to doe then? Let vs deliuer our ſoules from deſpaire, by ſtaying our ſelues vpon this *oath*, *As I liue?* And let not our ſmall number diſmay vs, though for that cauſe the world deſpiſeth and diſgraceth vs. No, the Lord, we doubt not, hath his elect ſcattered heere and there, whom at the length he will aſſuredly *gather* into his Church. Let vs plucke vp our ſpirits then, and *lift vp our eies* by a true faith, that wee may not onely extend our hopes to one age, but to many.

The vſe to vs.

Verſ. 19. *For thy deſolations and waſte places, and thy land deſtroied, ſhall ſurely be now narrow for the that ſhal dwel in it: and they that deuoure thee ſhall be farre away.*

HE confirmes that which went before, but in other words; to wit, that the change by him promiſed, is in Gods hand, who will cauſe his Church, which hath a long time lien *deſolate* and *waſte*, to be ſuddenly *inhabited* againe; and that in ſuch wiſe, as the *land* ſhall not be *large* enough to containe ſo manie inhabitants. He vſeth a ſimilitude of a Citie broken downe, whoſe walles and buildings are reedified: vnto which alſo the people flow in ſuch troopes, that the bounds thereof muſt be inlarged, becauſe the firſt circuits are too *narrow* for them all. And thus he not onely ſpeakes of the peoples returne from Babylon, but alſo of that reſtauration wrought by Chriſt, when the Church was not onely ſpread thorowout Iudea, but alſo thorowout all the quarters of the world.

A confirmation of the former ſentence.

Moreouer, he addes that ſuccours ſhall be in a readineſſe to defend the Church againſt her enemies, which would moleſt her with outrages and iniuries. Theſe ſhall not be able to hurt her. Why ſo? God will driue them *farre away*: not that the Church had euer any perfect reſt in this world, or could be exempt from all violence of enemies: but howſoeuer it be, God, who ſtill ſupports the infirmities of his ſeruants, hath alwaies reſiſted the wicked, repreſſed, or vtterly defeated their plots, that ſo the kingdome of Satan might neuer waxe great by the ruines of the Church.

The Church attaines not a full reſt in this world.

Verſ. 20. *The children of thy barrennes ſhall ſay againe in thine eares; The place is ſtrait for mee, giue places to me that I may dwell.*

I*Saiah* goes on with the ſame argument, and vnder another figure, promiſeth the Churches reſtauration. Now he compares her to a widow (or rather to a wife) that is barren: to ſet forth the miſerable and deſolate condition of this people, who were oppreſſed vnder ſo many euils, that the memory of that nation was in a maner extinct: for they were mingled among the Chaldeans, who held them priſoners; ſo as they were almoſt incorporated into one body with them. Wee are not to maruell then if he cõpares the church *to a barren wife*, for that conceiued no more children in her wombe. In former time the Iewes floriſhed; but now their kingdome was torne in ſunder, their power vtterly ouerthrowne, and their name in a manner buried in oblivion, when they were led into captiuitie.

The ſame argument ſtill proſecuted.

Hee promiſeth then that the Church ſhall come forth of theſe ſinkes, and that ſhe who now ſits ſolitarie, ſhall returne to her firſt eſtate. Which is ſignified by the word *againe*: for thereby he aſſures them, that God was able to render them that *againe*, which in former time he had beſtowed vpõ them, though

now for a season he had depriued them thereof.

Whereas many take *children of barrennes* for orphelins, me thinks it sutes not with the text, because widowhood and barrennes is referred rather to the person of the Church. And therefore by way of amplification he calles them so, who beyond all hope were giuen to her that was a widow and barren.

Giue place:] That is to say, for my sake giue way. Not that it is seemely for the faithfull to driue their brethren out of ỹ place wherein they dwell: but the Prophet borrowed a phrase of speech which is commonly vsed, to signifie, that no incõmoditie whatsoeuer shall hinder many from desiring to be receiued, and that place may be giuen them. This came to passe when the Lord gathered an infinite number of soules from all parts of the world. For in a moment, and aboue mans reason the Church which was *emptie* before, was repleniſhed: *her bounds were enlarged*, and extended farre and neere.

Vers. 21. *Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I am barren and desolate, a captiue, and a wanderer to and fro? And who hath nourished them? Behold, I was left alone: Whence are these?*

The Church brought in, admiring her extraordinarie exaltation,

BY these words he shewes, that the restauration of the Church whereof he now speakes, shall be admirable: and therefore he brings her in wondring, yea astonished, that she is exalted by so extraordinarie and vnexpected a maner. And to say the truth, this is no superfluous description. For the children of God, and of the Church, are not made new creatures by the will of flesh and blood, but by the secret vertue of the holy Ghost; neither are they borne into this world as we see men dayly haue a new of-spring to repleniſh common-wealths, for naturallie we haue no part in the kingdome of God. If any mah then will but consider of this new and vnaccustomed change, and then by what meanes the Church was *multiplied* and *nourished* a lõg time in her poore estate, he shall be constreined to *admire and wonder thereat.*

Now he shewes that this shall be no fained admiratiõ, in which arte flatterers haue great skill, but it shall proceed from a true affection of the heart. Why so? Because there shall be iust occasion *to wonder*, in regard the Lord hath so long, and in so many dangers not only preserued his Church, but hath made it multiplie into a new generation vnhoped for. For who would haue imagined that when the Iewes were in the most contemptible condition that might be, couered ouer as it were with miseries and reproches, that any one of the Gentiles *would haue desired fellowship with such?* Moreouer, there was no likelihood that mens minds could fetle so sudden an alteration as to ioine themselues to such a religion as themselues both hated, and despised before: nay more then that, the wall of separation then stood, which shut out all strangers and vncircumcised ones from entring into the Church of God.

But he addes the reason of so great an astoniſhment, to wit, that she was *barren* before, and therefore was vtterlie destituted of children. For the word of God which is the spirituall seed wherewith the children of the Church were begotten, ceased: the sacrifices also were broken off: in a word, whatsoeuer serued to maintaine a state in perfection, was abeliſhed.

Besides, the Church is called *barren*, not because God euer forsakes her, but in regard his gracious presence doth not alwaies appeare. We saw a wofull spectacle of this *barrennes* when the Lord to puniſh mens ingratitude tooke from vs his blessed truth, and suffred vs to walke and erre in darknes, then we might well say that shee was a widow and barren indeed, when she was left quite destitute of children. Hence also we may perceiue how fooliſh the Papists are, in that they will alwaies haue Christ so to dispose of his Church, that she must neuer know the state of widowhood nor barrennes. For howsoeuer the Lord at no time vtterlie reiects his Church, yet he often withdrawes from her the signes of his presence, because of the worlds vnthankfulnes.

A wofull spectacle of the Churches barrennes seene in our times.

Who hath nourished these?] Those who are baniſhed and often remoue their habitation can not well nouriſh nor bring vp children: So, when the law and doctrine of godlines sounds no more in the Temples, spirituall nouriſhment must needs faile. But the Lord who stands in no need of humane helps, begets vnto himselfe children after an extraordinarie maner, by the incredible vertue of his holy Spirit, and these he nouriſheth, how, and in what place it pleaseth him. Now to accompliſh this propheſie, he hath contrarie to all hope, raised vp nurses, so as the Church *admires not without cause* at the fostering and bringing vp of her children.

Vse.

When we reade this propheſie we are admoniſhed not to vex our selues aboue measure if at any time we see the Church left like a widow. Neither so farre to giue way to distrust, as to thinke that God who is all sufficient, can not in a moment renue and restore her to a perfect estate, though for the present we see no likelihood nor appearance at all of it.

Vers. 22. *Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will lift vp mine hand to the Gentiles, and set vp my standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sonnes in* their *armes: and thy daughters shall be carried vpon* their *shoulders.*

A confirmation added to the Churches admiration.

I *Saiah* cõfirmes that which he said erewhile, to wit, that ỹ Lord would cause the Church which a long time was a widow and barren, to bring forth an innumerable of-spring, so as her selfe should be constrained to admire at her owne fruitfulnes. And this he doth to remoue all scruples and doubtings, which peraduenture might arise in their minds. But the

the Lord pronounceth, that he will not only giue children to his Church among the Iewes (as in former time) but among the Gentiles alſo: and yet he ſhewes, that this generation ſhal be ſpirituall, to wit, by the grace of adoption. To which purpoſe appertaines the ſimilitude of the *ſtandard*, for thereby he incourageth the faithfull to hope for a new kinde of generation, far different from that which we ſee in the common courſe of nature. It was neceſſarie then that the Lord ſhould ſet vp his *ſtandard*, and to diſcouer his ſecret power by the preaching of the Goſpell, that among ſo many ſorts of languages and differing diſpoſitions, he might bring children to the Church, and to be made one with her in the ſame faith, euen as brethren gather together into the lap of their mother.

The preaching of the Goſpell, and the efficacie of the holy Ghoſt muſt goe together.

Thoſe are deceiued who by the metaphor of the *hand*, and *ſtandard*, thinke the preaching of the Goſpell is only ſignified, ſeparating it from the efficacie of the holy Ghoſt, for both muſt be conioined together. The vertue of the holy Ghoſt muſt in no wiſe be ſeparated (I ſay) from the preaching of the Goſpell, witneſ 2.Cor.3.6. We muſt run therefore to this 1 *hand* of God, and to this *ſtandard*, when we ſee 2 the Church oppreſſed vnder the tyrannie of the wicked. For albeit they be euer plotting all ſorts of miſchiefe vtterlie to ouerturne it, yet is Gods *hand* ſtronger then all, and men *Iob.9.4.* in the end ſhall gaine nothing by reſiſting him, for at laſt he wil ſubdue and bring down their rebellion, that his Church may haue ſome breathing time in deſpite of them all. In that he promiſeth the childrē of ỹ Church ſhall be brought in betweene the *armes*, and vpon the *ſhoulders*, it is a figuratiue maner of ſpeech, in which he would ſignifie that God will no way be hindred, when he meanes to gather his Church from the ſcattering, wherin he ſhal find her, becauſe all the *Gentiles* ſhal help him. And howſoeuer this be in the firſt place to the baniſhed and diſperſed Iewes, yet no doubt it is to be extended vnto all Gods elect in all places, who are, or ſhall be receiued in, to participate of the ſame grace.

Verſ. 23. *And Kings ſhall be thy nurſing fathers, and Queenes ſhall be thy nurſes: they ſhall worſhip thee with their faces towards the earth, and lick vp the duſt of thy feet: and thou ſhalt know that I am the Lord: for* * *they ſhall not be aſhamed that wait for me.*

* Or, all.

HAuing ſpoken of the obedience of the Gentiles, he ſhewes, that it not only appertaines to the common people, but euen to *Kings* alſo, whom he compares to *foſterfathers*, who bring vp other mens childrē, and *Queens* to milch nurſes, which are hired forth for that purpoſe. Why ſo? Becauſe *Kings* and *Queenes* ſhall furniſh ỹ Church with all things neceſſarie for her children. For whereas before *they* baniſhed Chriſt out of all their coaſts, now they ſhall from henceforth acknowledge him for their ſouereigne King, and ſhall yeeld him honor, homage, and ſeruice. And all this came to paſſe after God manifeſted himſelfe to all the world by his Goſpel, for the great Kings and Princes therof not only ſubmitted themſelues vnder the yoke of Chriſt, but alſo imployed their wealth & riches to reſtore & maintaine the Church, ſo as they became the protectors and defenders of it.

Whence we note, that a ſpeciall and particular dutie is heere required of Princes, beſides their ordinarie profeſſion of the Chriſtian faith. Why ſo? Becauſe the Lord hath clothed them with power and authoritie, to the end they ſhould prouide for the Churches good, and alſo procure the glorie of God. I grant this dutie belongs to euery one, but by how much the greater power Princes are indued withall, the more carefull ſhould they be to imploy their ſtudies and paines about theſe things. That is the cauſe why *Dauid* expreſly names them, and exhorts them to be wiſe, to ſerue the Lord with feare, and to kiſſe his Sonne, Pſal.2.10.11. Hence alſo we may diſcerne of their follie and madnes, who affirme that Kings can be no Chriſtians vnleſſe they giue ouer this office and dignitie. For this was accompliſhed vnder the kingdome of Chriſt, when *Kings* being conuerted vnto God by the preaching of the Goſpell, came to this hie degree and dignitie, which far ſurmount all ſorts of rule and principalities, to wit, to be the *nurſing fathers*, and defendors of the Church.

A ſpeciall and particular dutie required heere in Kings and Princes.

The follie of ſuch as affirme that Kings can be no Chriſtians vnleſſe they giue ouer their dignities.

The Papiſts thinke none can be right nurſing fathers to the Church vnleſſe they leaue vnto Prieſts, Monks, and idle bellies, great reuenues, large poſſeſſions, & fat prebendaries, to fatten them vp as ſwine in a ſtie. But this *nouriſhment* tends to a far other end, then to cramme and ſtuffe the guts of ſuch a companie of inſaciable gulphs. For the queſtion is not here touching the inriching of their houſes, who vnder a fained pretence of holines will needs be taken for the Miniſters of the Church (who haue bin the only poyſoners and corrupters of the Church of God, with the deadly venome of the whores cup) but rather to roote out Superſtitions, and vtterlie to ouerthrow all Idolatrie, to aduance the kingdome of Chriſt, to conſerue the puritie of doctrine, to remoue ſcandalles and offences, and to purge out the filthie dregges of falſe doctrine, whereby the wholeſome doctrine of God is corrupted, and whereby his glorie is darkned and obſcured.

After what maner Kings ought to be nurſing fathers to the Church.

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When Kings haue taken order for theſe things, then are they alſo to furniſh the Paſtors and Miniſters of the word with all things neceſſarie, let them relieue the poore, and looke that the Church ſuſteine not by their negligence beggerie, or vndecent wants. Then let them erect Schooles, and endow them with ſufficient pentions for the teachers: let them foſter and cheriſh Studients, let them build Hoſpitals for the aged and diſeaſed, and performe other offices which ſerue for the maintenance and conſer-

Paſtors.

The poore Schooles erected and endowed with ſufficient penſions.

Building of Hoſpitals.

conſeruation of the Church. But theſe exceſſiue expences ſuperfluouſlie beſtowed towards the founding of Maſſes and Oratories, and imploied for the making of veſſels of gold and ſiluer, rich & gorgeous veſtments, in which Papiſts glory and brag; only ſerues for a pompe and ambition to corrupt the pure and ſincere nouriſhment of the Church; yea, to choke and extinguiſh Gods ſeede, which is the onely food by which the Church liues.

If Kings in ſtead of nurcing fathers to the Church, become tormenters of her, it is the iuſt reward of our ſins.

Now when we ſee things otherwiſe carried at this day; to wit, that *Kings* in ſtead of *nurcing fathers* to the Church, become tormentors & deſtroiers of the Church, that the true doctrine is reiected, the faithfull Miniſters baniſhed, and that greaſie idle paunches, inſatiable gulfes, and ſuppoſts of Satan are put in their roomes, (for to ſuch, Princes diſtribute their riches: that is to ſay, the blood of the people which they haue ſucked) when alſo thoſe Princes, who otherwiſe being faithfull, yet wanting power, and therefore hauing little or no courage to defend the word, or to maintaine the church. Let vs acknowledge that this is the iuſt reward of our iniquities, and let vs confeſſe that wee be vnworthy to inioy ſuch good *nurcing fathers*. Notwithſtanding after theſe ſo horrible ruines, wee muſt be euer waiting and looking for the reſtauration of the Church; and for ſuch a conuerſion of Kings, as that they ſhall ſhew themſelues fathers and protectors of the faithfull, and ſuch as ſhall conſtantly vphold the doctrine of the word in their dominions.

They ſhall licke the duſt of thy feete.] The Papiſts in like manner offer violence to this place, to eſtabliſh the tyrannie of their Idoll: as if forſooth, Kings and Princes could not otherwiſe ſhew themſelues the true and lawfull ſeruants of God, vnleſſe in his ſtead they ſhould fall downe at the feete of their diſguiſed head of the Church. This they account a teſtimonie of great ſeruice done to God, when they will abaſe themſelues to kiſſe his feete with great reuerence. But firſt of all, if they will know what an opinion we ought to conceiue of ſuch an idolatrous and barbarous reuerence, let them learne it from Saint *Peter*, whoſe ſeat they brag to hold: for hee would not ſuffer *Cornelius* the Centurion to doe him ſuch reuerence: Act. 10. 26. Let them alſo learne it from Saint *Paul*, what to doe in this caſe, who rent his garments, and reiected this honour with great deteſtation: Act. 14. 14. Is any thing more abſurd then to ſay that the Sonne of God, in ſtead of ordaining a Miniſter of the Goſpell, ſhould conſecrate a prophane King, exerciſing a Perſian-like, pompous ſtate, vtterly inſupportable? But let vs remember that whileſt the Church is a pilgrime in this world, that ſhee may bee humbled, and that ſhee may bee conformed to Chriſt her head, ſhee is ſubiect to the croſſe. And if her enemies giue her any reſt, yet you ſhall perceiue that her cheefeſt glory and beautie conſiſts in modeſtie. Whence it followes, that ſhee is ſtripped of her ornaments, when ſhee is decked with a prophane arrogancie.

S. Peter.

S. Paul.

The Pope a prophane King.

The Churches cheefeſt glory conſiſts in humilitie.

The Prophet then by theſe words vnderſtands nothing elſe but *that adoration* by which Princes humble themſelues before God, and that obedience which they yeeld to his word in the Church: for we muſt carefully beare in mind what hath been ſaid before; to wit, that the honour which is done to the Church, muſt neuer be ſeparated from her head. For this honour and ſeruice appertaines vnto Chriſt: and if it be in any ſort attributed to the Church, it is in ſuch wiſe, that it alwaies remaines intirely to her onely head. Adde alſo that Kings doe not ſubmit themſelues to the true religion, that they ſhould beare the *yoke of men*, but that they might ſubmit themſelues to the doctrine of Chriſt. Who euer he be then that reiects the Miniſters of the church, and refuſeth to beare the yoke which God impoſeth vpon all his ſeruants by her hand: ſuch a one hath no communion with Chriſt, neither can hee be the child of God.

The honour done to the church, muſt neuer be ſeparated from her head.

Hee is no child of God, that will not beare the yoke which he impoſeth vpon him by the Churches hand.

For thoſe that wait for me, &c.] I take the word *Aſcher*, for a particle of rendring a reaſon: for the words runne on ſo in a line, that thoſe who diuide them, doe much darken the Prophets meaning. For by this argument, he proues that it is good reaſon Kings and Princes ſhould cheereſully bow vnder Gods gouernment, and need neuer be ſquemiſh to humble themſelues before the Church; becauſe God will not permit any that wait for him, to be aſhamed. As if he ſhould ſay; This ſhall be no ſlauiſh, but an honourable and an amiable ſubiection.

No ſlauiſh, but an honorable ſubiection, to humble our ſelues before the Church.

Now he ioines his truth with our ſaluation: as if he ſhould ſay; Let me be held neither for *God, nor true of my word*, if I accompliſh not that which I haue promiſed. Hence we gather an ineſtimable fruit. For as it is impoſſible that God ſhould lie or repent, ſo is it neceſſarie that the ſtablenes of our ſaluation, which the Prophet drawes from *the truth of God himſelfe*, ſhould euer remaine ſtedfaſt, without being moued or ſhaken.

Verſ. 24. *Shall the pray be taken from the mightie? O the iuſt captiuitie deliuered?*

25. *But thus ſaith the Lord; Euen the captiuitie of the mightie ſhall bee taken away, and the pray of the tyrant ſhall be deliuered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will ſaue thy children.*

HAuing anſwered an obiection in the former verſe, which might ariſe in the minds of the faithfull: now hee confirmes this ſolution yet better. For it ſeemed a thing *incredible* that the Iewes ſhould *euer be deliuered* from vnder the hands of ſo mightie an enemie, who held them priſoners *by the law of armes*, and had iuſtly ſubdued them vnder bondage. He addes this interrogation then (as it were) in the perſon of all the common people, who, as it is likely, had this ſpeech rife in their mouthes: to which he makes anſwer, as wee ſhall

Godteſtifieth in theſe verſes, that he will oppoſe his power againſt the power of ſuch as tyrannize ouer his Church, be they viſible or inuiſible aduerſaries.

ſhall ſee anon. But firſt we muſt obſerue the ſimilitude, in that the Church is called *the pray of the mightie*, and *the iuſt captiuitie*: that is to ſay, lawfull. For he is called a iuſt poſſeſſor, which hath gotten it lawfully: as in a iuſt war, he that takes the ſpoile, is the iuſt poſſeſſor of it. Such was the condition of this ancient people, whileſt they were in exile; for they loſt both their *Countrie* and *libertie* together, and the *vanquiſhers vvill* onelie was a *law*?

But yet we are diligently to obſerue this ſimilitude; to wit, that the Church ſhould be oppreſſed by the tyrannie of Princes, & made a pray to the throte of wolues: and yet notwithſtanding ſhee ſhould be eſteemed good purchaſe, yea eſteemed a *iuſt captiuitie*. What is more vniuſt? But thus were our fathers handled: and are we better or more worthy then they? But let them boaſt as long as they liſt of their iuſt captiuitie, and let them glory at their pleaſure in this vaine title, the Lord pronounceth them abominable (cut-throtes) and theeues, in affirming that he will bee auenged of them, *and plucke the pray out of their teeth*, for God vſeth not to ouerthrow *iuſt poſſeſſors*. Whence it followes, that the dominion which they vſurped ouer Gods people, was an vniuſt tyrannie, and plaine robberie. Neither could their weapons nor munitions hinder the Lord from taking from them, that which they vnlawfully detained.

And this promiſe ſtands in force not onely againſt tyrants, and viſible enemies, but alſo againſt the tyranny of Satan, from which we are now deliuered by the admirable power of God. I grant, Satan is a powerfull aduerſarie; but the Lord, which is ſtronger then he, will bind him, and take away his weapons, and caſt downe his ſtrong holds, that he may reſtore vs vnto liberty: Mat.12.29. Haue wee tried the power of God then in this behalfe? The greater reaſon haue we to relie vpon his deliuerance ſtill, as oft as our enemies tread vs vnder their feete, and tyrannize ouer vs with cruelties. 2.Cor.1.10.

Now when he ſaith, he will *contend* for our ſakes: firſt, he therein brings vs to the conſideration of his power, that wee ſhould not iudge of things either by common reaſon, nor yet by the ſtrength of mans arme. Wee muſt not look then vpon *that* which we are able to doe, or to the meanes which we haue in a readineſſe; but commit the whole ſum of our affaires vnto the good will of God, who vouchſafes both to care for vs, and to defend vs. And not onely ſo, but aſſures vs that he is furniſhed with ſtrong arguments, to anſwer all the ſlanders of our aduerſaries. For we haue ſaid a little before, that the wicked doe not onely aduance themſelues, by violence and crueltie againſt the Church; but do alſo lode her with infinit ſlaunders, as if they had *iuſt occaſion* giuen them to tyrannize ouer her.

Is not this conſolation more then needefull then; to wit, *that God* will maintaine our innocencie, and by his *allegations*, will cauſe the vaine pretext to vaniſh, which may anie way ſerue to augment the crueltie and impudencie of the godleſſe? Therefore it is that hee addes once more, *And I vvill ſaue*. Heere then you ſee wee haue a ſingular conſolation, knowing that we are made one with the Lord in ſo faſt a couenant, that hee *oppoſeth* himſelfe againſt all thoſe that *contend with vs*. So as he will bleſſe thoſe that bleſſe vs; and on the contrary, will curſe thoſe that curſe vs: in a word, hee teſtifies that he is *an enemie* to *our enemies*. From this word *ſaue*, we muſt alſo note, that whē we are ſet free from bondage, and defended againſt the furie of our enemies, or *ſaue*; hat we impute not theſe things to the worke of fleſh & blood: leſt any ſhould aſcribe that to his owne induſtry, which God commands vs wholly to expect and *vvait for onely from himſelfe*, in regard it is a ſingular benefit that proceeds from his hand. See Chap. 26.12.

Verſ. 26. *And I will feed them that ſpoile thee with their owne fleſh, and they ſhall be drunken with their owne blood, as with ſweet wine: and all fleſh ſhall know that I the Lord am thy ſauiour, and thy redeemer, the mighty one of Iakob.*

IN the firſt place hee ſhewes what ſhall become of the enemies of Gods Church, threatning that the time wil ſhortly approch, in which they being enraged and *ſet on fire vvith hearts burnings* one againſt another, ſhall at laſt *butcher* one another. Truly *is is the Lord* which depriues them of reaſon, and plungeth them into frenzies, and that in ſuch wiſe, that they bend againſt themſelues the very weapons, which in times paſt they had drawne forth to maſſacre the Church withall. And thus they *turne their ſwords points one againſt another*, till they haue ſought their owne vtter ruine, as the Madianites did: Iudg.7.22. The ſumme of all is, that the Church ſhall haue no need of mans helpe, nor of any preparation at all, when God is minded to confound and bring the wicked to nought: *for hauing firſt ſmitten them vvith giddineſſe*, they ſhall fall to eat and deuoure one another, being ſet on fire with the furies of hell, euery one againſt his fellow. The chu ches enemies ſhall at length turne their ſwords points againſt themſelues, which they drew forth to maſſacre her withall.

And all fleſh ſhall know.] Hee repeates the ſame thing which wee haue ſeene in verſe 23. namely, that the time ſhall come, in which *the God of Iſraal ſhall be acknowledged of all, the true and onely God*: becauſe he hath *ſaued* his people from deſtruction. For he would haue this to be noted as a ſpeciall teſtimonie of his Diuinitie, when hee appeared in all mens ſight the *ſauiour* and *redeemer* of his people. Some reade the name of *Iakob* in the vocatiue caſe: but I expond it in the genitiue. For the Lord ſhews that he is the *ſauiour*, redeemer, and the *mightie one* of *Iakob*; that his people might learne to reſt themſelues ſecurely vnder his ſauegard and protection.

CHAP.

THE L. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Thus saith the Lord; Where is that bill of your mothers diuorcement, whom I haue cast off? or who is the creditor to whom I sold you? Behold, for your iniquities are you sold; and because of your transgressions is your mother forsaken.*

The Lord proues the lawfulnes of the Churches diuorce, vnder two similitudes.

THis place is diuersly expounded: but very few haue attained ỳ Prophets meaning. To the end wee may haue the sum briefly, we must note this *coniunction*, whereby the Lord in manie places testifies, that his people are obliged and bound vnto him: namely, that he is as it were our husband, and we his wife: for it is a spirituall mariage consecrated by his eternall word, and sealed vp with the blood of Iesus Christ. As he then for his part receiues vs into his protection as his beloued wife, vpon condition that wee keepe faith and loyaltie towards him: so when we play false with him, he reiects vs; and then it is rightly said, that *he puts vs away*: euen as if a husband should banish an adulterous wife his house. Now, because wee could not easilie conceiue the reason why God should reiect the Iews which were pressed vnder so many and great calamities, it was necessarie she should here come to manifest the cause of this *diuorce*. But for as much as we are ordinarily too eloquent in couering of our owne faults, and striue to lay all the blame where we should not; that is to say, vpon God himselfe: so the Iewes also then murmured at their estate, as if the Lord had done them wrong so to reiect them. Why so? Because they could not bee brought to acknowledge that the promises were made vneffectual, and the couenant abolished by their leaud behauiour. At least they could not be drawne to make this confession, but with much adoe: for they posted ouer their fault to their predecessors, as if *they* forsooth had borne the punishment of their offences. From thence proceeded those complaints recited by *Ezekiel*; Our fathers haue eaten sower grapes, and our teeth are set on edge: Ezek. 18.2. Now because such prouerbs at that time went currant among them, the Lord bids them bring forth that *lesse of diuorce*, by which they might iustifie their owne innocencie, and proue that God had vniustly put them away.

Our spiritual mariage with God consecrated by his word, and sealed vp by the blood of Christ.

The first Simile.

It was the custome then to giue a woman vniustlie diuorced, a letter in her hand: for thereby her husband was constrained to testifie, that his wife had liued chastly and honestly with him: that all might know that she was not put away for her owne fault, but because she pleased not her husband. And thus the wife was set at libertie, and her innocencie approued; and the fault was laid onelie vpon the husband, to whose discontented mind the cause of this rent was imputed. *Moses* ordained this law, Deut. 24.1. in regard of the peoples hardnesse of heart, as witnesseth our Lord Iesus Christ, Mat. 19.7. The Lord by a very fit similitude then shewes, that hee is not the author of this diuorce, but that the people put away themselues by their owne fault, and so pursued their lusts, that they vtterly dissolued the mariage knot. This is the cause why he asks for this *lesse*, whereof they boasted so much: for there is great weight in ỳ pronoune demonstratiue *shas*; by which the Prophet meant to tax their vaine excuses. As if hee should; You haue skill to put the fault farre enough from you, and to reproch the Lord; you haue your defences in your hands readie to shew; and yet in the meane while your selues haue violated the faith of mariage; neither are you able to alleadge any iust matter for your selues, whereby to disproue the lawfulnesse of your diuorce.

Where is the creditor? Heere hee sets forth the same thing by another similitude: when any was so farre indebted, that hee could not satisfie his creditors, hee was constrained to giue his children in paiment. The Lord now askes if hee were forced to doe this; to wit, whether hee hath *sold* or *giuen them* to pay his creditors; or whether he was like to those vnthrifts, who fondly waste their substance: or to those housholders, who suffer themselues to runne ouer shooes in debt. As if he should say, I am sure you are notable to charge mee with any such matter. And therefore it is euident to all, that you haue been *sold* & brought into bondage *for your iniquities*. And thus the Lord maintaines his owne iustice against all false imputations; which by this second member hee thus repulseth, in regard the Iewes were *sold* and *put away* by their owne fault.

The second Simile.

Saint *Paul* vseth the same similitude when he saith, We are sold vnder sinne: Rom. 7.14. but in a diuers sense. Besides, the Hebrues are wont thus to speake of wicked ones, who giue ouer themselues to commit sinne with a reprobate mind. But heere the Prophet onely meant to conuince the Iewes, in regard that by their owne offences, they had wittingly pulled all the euils they sustained vpō themselues. If any aske; but can the Lord reiect his heritage? Can hee disanull or breake his couenant? No verily; but it is said hee forsakes and prophanes his heritage: as in Psal. 89, Ezech. 24. because we can iudge no otherwise of it by outward appearance. For in that he bare not that affection towards them hee was wont, it was a kinde of diuorce or reiection,

1. Kin. 21.25

iection. To be ſhort, we muſt note theſe oppoſitions, *either that the wuiſe is diuorced by the husbands fault, or becauſe her ſelfe is a ſhameleſſe harlot.* Againe, *that the children are ſold, either by reaſon of their fathers pouertie, or for their owne vnthriftineſſe.* And thus the context of this text will be eaſily vnderſtood.

1 2

Verſ. 2. *Wherefore came I, and there was no man? I called, and none anſwered: is mine hand ſo ſhortened that it can not help? or haue I no power to deliuer? Behold, at my rebuke I drie vp the ſea: I make the floods deſert: their fiſh rotteth for want of water, and dieth for thirſt.*

IT may be the Prophet renders a reaſon heere why the people hauing prouoked the holy one of Iſrael to anger, hath not only pulled vpon themſelues a ſea of euils, but are alſo worthely cut off by their owne obſtinacie from all hope of pardon and ſaluation. But I rather thinke the Lord proceeds yet further. For hauing ſhewed that he had good cauſe giuen him to reiect this people, who willinglie chooſed rather to liue a *ſeruile life* then to be *free*, he addes, that it is none of his fault that they were not forthwith deliuered. And as in the former verſe he ſhewed that the fault whollie reſted in the Iewes, ſo heere he proues that their owne malice was the cauſe why they grew old and putrified in their miſeries, for there wanted neither will nor power in the Lord to haue holpen them if they had not ſtubbornly refuſed his grace and liberalitie. To ſhut it vp in a word, *Iſaiah* ſhews, that both their *entrance*, and *continuance* in this calamitie came only from their owne fault, that he might free God from blame: and ſignifies, that the Iewes did wickedlie when they accuſed him to be the author of their miſeries; or in complaining, that he came not ſoone enough to their ſuccor.

The Lord proceeds on in proouing his plea to be iuſt.

Firſt then the Lord ſaith, that *he came*. But to what end? To reach the Iewes his hand. Whence it followeth, that they are iuſtlie deſtitute of help, in regard they deſpiſed his fauor. Now the Lord *comes*, when he giues vs any ſignes of his preſence. He comes by the preaching of his word, and by the ſundrie benefits which he beſtowes vpon vs: as alſo, by the many teſtimonies which he vſeth to manifeſt the fatherly loue and good will he beares vs. Was there euer any people, ſaith *Moſes*, that ſaw ſuch ſignes and wonders as thou haſt done, or that hath heard the voice of God ſpeaking out of the middes of a fire, and liue? Deut.4.33.34. Seeing ſuch a dayly ſummons ſerued to no purpoſe; and that in ſetting hope of mercie before thé, he ſought to draw them to repentance, doth he not iuſtlie cõplaine as of a prodigious thing, that they would not come *forth to meet him?* They are cõuinced of ingratitude then, that whereas they ought to haue ſought vnto God, they would not vouchſafe to meet him. For what a vile vnthankfulnes is it, not to receiue that grace which is freely offred?

1 2

In that he ſaith, *I called*, he repeates the ſame thing in diuers words. When God *calles* vs we ought to giue eare, and to offer our readie and willing obedience. For this is the *anſwer* (which he complaines is not giuen him) to wit, that we ſubmit not our ſelues whollie vnder his command. But this word ſutes very well heere to the circumſtance of this place, in that they wilfullie deſpiſed God, who offred them preſent deliuerance out of their troubles. It auailed him no more to ſpeake vnto them therefore, then if he had ſpoken to ſo many deafe and dumb men. Thence he concludes, that their deliuerance was deferred only in reſpect of their owne backwardnes, which he confirmes vnto them by former teſtimonies, in that he had in former time manifeſted to their fathers the ſufficiencie of his power.

Now leſt they ſhould cauill and excuſe themſelues in affirming that they were not ſaued, though they deſired it: God on the contrarie affirmes, that they muſt ſeeke the cauſe of ſuch a change ellewhere then in him. For ſure it is, his *power* was not diminiſhed. He would not haue bin ſlack in reaching out his hand to them in their affliction, if they had not obſtinately reiected his offer.

Now by this *Interrogation*, he expreſſeth the equitie of his cauſe, as one that maintained a thing cleare and manifeſt. For who dares obiect that his power is leſſened? And to that end he puts them in mind of that power of his, *by vvhich he brought them out of Egypt*, leſt they ſhould imagin ỹ ſame were now diminiſhed, but might rather acknowledge that their vices ſtopped the courſe of this power, that it could not now manifeſt it ſelfe. At his *rebuke* he ſaith the *ſea is dried vp*, as if he had terrified it, in rebuking of it. For by his commandement the waters parted in twaine to giue his people paſſage, Exod.14.21. And Iordain fled back, Ioſh.3.16. Pſal.114.5. ſo as the *fiſhes* being deſtitute of water, died and *rotted*.

Verſ. 3. *I clothe the heauens with darknes, and make a ſack their couering.*

HE alſo mentions the thick darknes which was ſpread ouer the whole land of Egypt for the ſpace of three daies, Exod.10.21. for then the heauens were in a maner *clothed vvith mourning vveeds*, becauſe as a faire and cleare day glads our hearts, ſo a darke and gloomie day brings ſadnes & heauines with it. Therefore it is ſaid that the *heauens vvere couered vvith a ſack*, or with a mourning garment, as ſignes and teſtimonies of affliction. And if any had rather take them for generall ſentences, he may do ſo if he will. But as I thinke the Prophet hath reſpect to the hiſtorie touching their deliuerance out of Egypt. From whence they might gather, that God who had deliuered their fathers after ſo wonderfull a maner, was now letted from ſuccoring thé in the miſeries which oppreſſed them, by reaſon of their owne vnthankfulnes.

It was not for want of power in God that he ſuccored not the Iewes: but it reſted whollie in their owne vnthankfulnes.

Verſ. 4. *The Lord hath giuen mee a tongue of the learned, that I ſhould know how* to miniſter *a word in due ſeaſon to him that is wearie: he will raiſe me vp in the morning; in the morning hee will awaken mine eare to heare, as the learned.*

After a double reprehenſion, he addes a conſolation.

HAuing twice conuinced the people of ingratitude; now, according to his cuſtome, he addes a conſolation: for the Lord ſo ſhames vs, that he forthwith mindes to free vs from ſhame and confuſion. Albeit then vpon good grounds hee hath proued, that the people were iuſtly reiected, and periſhed by their owne deſerts; yea, and had made themſelues vtterly vnworthy of deliuerance: notwithſtanding all this, hee promiſeth them helpe and ſuccour. Now becauſe in a matter ſo difficult, there was need of more then ordinarie authoritie, the Prophet ſaith, that *God* ſent him, and fitted him with abilitie to execute that which was inioined by him. All in a manner doe refer this place vnto Chriſt, as if it ſuted not to the Prophets perſon, whē he ſaith he was ſmitten. We reade not indeed that *Iſaiah* was ſo handled: and yet it followes not therefore that their argument is ſound enough. For *Dauid* complaines that his garments were diuided; which properly appertained vnto Chriſt: & yet it followes not that the like befell not *Dauid*. For mine own part, I am out of doubt that *Iſaiah* brings in himſelfe as one repreſenting the perſon of all Gods ſeruants, as well touching thoſe that were before him, as of thoſe that were to ſucceed him.

Now hee ſaith that the Lord gaue him a *tongue*, to the end the promiſes, whereby hee ſeekes to cheere vp the peoples hearts, might haue the greater weight: for our faith ſoone begins to wauer, if we once deeme that men ſpeake without warrant. Beſides, the condition of this people was ſo forlorne, that they could not be drawne nor allured by any reaſons that could be alleadged to hope or expect deliuerance. The ſumme is then, that the meſſage of their preſent deliuerance is brought them from heauen: ſo as if any will refuſe to credit it, ſuch a one ſhall ſhew himſelfe no better then a rebell againſt God.

None are fit to teach others, but ſuch as haue firſt been taught of the Lord.

Now howſoeuer the Prophet indeuors to purchaſe authoritie vnto himſelfe in this behalfe: yet hence we may gather in generall, that none are fit to teach, vnleſſe they be firſt taught and inſtructed of the Lord. Thus then all faithful teachers are admoniſhed to craue that of Gods Spirit, which otherwiſe they can neuer haue. I grant they ought to ſtudie diligently, leſt they ſhould get vp into the chaire without ſufficient preparation: but yet we muſt hold this principle, that whatſoeuer ſerues to furniſh them for able Miniſters, muſt be ſo many gifts of the holy Ghoſt. And to ſpeake the truth, what boldneſſe and preſumption is it to repreſent themſelues in the publike aſſemblies in the name of God, if they bee not the organs and inſtruments of the holy Ghoſt.

That I ſhould know.] Somewhat muſt be ſupplied heere (which wee alſo haue done) that is, *to miniſter* or publiſh. Vnder the word *To know* he comprehends that wiſdome and dexteritie which a Paſtor of the word ought to haue that meanes to preach the word faithfully and fruitfully. As if he ſhould ſay; I haue been *well inſtructed in Gods ſchoole*, and therefore I haue attained ſufficient skill *to ſpeake a word in due ſeaſon*, for their comforts that are loden with the burthen of their ſinnes.

He calles them *wearie*, who were broken with many afflictions, as wee haue ſeene before. I giue ſtrength to him that is *wearie*. And Chriſt ſpeakes thus, Mat. 11.28. Come vnto mee all you that are *wearie* and laden. Thus hee meanes then that God hath inſtructed and taught them, that he might bee fitted to comfort the afflicted with apt and fit words: ſo as the broken hearts might be healed by the ſenſe and feeling of Gods mercie in Chriſt. Hence we gather, that the Miniſters of the word ought chiefly to extend their care ouer ſuch as are in diſtreſſe, and to comfort thoſe that are oppreſſed, and in a manner ouerwhelmed with the weight of their calamities: and then to teach them wherein the true reſt of the ſoule conſiſts: as wee haue ſhewed, Chap. 29 18.22. Moreouer, heere we ſee what euery one of vs ought eſpecially to ſearch after in the holy Scriptures; namelie, how to arme and fit our ſelues with proper and apt ſentences to miniſter conſolation to our owne ſoules in the time of need. He then that ſhall bee able to cheere vp and ſuſtaine his owne ſpirit with ſolid cōfort when things are perplexed; nay, when they ſeeme altogether deſperate: let ſuch a one aſſure himſelfe, that he hath well profited in the Goſpell. I confeſſe the doctrine of the holie Scriptures hath many other vſes. For they not onelie containe in them matter that is meete and profitable to comfort the weak and afflicted, but alſo ſharpe rebukes and threatnings againſt the obſtinate: 2. Tim. 3.16. But *Iſaiah* heere ſhewes, that his principall charge was, *in due ſeaſon*, to *miniſter* or bring a word of comfort to the Iewes, who were now in a maner comfortleſſe.

Chap. 50.29.

Ouer whom the Miniſters ought to extend their chiefeſt cares.

What euery one of vs ought eſpecially to ſeek in the ſcriptures.

2. *Tim.* 3.16.

He will waken me in the morning.] Heere the Prophet witneſſeth, that the Lord is ſo carefull of the miſerable and oppreſſed, that he will giue them comfort in the *morning*: that is to ſay, in time conuenient. I grant we are often left deſtitute of conſolation: but howſoeuer the Lord ſuffers vs to languiſh for a time, yet the fit times and ſeaſons are in his owne power, in which hee will preuent our neceſſities by his ſuccours. And if it ſo fall out that he tarry long, let vs impute it to our negligence: for we ſtop and hinder the courſe of his mercies from flowing in vnto vs by our owne ſloth: or rather indeed, by our rebellion. But howeuer it be, yet he watcheth alwaies carefully for our ſaluation, and makes ſpeede to ſuccour vs: nay, whileſt wee flee from him and reſiſt him, he then allures vs to himſelfe,

himſelfe, that he might refreſh vs by his loue and fauour.

He repeates the word *morning* twice, thereby ſignifying a daily continuance: leſt wee ſhould thinke there were any paſſions in him, as there are in men, to reiect & deſpiſe them afterwards, whom hee hath once taken into his cuſtodie. No, contrariwiſe, he makes them alwaies to feele his goodneſſe euen vnto the end, and neuer deſtitutes them of conſolation.

That I may heare as the learned.] His meaning is, that his eare was attent, not like to one that is ignorant, or dull witted, but that hee was fitted and wel inſtructed for the purpoſe. And yet withall hee ſhewes by his example, that God teacheth all ſuch Miniſters as hee ſends forth, for the ſaluation of the Church with efficacie: for it were to ſmall purpoſe for them to be indued with humane learning, vnleſſe therewithall they had the inward teaching of the holy Ghoſt. By this wee ſee yet better, how true that is which wee haue ſaid before; namely, that none proue good teachers, but ſuch as haue firſt been good diſciples. Such the Prophet calles them *taught* and *learned*: for thoſe that will not vouchſafe to learne, as thinking that they know enough, are twice mad and fooliſh. For by Gods owne cenſure, none are truly *taught* and *learned*, but ſuch as ſuffer themſelues to be taught, before they take vpon them to teach others; that ſo they may haue the certaine knowledge of the things which they meane to teach them. Now to publiſh ought abroad to the world, which they may not with good conſcience proteſt they haue receiued from God. To ſhut vp all in a word; *thoſe are learned, vvho in learning dailie diſdaine not to grow ſtill in learning.*

He ſhall neuer become a good Doctor in the Church, that hath not firſt been a good diſciple.

Verſ. 5. *The Lord God hath opened mine eare, and I was not rebellious; neither turned I backe.*

HE repeates that againe which he ſaid before, and heere comprehends whatſoeuer is fitting for the office of a teacher. For *the opening of the eare*, ought not onely to be referred to doctrine, but to the whole vocation: as firſt, to his entrance: ſecondly, when he that is to bee ſent, receiues his charge, touching all that which he is to performe; to wit, the commandement it ſelfe, and authoritie to execute the ſame. Beſides, the Lord not onely *opens the eare*, when hee manifeſts his will, but when hee toucheth the mans heart with efficacie, and ſo mooues him, that hee yeeldes him his obedience. As in the fortie Pſalme; Thou haſt pierced mine eare. And Chriſt ſaith; Whoſoeuer hath *heard* and *learned* of my Father, hee comes to mee: Iohn 6. 45.

Hitherunto appertaines the ſecond member, where the Prophet ſaith, he was not *rebellious*. The ſumme is, that hee vndertooke nothing at random; but being well aſſured of the calling of God, hee performed the office of a teacher: notwithſtanding it was heauie and tedious to beare, becauſe he was made fit and willing to obey.

Verſ. 6. *I gaue my backe to the ſmiters, and my cheekes to the nippers: I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.*

HE oppoſeth the inuincible force wherewith hee is indued, to the reproches, ſcornes, and outrages of the wicked: as if he ſhould ſay; Albeit the contemners of God vſe many deuices, yet will he ouercome all their iniuries: ſo as hee will neuer repent himſelfe of that labour which hee hath taken in hand. Moreouer, this place manifeſtly ſhewes, that the Miniſters of the word cannot faithfullie diſcharge their duties, but they muſt therewithall prepare to buckle againſt the world, yea, to ſuſtaine ſharpe aſſaults on all ſides. For *Iſaiah* no ſooner affirmes that hee was readie to obey Gods commandement, but by and by he addes, that his perſon was expoſed to the *ſmiters*. Wherefore the faithfull ſeruants of God cannot auoid this condition, in preaching the word as they ought; but they muſt looke for ſtripes, reproches, hatreds, ſlanders, and diuers aſſaults of the aduerſaries, who repine at the libertie which the true Miniſters of God muſt needes vſe in their reprehenſions and admonitions. Let them arme themſelues therefore with faith and conſtancie: for there is a terrible combat prepared for them.

Miniſters muſt make account to meete with oppoſitions in the diſcharge of their duties.

But he not onely expreſſeth what meaſure the Prophets ſhall haue at the hands of the wicked, but alſo the contempt of the world: for the wicked will haue men ſuppoſe that their cauſe is good and iuſt, euen whileſt they oppreſſe the Miniſters of the Goſpell, and perſecute their doctrine: for they will haue Gods ſeruants reputed as euill doers, that by this meanes they may bring them into diſgrace and hatred. That is the cauſe why they rent and teare them with varietie of falſe imputations, and belch out all the outrage they can. And haue not wee experience hereof at this day? Doe not our aduerſaries load vs with the nickenames of ſeducers, ſeditious, ſchiſmatikes, and heretikes, and diſgorge manie other reproches, wherewith they haue heeretofore taxed Chriſt and his Apoſtles? *Iohn.* 18. 30.

Now he complaines that he was ſmitten *and ſpitted vpō*, not only by ſtrangers and open enemies, but he toucheth the wrongs which were done him by thoſe that made ſhew to be of the Church. For it is alwaies ſeene, that out of the lap of the Church there ariſeth wicked contemners of God, who are the ſurlieſt enemies that the Prophets of God haue. Thoſe then who will ſerue God purely, muſt fit themſelues aforehand to beare all theſe things with patience, that ſo they may paſſe as well through good as euill report, 2. Cor. 6. 8. Yea, let them not only deſpiſe bands, tortures, baniſhments, and death, but reproches *and ſpittings* alſo, though ſometimes theſe things ſeeme harder to beare then death it

ſelfe. This doctrine appertaines indeed to all the faithfull, but eſpeciallie to the Miniſters of the word, who ought to be the ringleaders to others, and to be as ſtandard-bearers.

Verſ. 7. *For the Lord God wil help me, therefore I ſhall not be confounded: therefore haue I ſet my face as a flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed.*

To thoſe oppoſitions of men, the Prophet ſets the help of God.

HEere the Prophet ſhewes from whence this great magnanimitie proceeds, wherwith he and other the ſeruants of God were indued to ſuſtaine the violence of all commers, namely, the *help of God*: for by faith therein *Iſaiah* affirmes, that he hath hardned his *face as a flint* againſt all the iniuries of the vngodly. Hauing then with a ſtout courage, wherewith he is endued, ſet light by all his aduerſaries, he alſo labors to draw others to the ſame conſtancie with him; and (as in a glaſſe) deſcribes to the life what the ſtate and condition of all Miniſters of the word is, and ſhall be. For thus he would turne them from the loue of the world, that they might giue themſelues whollie vnto God, and to fixe their eies altogether vpon him, for there is no combat ſo ſharp, in which they ſhall not be more then Conquerors vnder the leading of ſuch a Captaine.

By the ſimilitude of a *flint*, he ſhewes, that come what come will, he will not ſhrinck an inch, for the ſignes of feare and aſtoniſhmẽt, and of all other affections appeare by and by in the face, which plainely vtters to all how matters goe within. When Gods ſeruants are handled thus ſhamefullie, they muſt needs quaile vnder ſo many iniuries, if they had not browes of braſſe and yron to repulſe them. And in this ſenſe it is ſaid, that *Ieremiah* was ſet as a defenced Citie, *and yron pillar, and vvalles of braſſe* againſt the Kings of Iudah, againſt the Princes, and againſt all the people, Iere. 1. 18. *Ezechiel* alſo had his forhead made as *hard as the adamant*, which is much harder then the flint, that he might not recoile back from the obſtinacie of the people, Ezech. 3 9.

This ſentence, *I ſhall not be aſhamed*, is not to be taken in the ſame ſenſe with that in the former member: for there it is referred to the affection, and heere to the effect, or the thing it ſelfe. When in the beginning of the verſe then he glories that he ſhall not be *confounded* becauſe God is on his ſide, it is to ſhew, that it ſufficeth not to know that God will help vs, vnleſſe we alſo feele the ſame by experience. For what profit haue we by his promiſes, vnleſſe wee put our confidence therein? Faith then is required, both to vphold our comfort, and aſſure vs of Gods fauor: but in the end of the verſe the Prophet boldly proteſts, that he is vndoubtedlie perſwaded of an happie iſſue. And thus to *be aſhamed*, ſignifies to be diſappointed. For they that conceiue a vaine hope, are ſubiect to mocks and reproches. Heere we ſee then that the faithfull teachers and Miniſters of the word haue promiſe of a ſpeciall defence. Let Satan and the world bend their forces together then to aſſaile them with all their power: the more they aſſault them, the ſtronger ſhall Gods defence and protection be ouer vs. Thence we muſt conclude, that all ſuch as are fainthearted and quaile when they come to the triall, were neuer yet well fitted to execute their office. For he that hath not learned to fight, is neither apt to ſerue God nor his Church; neither is he fit to preach the doctrine of the word. 2. Tim. 2. 5.

Verſ. 8. *He is neere that iuſtifieth me, Who will contend with me? Let vs ſtand together: Who is mine aduerſarie? Let him come neere to me.*

9. *Behold, the Lord will help me: who is he that can condemne me? Loe, they ſhall wax old as a garment: the moth ſhall eate them vp.*

A Miniſter that hath a good conſcience, may haue alſo great boldnes.

WEE muſt alwaies remember that the Prophet ſpeakes nothing heere that is proper to himſelfe only, but teſtifies what a one God will, and euer ſhall be towards the faithfull Miniſters, that ſo being aſſured of their lawfull calling, and executing their offices faithfullie, they might boldly contemne all aduerſarie power, and neuer ſlack their duties an inch for any ſlanders. Why ſo? Becauſe the Lord who *iuſtifies* them, hath, and euer will be readie to maintaine and defend his owne truth. Now whoſoeuer he be that will indeed boldly proteſt this, he ought to haue a pure conſcience. For if he haue vnaduiſedly intruded himſelfe, not hauing a ſure teſtimonie of his lawfull calling: or if he be ſuch a one as brocheth his owne dreames and fanſies, in vaine ſhall he boaſt of this promiſe, for it appertaines to none but to ſuch as being called of God, doe faithfullie and purely diſcharge their duties.

Intruders can not challenge to thẽſelues this priuiledge.

Now howſoeuer mockers and deſpiſers of God will neuer ceaſe to make many replies againſt his ſeruants, yet *Iſaiah* ſtil offers himſelfe to pleade his maſters cauſe, and that as boldly, as if none durſt enter the liſts againſt him, or to forge any ſlanders for their defence. Not that he was able to charme their tongues, but becauſe he was well aſſured they ſhould gaine nothing by all their tattle. Thus then he ſhewes, that notwithſtanding all the falſe imputations which the aduerſaries lay vpon the word and the Miniſters thereof, they muſt not be diſcoraged. For there is no crime with which they doe not charge vs. But all in vaine. Why ſo? Becauſe the Iudge that defends their innocencie *is neere*. The faithfull Miniſters therefore may (by S. *Pauls* example) ſummon the falſe and ſiniſter iudgements of men before the Iudgement ſeate of God, who will giue a iuſt ſentence, 1. Cor. 4. 4.

Let vs ſtand together.] The faithfull teachers ought to be ſo confident, as without feare to challenge all their enemies the field. For Satan with all his ſuppoſts dare not at all times ſtand to their tackling openly, but eſpecially when they encounter vs with lies. But they haue

haue cloſe and ſecret practiſes, and iugling tricks vnder boord to ſurprize ſuch as ſtand not vpon their watch. Yet the ſeruants of God feare not to ſhew their faces, nor to enter the liſts againſt the aduerſarie: neither are they abaſhed to reaſon and debate the matter, if the enemie dare appeare. For the truth is of ſuch ſtrength, that it flees not the noone day, as we ſee heere, that *Iſaiah* feares not boldly to egge and prouoke all thoſe to the fight, whom he ſaw to lie in wait to trap him. And here he vrgeth them againe ſaying, *Let him come neere me.* For the true Paſtors ought to be alwaies readie to yeeld a reaſon of their doctrine. But where is he that vouchſafes to heare them patientlie, or that will conſider what his doctrine is which they preach. I grant the aduerſaries are readie enough to *draw neere*, but it is only to draw out their ſwords, and to cut the throates of Gods ſeruants, or to whet & file their tongues, that they may be fit to defame them by all ſorts of ſlanders. In a word, their beſt defences conſiſts in fraude, and tyrannie, for with reaſons orderly gathered from the Scriptures, they dare not encounter, we therefore being well aſſured of the equitie of our cauſe, are readie with a chriſtian fortitude to challenge them the field. For though they *condemne* vs without hearing our defences; yea, and though the numbers of thé be great, which ſubſcribe to their ſayings, yet will we not be outfaced, for God, whoſe cauſe we defend, is the Iudge, who at the laſt will giue ſentence on our ſide.

It ſeemes S. *Paul* alludes to this place, where he ſaith, It is God that iuſtifies, who ſhall condemne? Rom. 8. 33. For wee may boldly appeale to the Iudgement ſeate of God, when we are clothed with his free righteouſnes in Ieſus Chriſt. But *Iſaiah* handles another argument heere. For he ſpeakes not now of mans ſaluation in generall, but of the miniſtrie of the word, whereof the Lord will be the protector againſt all the aſſaults of the wicked, neither will he ſuffer his ſeruants to be ouerwhelmed with their falſe packing nor violences. In the end of the verſe he ſhewes that he vaunts not of his fortitude as one out of gunſhot, or as if he meant to fight with his owne ſhadow, but he proteſts that he will keepe his ſtanding in the face of the proudeſt of them all that dare aſſaile him. For whoſoeuer they be that bid battell to Gods word, ſhall but daſh themſelues vpon their owne deſtruction by reaſon of their owne brittlenes, and ſhall forthwith vaniſh to nothing.

Now as if he had had the thing before his eies, he vſeth a particle demonſtratiue, *Behold*, or *loe, they ſhall waxe old as doth a garment*, the moth ſhall conſume them. The Pſalmiſt vſeth the like ſimilitude, when he compares the men of this world with the children of God, Pſal. 49. For albeit the worldlings braue it out, and that they ſhine as pretious ſtones, yet ſhall they periſh. But the faithfull who now lie couered with filth and rubbiſh, being once decked with new beautie, ſhall in the end ſhine as the ſtarres. But in this place *Iſaiah* properly ſpeakes of theſe mad dogs, who hate and barke at the faithfull Miniſters of the word. Now howſoeuer ſuch prophane wretches are in beſt eſteeme with the world, and in great authoritie in the middeſt of thé, yet all their brauadoes ſhall fall and come to nought, euen as the *beautie of garments* that are defaced by the gnawing of the *moth*.

Verſ. 10. *Who is amongſt you that feareth the Lord? Let him heare the voice of his ſeruant: he that walketh in darknes, and hath no light, let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay vpon his God.*

HAuing ſpoken of the inuincible ſuccors which God giues to all his Prophets, *Iſaiah* now directs his ſpeech to the faithfull, admoniſhing them to ſuffer themſelues to be gouerned by Gods word, and to yeeld themſelues teachable. Whence wee may gather how farre he inſulted ouer thoſe with an holy pride which were his detractors. For in regard the wicked among the Iewes at that time preuailed, in reſpect of their multitudes, the little flock were in danger to haue their faith extinguiſhed by them. In that he asks where thoſe were *that feared the Lord?* it is to note out the fewnes of them. And yet *he calles thoſe few* to take part with him, that they might ſeparate themſelues from that great rout, leſt they ſhould conſent with them in their wicked plots, ſo much condemned of God. As in Chap. 8. Say yee not a conſpiracie, &c. Thus then howſoeuer Gods enemies make a great armie in regard of their multitudes, yet *Iſaiah* aſſures himſelfe, that there is a remnant left who wil profit by his doctrine. Heere the Prophet turnes his ſpeech to the faithfull.

Now he ſpeakes to ſuch as *feare God*, for where religion and the feare of God is wanting, there wholeſome doctrine can take no place. We ſee how thoſe who otherwiſe will be taken for great clerks, and ſharp witted, do yet reiect the ſame. Why ſo? Surely thoſe that are ſwollen with pride, and hate modeſtie and all humilitie, proue more then doltiſh when the matter concernes the diſcerning of this *wiſdome* of God. It is no maruell then that *Iſaiah* layes this as the foundation, to wit, the *feare of the Lord*, that ſo the word may in deed be diligentlie and attentiuely *receiued and heard*. Whence alſo it appeares, that there is no true feare of God where the *hearing* of his word is contemned. For hypocrites will make great brags of pietie, and the feare of God: but by their contempt of it they plainly manifeſt their rebellion, in that they obſtinately reiect the doctrine of the Goſpell, and all ſound admonitions. Take a ſure triall heere then of ſuch kind of perſons, that ſo you may pluck off their vizard wherewith they would couer their faces.

Let him heare the voice of his ſeruant. He might euen as well haue ſaid the *voice of God*, but he chooſeth rather to ſay, *of his ſeruant*. For God will be no otherwiſe heard of vs, but by the *voice* of his *Miniſters*, whoſe ſeruice he vſeth for our inſtruction. *Iſaiah* then ſpeakes firſt of himſelfe, and next of all his fellow brethren, who haue the ſame office of teaching with him. The voice of Gods Miniſters the voice of God.

him. And thus heere is a close opposition betweene the *audience* which he requires, and that licentious contempt of holy doctrine, which being basely accounted of among the impure, they by their pride drew others, as witlesse and giddie headed as themselues, to the like base estimation of it.

Now because the faithfull might reply, that the fruit of their *feare* and pietie did not yet appeare, but that they were contrariwise in miserable seruitude, as if they had been wicked liuers; the Prophet meetes with this complaint, and affirmes that the faithfull, who hitherto had been hardlie dealt withall, should not for all that lose their labour, in yeelding obedience to God and his word: for though they haue *walked* in darknesse, yet they shall at the length inioy the *light* of Lord.

Darknesse taken for afflictions.

By *darknesse* the Prophet meanes not ignorance, nor blindnesse of minde, but the afflictions whereby Gods children are in a manner ouerwhelmed. And this is the consolation whereof he spake vers. 4. where hee said, that the tongue of the learned was giuen him, that hee might know how to minister a word in due season to him that was wearie. And he also heere promiseth, that those who hitherto haue been almost drowned in so many calamities, shall be comforted.

Vers. 11. *Behold, all you kindle a fire, and are compassed about with sparks: walke in the light of your fire, and in the sparkes that yee haue kindled. This shall yee haue of mine hand, yee shall lie downe in sorrow.*

The difference betweene Gods comforts, and those of our owne deuising. *Verse* 10.

HEe reprocheth the Iewes because they chose rather to make *a fire* alone by themselues, to walke in the light thereof, then approch to Gods light. This place hath bin ill expounded. And if we would haue the right meaning of it, wee must note the opposition which is betweene *Gods light*, and mans light: that is to say, between the consolation which the word of God brings, and the vaine comforts of men, who will indeuour to put away their sorrowes, by things ridiculous and of no value. Hauing spoken before then of *light* and *darknesse*, and hauing promised light to such as gaue eare to the voice of the Lord; hee now saith, that the Iewes reiected this light, *to kindle* one of their owne: and in conclusion affirmes; that they shall be *consumed* as with a fire, by their owne light.

In this sort Christ reprocheth the Iewes, for reioicing in *Iohn Baptists* light: Iohn 5. 33. Because they abused his person, to darken, nay rather to quench the glory of Christ. For in opposing *Iohns* person against Christs, to darken his glory: what did they else but put out the light of God, shining in a mortall man, to kindle themselues another? Which yet directed them not to walke in the right way; but made them wander in by-paths, wherein they had small cause to reioice.

In saying that they were *compassed about with the sparks*, he taxeth their froward imaginations, which harried them to and fro: and therewithall derides their vanitie, in that they ranne swiftlie and with great alacritie, whither soeuer their deceiueable lusts led them.

Walke.] As if he should say; You shall feele by experience how vaine and vanishing your light is, when your vncertaine hopes haue failed you. And thus by this so taunting a permission, hee signifies that they shall both lose their time and their labour. Others expound, that the wicked kindle against themselues, the fire of Gods wrath. But the Prophet hath an higher drift; neither doe I thinke that this exposition agrees to this place.

Of mine hand.] In regard the wicked being beguiled with a false confidence, think themselues vtterly out of danger, and doe boldly contemne all after claps, by trusting in their light; that is to say, in the meanes wherewith they haue furnished themselues: the Lord shewes that they shall *lie downe in sorrow*, and that this shall proceede *from his hand*. In a word, that such as forsake the light of Gods word to seeke consolation elsewhere, shall miserably perish.

THE LI. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Heare mee yee that follow after righteousnesse, and yee that seeke the Lord: looke vnto the rocke* whence *yee are hewen, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.*

A consolation or exhortation vnto patience.

NOw the Prophet exhorts the Iewes not to faint, though they were few in number: for they were so humbled and diminished, that they seemed neere their vtter ruin: euen as if they had been hopelesse of any posteritie to succeed them. Hee therefore brings them to their *originall*; to teach them that howsoeuer they were but a small handfull now, yet God was able to increase & multiply them. Then he commands them to *looke* vnto their father *Abraham*, who being but one man, yet grew into a great number, and God gaue him children as the starres in the firmament: Gen. 15. 5. (and as the sand vpon the sea shore: Gen. 22. 17.) Thence they might collect, that if God in so small a space was able so admirably to multiply their fathers, he was no lesse powerfull to make them increase heereafter, seeing his power is no whit abated, nor his will changed.

Looke

Looke to the rocke.] Some thinke that *Abraham* is heere called a rocke, becauſe hee was ſtrong in faith: as Saint *Paul* ſaith, Rom.4.19. Others alleadge a reaſon cleane contrarie to this ſimilitude: for they thinke *Abraham* is heere called a rocke or ſtone, becauſe he was vnfit to beget children: and that *Sara* was called a caue, becauſe ſhe was barren. But all of them, as I take it, are deceiued: for it is a plaine ſimilitude taken from ſtones. He ſaith then, that they were hewen or digged out of *Abraham* and *Sara*, as ſtones are *hewen* or digged out of a rocke or caue. There was exceeding need that the faithfull ſhould be vpheld by this admonition, in the ruine of the whole nation. God had promiſed (as we ſaid before) that *Abrahams* ſeede ſhould be as the *ſtarres*, and as the *ſand*. This promiſe in outward appearance was aboliſhed in the deſtruction of Ieruſalem: for then thoſe that remained, were like a ſmall cluſter of grapes that remaines after the vintage. But in regard they had alreadie prooued how powerfull God was, to create a great people of nothing; the Prophet exhorts them to hope well ſtill, that they may not bee taxed of vnthankfulneſſe towards God. And thus hee directs his ſpeech properly to the faithfull, who had much adoe to ſuſtaine ſo ſharpe temptations: for hee ſpeakes not to all in generall, but to thoſe only that reſted vpon the promiſes, whom he calles *followers of righteouſneſſe*.

Gen.15.5. & 22.17.

The Prophets alwaies make a diſtinction betweene the faithfull and the hypocrites.

The Country was filled with vnbeleeuers and hypocrites, who had for a long time been apoſtataes from the exerciſe of pietie: the more praiſe thoſe deſerued then, who conſtantly followed a godly and a ſincere courſe. Where there is a deſire of *righteouſneſſe*, there God hath audience: but where infidelitie raignes, there is no place at all for the promiſes. Thus then, albeit they boaſted they were *Abrahams* children, yet all were not capable of this doctrine. In the next place the Prophet ſhewes the way how to follow this *iuſtice*, to wit, in *ſeeking the Lord*: for it muſt needes be that ſuch as ſeeme to follow righteouſnes, and yet aime not at this marke, doe erre in all the parts of their life. Theſe two things then, *to follow righteouſneſſe*, and *to ſeeke the Lord*, muſt be ioined together.

Note.

Verſ. 2. *Conſider Abraham your father, and Sara that bare you: for I called him alone, and bleſſed him, and increaſed him.*

The application of the former conſolation.

THis application ſhews ſufficiently whereunto the Prophets exhortation tended; namely, to confirme the peoples hearts in the hope of a better eſtate. He ſaith he called him *alone*, not onely becauſe *Abraham* had no companions with him when he was called to forſake his Country; but becauſe the Lord ſuffered him to inhabit the land of Canaan, without hauing iſſue, till his old age: ſo as he looked not to haue any at all. And beſides that, *Sarah* his wife was alſo barren: but at the laſt they had a ſonne giuen them to comfort their old yeeres in their afflictions. Which was no ſooner giuen, but it ſeemed that God had appointed him to the ſlaughter: and yet for all this, the Lord furniſhed him with a great number of children. I told you ere while, how neceſſary this conſolation was for the Iewes; which wee may alſo iudge by that wofull and miſerable eſtate in which they then were; as hiſtories doe at large record.

Vſe to vs.

It is alſo no leſſe needfull for vs at this day, in regard of the ſcattering of the church; that ſo our ſmall number may no whit diſcourage vs. No, wee are rather to hope that God wil one day multiply the ſame, by means to vs vnknowne. For we haue heere a manifeſt and an excellent example thereof in this *bleſſing*, whereby wee ſee how the Lord in *Abrahams* old age, weakens, yea and out of death it ſelfe multiplied his of-ſpring. Which promiſe appertaines not onely to the Iewes, but to other nations: and therefore his name is no more called *Abram*, but *Abraham*: Gen.17.5.

Verſ. 3. *Surely the Lord ſhall comfort Zion, hee ſhall comfort all her deſolations, and hee ſhall make her deſert like *Eden, and her wilderneſſe like the garden of the Lord: ioy and gladneſſe ſhall be found therein, praiſe and the voice of ſinging.*

*Or, a place of pleaſure.

THe Prophet ſhewes that the example propounded in *Abrahams* perſon, agrees to all ages. For as the Lord created ſo great a ſtocke out of one man in a moment; ſo will hee repleniſh his Church by extraordinarie and vnknowne meanes: not for once onely, but as oft as in the worlds account ſhe is become a widow and barren. And thus after S. *Paul* hath ſpoken of *Abrahams* faith, and commended the excellencie of it, he applies the ſame doctrine to euery one of vs in particular: Rom.4.24.

After darkneſſe, light.

Where he addes, *and ſhall comfort all her ruines*; it may be thus expounded. The Lord will comfort his Church, not onely whileſt ſhee floriſheth, but euen when ſhe ſhal be brought to deſolation and ſolitarineſſe. And it was neceſſary indeed that ſhe ſhould be waſted and deformed euen to the vtmoſt, before ſhee could rightly taſte the helpe whereof hee heere ſpeakes. Whereas it followes, that *her deſert ſhall be as a place of pleaſure*, the Prophet hath reſpect to that place of *Moſes*, where he ſhewes how man at the beginning was put into the *garden of Eden*: Gen.2.15. that is to ſay, into a place of pleaſure: whence by his owne fault he was baniſhed. Now we which are depriued of this benefit and bleſſing which God beſtowed vpon our firſt father, are alſo *ſcattered* vpon the face of the earth, and depriued of theſe *pleaſures*. Wherefore when many *deſolations* befall vs, and that wee ſee the order of nature ouerturned, and nothing to bee perceiued but miſerable waſtes and ſcatterings, let vs acknowledge that this is the iuſt puniſhment of our infidelitie, and

The Church muſt be very low brought before ſhe is fit to receiue comfort.

The Garden of Eden, a place of pleaſure. Gen.3.23.

of the reſt of our horrible iniquities. Let vs alſo remember the ſentence pronounced againſt our father *Adam*, or rather againſt his whole poſteritie, which as we are to do in the whole courſe of our liues, ſo then principallie when wee ſee the deſolations and wracks of the Church. For the earth which otherwiſe of it ſelfe *vvould abound vvith all ſorts of pleaſures*, is now brought into a *vvilderne* by our fault, and the Church which euery where floriſhed, is deſtroyed and laid waſte. Now in the next place the Prophet addes *ioy* and *gladnes*, wherby he ſignifies, that there ſhal be ſuch a wonderfull change, that the Church ſhall mourne nor lament no more: for whileſt ſhe was oppreſſed vnder ſo heauie a bondage, there was nothing heard but *ſighs and grones*, but being reſtored, the ſhall *reioyce*, and *ſing praiſes vnto God*. Heere then we are admoniſhed *to praiſe* and bleſſe the name of God, after we haue taſted of his liberalitie, Pſal. 14.7.

A good meditation for vs in the Churches deſolation.

Verſ. 4. *Hearken ye vnto me, my people, and giue eare vnto me my people: for a law ſhall proceed from me, and I will bring forth my iudgement for the light of* * *the people.*

*Or, peoples.

IT is not without cauſe that the Lord ſo often calles for *audience*: for wee haue too wofull experience how dull wee are of hearing, and chiefly in aduerſitie. When wee ſtand in greateſt need of conſolation, then by our impatiencie and faint-heartednes we put it farre from vs. Wherefore it ſtands euery one of vs in hand to pluck vp our ſpirits, eſpeciallie when aduerſities do pinch vs to the quick, that by this meanes wee may *rouze vp and awaken our ſpirits, and baniſh all ſlothfulnes to receiue cõfort*. Such an *attention* thẽ is heere required as may confirme our hearts in patience, till the time of grace be come. And thus the Lords meaning is, that he will reigne againe, and reſtore his Church to her firſt eſtate, in which he will haue his name called vpon.

Our ſlow attention cauſes God to double his exhortation: See verſe 1.

Albeit the word *Law* ſignifies as much as the Edict which the Lord will publiſh when he is determined to gather together his ſcattered Church, yet therewithall he ſhewes by what meanes he will reigne, to wit, by his law, and by the doctrine thereof. And thus we ſee that where the doctrine of the law is reiected, there God reignes not: that is to ſay, there men acknowledge him not.

How God wil raigne in his Church.

By *Iudgement*, he meanes the rule of a well ordered gouernment, by which he will reſtore his kingdome. He ſaith, that this Iudgement ſhall be for the *light* of peoples, becauſe miſerable men by nature are drawne out of darknes when God begins to raigne, and are then *enlightned* by the doctrine of the word.

The verb *I vvill bring forth*, is diuerſlie tranſlated by the Interpreters, becauſe the Hebrue word *Rega* hath diuers ſignifications, for ſometimes it ſignifies to cut, and to open, ſometimes to reſt. Some then expound, I will cauſe to reſt: that is to ſay, I will make firme, and this ſenſe agrees not ill. Many among the Iewes vnderſtand it otherwiſe, but I will not trouble the reader with their harſh and intricate expoſitions, I rather willinglie receiue this tranſlation, I will bring forth; or cauſe to come forth: that is to ſay, I will *manifeſt my iudgements*, for this I thinke ſutes beſt with the former member. Now we know that the Hebrues are wont to vſe many repetitions. And therefore albeit the Lord repeates one thing twice, yet the ſenſe is but one and the ſame. For where he ſaid, that a law ſhould *proceed from him*, now he promiſeth to *bring forth*, or to manifeſt his iudgement.

Verſ. 5. *My righteouſnes is neere: my ſaluation goeth forth, and mine armes ſhal iudge the people: the Iles ſhall wait for me, and ſhall truſt vnto mine arme.*

HEE confirmes the former doctrine. The *righteouſnes* of the Lord hath relation vnto men, who haue experience that he is iuſt. When the people were oppreſſed vnder ſo ſore a bondage, they had good cauſe to think they were iuſtlie chaſtiſed for their ſinnes. But they might wonder they were thus left and forſaken, that Gods worſhip was diſſolued, and his holy name blaſphemed by the prophane & vngodly, who committed many outrages againſt him without puniſhment. That he might giue them ſome conſolation then, *Iſaiah* promiſeth that God will *ſhortly* aſſiſt them, that ſo his truth and righteouſnes may be publiſhed throughout the whole world. But by the word *Iuſtice*, he meanes not that recompence, which he giues to euery one, but that *faithfulnes* of the Lord, who protects his Saints, and beſtowes many graces vpon them, and keeps his promiſe touching their deliuerance, in not ſuffring them to be ouerwhelmed. This appeares yet better to be ſo by the member following, where by way of expoſition he addes, that his *ſaluation is gone forth*: for the *righteouſnes* of God appeared in the *ſaluation* of the people. The captiuitie of the Iewes in Babylon was vnto them as a kind of death, and this is the cauſe why he calles this deliuerance *ſaluation*.

A confirmation of the former doctrine.

Mine armes ſhall iudge.] By *armes* he ſignifies the manifeſtation of his power, for it is a figuratiue maner of ſpeech much vſed in the Scripture. Now becauſe Gods ſoueraigntie and power ſeemes to be limited within very narrow bounds; yea, ſometimes appeeres not at all, therefore he mentions his *armes*, thereby ſignifying that his kingdome ſhalbe ſpread farre and neere.

Verſ. 6. *Lift vp your eies to the heauens, and looke vpon the earth beneath: for the heauẽ ſhal vaniſh away like ſmoke, and the earth ſhall wax old as a garment, and they that dwell therein ſhall periſh in like maner: but my ſaluation ſhall be for euer, and my righteouſnes ſhall not be aboliſhed.*

WHileſt wee ſee ſo many changes fall out in the world, and that ſ Church

as

The ſtabilitie of the Church.

as we often thinke ſhall be violently ſwallowed vp therein, it is very needfull that our minds ſhould be gathered vp farre aboue the whole order of nature, otherwiſe the ſaluation of the Church ſhall ſeeme to hang in a net, and to flote vp and downe in the middeſt of theſe tempeſts, wee may eaſily diſcerne 1 *with vvhat vviſdome God gouernes all things both in heauen aboue, and in the earth below*: ſecondly, with what a fatherly care he vpholds 2 and preſerues his work, and the whole frame of the world: thirdly, with what equitie he 3 diſpoſeth and prouides for all his creatures therein: but his care and prouidence ouer his Church is ſurpaſſing great, which indeed he hath ſeparated from the reſt of the world. The Prophet hath here comprehended both theſe points, for he commands the faithfull to turne their eies on euery ſide of them, to conſider Gods admirable prouidence as well in the *heauens*, as in the *earth*, by which he hath conſtantlie continued from the creation that goodly order by him then eſtabliſhed. Hee addes, that although theſe things ſeeme to *fall to decay*, yet it is vnpoſſible that ỹ Church which hath her ſure foundatiõ in God ſhould euer be ſhaken. As if he ſhould ſay, Heauen and earth ſhall periſh an hundreth times rather then the promiſe (vpon which the ſaluation of the Church is grounded) ſhould be *aboliſhed*. He therefore puts *ſaluation* in the firſt place, and then he addes *righteouſnes*, which is the ſolid foundation wherewith this ſaluation is vpheld: when dangers threaten vs on all ſides then, let vs learne to flee to this citie of refuge.

Vnto this ſentence alſo belongs that which is in Pſal.102. The heauens ſhall wax old as doth a garment, but thou, Lord, art the ſame, and thy yeeres ſhall not faile: and therefore thy children ſhall *dwell*, &c. Both places do admoniſh vs, that the fauor which God ſhews in the conſeruation of his Church, farre ſurpaſſeth all the reſt of his works in excellencie; for the whole matter and ſubſtance of the heauens and earth is but periſhable and tranſitorie, but the *ſaluation* whereby God preſerues his Church neither is nor can be liable to ſuch changes and alterations, becauſe it is eternall.

Verſ. 7. *Hearken vnto me, yee that know righteouſnes, the people in whoſe heart is my law. Feare not ye the reproch of men, neither be ye afraid of their rebukes.*

A third exhortation to attention: ſee verſ.1. and 4.

BEcauſe the wicked hauing all things at their wiſh, deride and ſcorne our hopes, and make themſelues ſport with our miſeries & calamities, the Prophet exhorts the faithfull to ſuffer with patience, and not to feare their rebukes; neither to be diſcouraged for their outrages, becauſe the felicitie which they inioy, ſhall be *but of ſhort continuance*. For notwithſtanding their meriments ſtuffed ſo full of deriſions and proud diſdainings, they are alreadie ordeined to be meate for *mothes* and *wormes*: as on the contrarie, that God holds the ſaluation of the faithfull (which for a time he ſeemes to neglect) ſafe in his owne hand. But we are againe to note the repetition of this verb, *To hearken*, for this is the third time the Lord hath required *audience* in this Chapter: for when we be in perplexities, and tremble in regard of our miſeries, we haue much ado to apprehend or imbrace the promiſes. There is great need then that we ſhould often be rouzed and wakened vp to attention, vntill we haue wound our ſelues out of all entanglings. *Verſ.1. & 4.*

Verſe 8.

But he directs not his ſpeech heere to the hypocrites, but to ſuch as *know righteouſnes*. For howſoeuer the faithfull do not oſtentimes ſhut the dores againſt this *righteouſnes*, and ſo hinder the ſame from hauing any entrance, becauſe in aduerſitie they ſtop their eares, and nouriſh diſcomfortable thoughts within them. To the end then that they might giue the promiſes entrance, and ſuffer themſelues to be comforted, the Prophet awakens them againe, and bids them *giue eare*. The faithfull againe diſtinguiſhed from hypocrites. See verſe 1.

The order of his words is alſo to be noted, for firſt he ſhewes who they be of whom the Lord would haue audience, namely, of ſuch as *know* righteouſnes: ſecondly, expounding what this knowledge is, he addes, *the people in vvhoſe heart my law* is written and planted, for there is no *righteouſnes* without Gods word. Let men make neuer ſo many *lawes*, and that in the beſt forme they can deuiſe, yet they can not bring vs to true *righteouſnes*: they may well bring vs to ſome ſhadowes of it, but they ſhall neuer attaine ſo farre as to expreſſe it to the life. He alſo therewithall ſhewes the way how to profit in the law of the Lord: for the *law* hath not his ſeate in the braine, but in the *heart*, that ſo being leauened with this heauenly doctrine, Matth.13.33. we may be whollie transformed into it, 2.Cor.3.18. 1 2 Note.

Verſ. 8. *For the moth ſhall eate them vp like a garment, and the worme ſhall eate them like vvooll: but my righteouſnes ſhall be for euer, and my ſaluation from generation to generation.*

A preuention of an obiection.

BEcauſe the faithfull ſeruants of God were to indure many iniuries & wrongs which the enemies of the world would load them with: therefore the Prophet exhorts them againe to beare theſe things patiently: for the diſgraces and checks which we often receiue from the wicked, wound vs more to the heart then their fires or ſwords. But we muſt hold it our glory and crowne of reioicing, that wee be contemned of them, and accounted as the of-ſcouring of all things. Thence ariſeth that fortitude, though the world reiects vs *as the ſcumme of the vvorld*: for God holds vs precious in his ſight, in regard our cauſe is his owne. Let vs then with *Moſes*, eſteeme the rebuke of Chriſt aboue all the riches of Egypt, Exod.2.11.Heb.11.26. Let vs with the Apoſtles reioyce, who went from the Councell with glad hearts, in regard they were counted worthie

worthy to suffer rebuke and wrongs for the name of the Lord Iesus: Act.5.41.

Now because it were little ioy to vs to see the wicked brought to nought, vnlesse wee might inioy our freedome and safetie; the Prophet shewes what our condition shall be, namely, *neuer* to be *destituted* of the *righteousnesse* and *saluation* of God. But this comparison seemes not verie fitting, when the ruine of the vngodly is opposed to his *righteousnesse*. For it might haue been more properly and plainly affirmed, that howsoeuer the wicked reioice, yet they shall shortly perish, and the faithfull, who now resemble dead men, shall liue. For seeing he mentions not them at all, but onely recommends vnto them the perpetuitie of his *righteousnesse*; it might bee obiected, what profit shall we haue by this, that Gods righteousnesse shall remaine for euer, whilest we in the meane while, are ouerwhelmed with miseries? But the Prophet in these words aduertiseth vs, that the consolation which belongs vnto vs in afflictions, must arise from hence, that our health and saluation is after a sort shut vp in God. For whilest men rest in themselues, they cannot conceiue so much as the least dramme of hope, which will not forthwith vanish. And therefore he turnes our eies vnto God, whose mercie indures for euer, vpon them that feare him, and his righteousnesse vpon their childrens children, as *Dauid* saith, Psal.103. In regard that our saluation then is founded on Gods *mercy* and *truth*, *Isaiah* brings vs vnto it, that all men being accounted *as nothing*, wee may wholly trust in the saluation of the Lord. For thus we must reason; *Saluation* is in God, not for himselfe, but for vs: as also his *righteousnesse*, which hee is readie to manifest for our defence. From the saluation & righteousnesse of God then, wee ought to gather that his seruants can neuer perish. Which we haue also prooued from the testimonie of *Dauid*; Thou art alwaies the same, and thy yeeres shall not faile: the children of thy seruants shall continue, and their seede shall stand fast in thy sight: Psal.102.27,28. Wee see then how hee applies this *perpetuitie* vnto Gods children, who stand not by their owne strength, but in God, who is the rocke of their saluation.

Saluation in God, not for himselfe, but for vs.

Vers.9. *Rise vp, rise vp, and put on strength, O arme of the Lord: arise as in the old time in the generations of the world. Art not thou* *the same that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?

*that arme.

10. *Art not thou the same which hath dried the sea*, euen *the waters of the great deepe, making the depth of the sea a way for the redeemed to passe ouer?*

Gods promises must beget in vs the affection of Praier.

THe Prophet heere teacheth, that when God raiseth vs vp by his promises, we on the other side ought instantly to intreat him to accomplish that which hee hath promised. For he giues vs not comfort to nourish vs in idlenesse; but the more to inflame vs with a greater affection of praier, and to a daily exercising of our faith. Now the Prophet speaks heere according to our vnderstandings. For we thinke that God sleepes, as long as he deferres to relieue our miseries: and yet the Lord beares with vs thus far, that hee suffers vs to pray with such words, as sauour somewhat of the infirmitie of our natures. The faithfull then pray that God would *arise*, or awake: not as if he were *idle*, or *asleepe* in heauen; but they rather acknowledge therein *their owne dulnesse or slothfulnesse*, in regard they cannot conceiue ought else of God, as long as he deferres to helpe them. Notwithstanding howsoeuer the flesh imagineth that hee sleepes, and neglects our miseries, yet faith lookes higher, and apprehends his infinite power.

In what sense God is said to wake, &c.

The Scripture therefore is wont to say, that God *awakes*, and *puts on strength*, when he manifests some testimonies of his presence and power: for without this, we esteeme him either idle or asleep. Now when the Prophet calles it the *arme of the Lord* which was then hid; he sets it heere before them, as if it were present, that they might conclude; surely our enemies could not afflict vs thus cruelly, if that the Lord had not withdrawne his *arme*, and helping hand from vs. We haue shewed you the cause of this delay in Chap.50.1. namely, for their reuolt from God.

By the *daies of old*, hee shewes, that they ought to remember all the wonderfull works which God had in former time wrought for their saluation. For howsoeuer he seemes to sit still as one vtterly careless of vs, yet is he the same God still, who *of old* hath gouerned his Church, and therefore can neuer now reiect or abandon those whom he hath receiued into his protection.

Wee must meditate on Gods works of old.

In the generations of old.] This repetition doth yet better expresse, that wee ought not onely to consider what was done *yesterday*, but those things also which were done *long agoe*: for we must extend our thoughts euen to the most *ancient generations*, that wee may ouercome those temptations, which otherwise would seeme to ouerwhelme vs. The Prophet doth heere then gather together *in one*, all the testimonies of Gods fauour, which he hath from time to time manifested to his people, that if two or three were not sufficient, yet at least the *great* numbers of them might wholly confirme the faith of the elect.

Now because it was too tedious to draw a long catalogue of all, hee names *this first and excellent miracle* among the rest; namely, the wonderfull deliuerance of the people *out of Egypt*. For by *Rahab*, I doubt not but he means proud and cruell Egypt: as in the 87. Psalme; I will make mention of *Rahab* and Babylon, among those which know me. Also, *Ezechiel* calles the King of Egypt a *dragon*: 29.3. Behold, I come against thee *Pharaoh* King of Egypt, the great dragon, that lieth in the midst of the riuers. Thus it sufficiently appeares,

peares, and all (in a maner) are of the ſame opinion, that the Prophet heere puts them in minde of that ſtrange deliuerance of the people out of Egypt. If the pride and loftineſſe of *Egypt* was at that time brought low; if the *dragon* was then *ſlaine*; why ſhould wee not ſtill hope for the like?

Art not thou that arme?] The Prophet reaſons from the nature of God: for this cannot bee ſaid of the arme of fleſh: the ſtrength whereof (be it neuer ſo great) yet decaies and diminiſheth in ſucceſſion of time. *Milo*, who was the ſtouteſt and ſtrongeſt among many, waxing old, and looking vpon *his arme*, ſighed, becauſe hee felt himſelfe deſtitute of that force which once hee inioied: but it is not thus with God, for his power can neuer diminiſh. Theſe words then, *Art not thou that arme?* muſt be read with a certaine vehemencie: for the Prophet ſhewes that the Lord is the ſame which he was wont to be, in regard he continues alwaies one and the ſame.

Miloſigheth.

Now howſoeuer *Iſaiah* recites not all the miracles which God did, when he deliuered his people from vnder the bondage of Egypt; yet he meant in a word to comprehend whatſoeuer *Moſes* expreſſeth at large; that the Iewes being admoniſhed by this briefe ſentence, might from thence call to minde after how manie waies God did then manifeſt his power.

Hee mentions the red *ſea*, which was *dried vp*; not onely for the rareneſſe of the miracle, but becauſe all the former miracles tended to this end, that the people being now ſet free from an vniuſt oppreſſion and tyrannie, might paſſe out of Babylon into the land of promiſe: and therefore hee makes expreſſe mentiõ of the *way* which was opened for the *redeemed*. From this example we may conſider what a one God hath been towards vs, that thence we may conclude, that he will for the time to come, bee alwaies like himſelfe, as plainlie appeares by the coherence of the text.

Verſ. 11. *Therefore the redeemed of the Lord ſhall returne, and come with *ioy vnto Zion; and euer laſting ioy ſhall be vpon their heads: they ſhall obtaine ioy and gladneſſe, and ſorrow, and mourning ſhall flee away.*

*Or, a ſong.

NOw hee ſhewes that more plainly, which he briefly touched before: for hauing recited the wonderfull workes of God, whereby in times paſt hee manifeſted his power in Egypt, for the deliuerance of his people, hee concludes that neither the high rockes, nor the bottomleſſe gulphes, no nor the gates of hell themſelues ſhall be able to let him from bringing backe his people out of Babylon. Now the better to confirme and apply this, he calles them *the redeemed*; to teach them that God intitles not himſelfe to bee the ſauiour of his people, but for their ſakes: and alſo to aſſure them, that he will ſhew ſuch a teſtimonie of his power for their deliuerance, as hee once did; in regard the cauſe is now the ſame.

An amplification.

Vnto Zion.] That is to ſay, vnto that place where he once appointed his name to be called vpon, that ſo hee might aſſure them that the Temple ſhould be reedified, and Gods pure worſhip eſtabliſhed. For when the Iewes who were in Babylon, were to looke for that deliuerance which their fathers formerlie had, in regard God was alſo the *redeemer* of their children: they had yet a priuiledge aboue their fathers, becauſe God had choſen Mount Zion, in which he had promiſed to reſt for euer: Pſal. 131.14. But becauſe the worke of God promiſed heere by *Iſaiah*, was extraordinarie, therefore he exhorts the people to *thankſgiuing*. The word *Rinna* may be ſimply taken for ioy: but becauſe it often ſignifies that praiſe, which wee yeeld vnto God in the acknowledgement of his benefits, I had rather take it for a *ſong* in this place. The Prophets meaning is then, that there ſhall be an vnwonted, and an vnexpected change; ſo as the faithfull ſhall haue an exceeding cauſe of ioy and thankſgiuing.

In ſaying that *euerlaſting ioy ſhall bee vpon their heads*; he alludes vnto thoſe crownes and garlands of flowers, wherewith they were adorned at banquets. He addes, that they *ſhall obtaine ioy*: meaning thereby a firme and ſolid ioy. Laſtly, for amplifications ſake, hee ſaith, that *all ſorrow ſhall flee away*: and this was to confirme them againſt that ordinary feare which men haue; namely, when as all their ioy in a moment is turned to mourning. And yet heerewithall the Prophet admoniſheth them to wait patiently for that happy iſſue which he hath promiſed, though for a while (if neede bee) they are in heauineſſe and ſorrow.

Verſ. 12. *I*, euen *I am he that comfort you. Who art thou, that thou ſhouldeſt feare a mortall man, and the ſonne of man, which ſhall be made as graſſe.*

THe Lord not onely promiſeth ſaluation and grace heere to the Iewes, but complaines that they would not beleeue his word, neither would they make that account of his power, which they ſhould haue done. For what an vnworthy thing is it, that the threats of men ſhould ſo terrifie vs, as to make vs ſet light by the promiſes of God, who is ready to manifeſt his power, that ſo at the leaſt wee might be fortified againſt all aſſaults? Wee ſhew our ſelues flat contemners of God then, when we nouriſh in our ſelues an inordinate *feare of man*. Whence it appeares how odious a thing it is to make a tumult in our mindes, by reaſon of mens threats, when God calles vs to reſt quietly in him. Truly the ingratitude of men is too groſſe, if in hearing that God is of their ſide, they conceiue not hope from ſo many famous promiſes, to cry with boldneſſe; If God be with vs, who can be againſt vs? Rom. 8.31. That is the cauſe then that when dangers appeare, they ſtand as men amazed; and attribute more power to a mortall

A complaint againſt the peoples inordinate feare, proceeding from infidelitie.

mortall man to harme them, then to God to help them. He iustly reprocheth the Iewes then, that they had fortified thémselues no better with these promises, and that by them they were no better armed against all dangers. For what greater dishonor can we doe vnto God, then to call the truth of his promises into question, which yet falles out, when men so affright vs, that we can not quietly rest in the things reuealed?

This repetition *I, I am*, hath great weight, because he that promiseth this consolation is true, neither can the forces, nor deceits of men defeat him of his purpose. *Who art thou, &c* He shewes how fraile, transitorie, vaine, and brittle *mans nature is*, the better to bewray the sottishnes of this people, whilest they preferred bubbles, a smoke, and shadowes to ỹ strong God. But withall he shews, that men can not be ouerwhelmed with feare as long as they retaine within them the remembrance of Gods power. Doe wee then stand amazed when dangers approch? It is a signe that we haue forgotten God, and therfore he addes,

Prou.24.10.

Vers. 13. *And forgettest the Lord thy maker that hath spread out the heauens, and laid the foundations of the earth? And hast feared all the day continuallie because of the rage of the oppressor which is readie to destroy? Where is now the rage of the oppressor?*

We must beware how we feare the creature aboue the Creator. See Chap.43. 15.

IT is not enough to imagin that there is one God, but wee must acknowledge and imbrace him by faith. In calling himselfe a *maker*, it must not be referred to the generall Creation, but to spirituall regeneration, as we haue noted before in diuers places. And in this sense *Paul* calles vs the *workemanship* of God, because *he hath created* vs vnto euery good worke, Ephe.2.10. If we remember then the worke of our *Creation* and adoption, from this beginning we may hope of perseuerance vnto the end, lest we should proue vnthankfull vnto God, when after so vndoubted testimonies, he hath manifested his faithfulnes and truth vnto vs.

Besides, the Prophet ioines Gods infinite *power* with *his speciall goodnes which he shewed to his people:* and this power he opposeth to mans imbecilitie, who in the former verse he compared to *grasse*. He shewes by his works what his power is, so as those which perceiue not the same therein, are more then blinde. For which way can we turne our eies but we must needs behold most ample and large testimonies of Gods power and goodnes? which he notwithstanding notes out here in a word, whé he speakes of the *spreading out of the heauens*, and of *laying the foundations of the earth*. It is our brutishnes then, & matchlesse sensualitie to *forget* the same, seeing there are so many infinite testimonies of Gods power, which may dayly refresh our memories.

And hast feared.] Hee continues the same comparison. For what are *men*, saith he, that thou shouldest *so feare them*, if thou compaiest them *with God*, who hath promised to relieue thee? Truly it is an exceeding dishonor done to his Maiestie, if we beleeue not that he hath more power to saue vs, then the enemies haue to destroy vs. The Lord therefore would haue vs to consider well what and how great he is, and how farre his power extends it selfe that we should not feare *the rage of the oppressor*, nor the furie of *a mortall man*, who vanisheth as a puffe of winde, or as the smoke.

See 2.Kin.6. 16.2.Chr.32. 7.1.Ioh.4.4.

Vers. 14. *The captiue hasteth to be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should faile.*

THis verse is diuersly expounded: for some thinke it is to be referred to *Cyrus*, and so they expound the word *Tsoah* (which we haue translated *banished*) he which causeth to remoue. But the most receiued opinion is, that this word is to be taken for him that is bound or oppressed: or, for one exiled, wandring hither and thither. The Iewes were not only banished, but were so held captiues, that it was impossible for them freely to returne home into their countrie: and therefore I expound this of the Iewes: but yet it may be taken both waies, either that the Prophet reproues their ouer-great haste to be loosed, in regard of their impatient wishing to returne: or it signifies, that their returne into their countrie shall come in due season, that their long expectation might not put them vtterly out of heart. As if he should say, The time in which you are to depart home is hard at hand. This second exposition is the most approued, and I willinglie receiue it, because it agrees with the scope of the text.

A thousand yeeres with the Lord is but as one day.

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But is it not strange that he saith, the people shall *shortly* returne, seeing the captiuitie indured so long a time. But it is not without cause that God saith, his deliuerance which he deferred to a fit time should forthwith be accomplished: for albeit the same seeme very long to vs, yet is it but short in deed, because it is the fittest and best time. And truly if we shall consider the estate of this so great and mightie a Monarchie, which had not then so much as any appearance of euer being ruinated, we may safely affirme that the time was very short.

Thus then, whereas we thinke Gods promises long in performing, we shall esteeme the time but a moment; prouided that wee lift vp our eies vnto the heauens, Psal.123.1. This exposition is yet better confirmed by that which is added, *that he die not in the pit*. See how the Lord *hastens* then to deliuer his elect in due season, that out of the darke dungeon they may come forth safe and sound. Neither doth he promise his people a speedie dispatch, to free them from their bonds only, but also that he may do thé good after their deliuerance, for he promiseth them all things necessarie for this life present, that so they may rest whollie vpon the Lord, who is not wont to aid his people for once only, but is

wont

wont to be with them, euen till their latter end.

Verſ. 15. *And I am the Lord thy God that diuided the Sea when his waues rored: the Lord of hoſtes is his name.*

HE mentions his power againe. For mens diſtruſt and ſlothfulneſſe is ſo great, that albeit the ſame his power bee manifeſted in their ſight, yet the leaſt temptation that is, prooues ſufficiently that they are not well perſwaded thereof. For they alwaies turne to their old bias againe, when the euill preſſeth them; neither can they conceiue how this power which is in God, appertaines any whit vnto them. Hee ſpeakes not heere generally but alleageth that worke of wonder, ſo often mentioned heeretofore: for in that redemption of their fathers, hee gaue hope of eternall ſaluation to all their poſteritie. He therefore rightly affirmes himſelfe to be that *God*, who long ſince diuided *the ſea*, Exod.14. 21. Then he adornes this miracle, in ſaying, that at his voice the *roring* and boiling *waues* were appeaſed. Let vs know then that there are no floods ſo violent, but the Lord can ſtil and aſſwage them, for the deliuerance of his Church: Pſal.93.3,4. For it is hee that calmes the ſea by his power, as *Iob* ſaith, Chap.26.12. though it bee very boiſterous and vntamed. He alſo raiſeth the tempeſts when it pleaſeth him. But the Prophet, as I haue ſaid, chiefly reſpected the hiſtorie of their deliuerance out of Egypt.

He giues God the title of the *Lord of hoſtes*, to teach vs how farre his power extends it ſelfe; which hee is readie to manifeſt, as oft as hee purpoſeth to giue reliefe vnto his Church.

Verſ. 16. *And I haue put my words in thy mouth, and haue defended thee in the ſhadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heauens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and ſay vnto Zion, Thou art my people.*

HEe returnes againe to the doctrine by him propounded before; namely, that God, who comforts his Church, and ſaith I, euen I am hee that comfort you, verſ.12. affirmes heere, that hee hath *put that into the mouthes* of the Prophets, which they haue in charge to deliuer. Hence we may gather, that theſe things proceeded not from man, who commonly is mutable; but from God, that cannot lie. The Lord ſpake to all the Prophets: firſt, to *Iſaiah*, then to others ſucceſſiuely; but at laſt we muſt come to Chriſt: and yet we need not reſtraine this to *Iſaiah*, nor to Chriſt; but to extend it to al the Prophets. Moreouer, it is the Lords meaning that wee ſhould hearken as diligently to the conſolations of the Prophets, as if he taught them vs in his owne perſon: yea, he ſaith heere, that it is hee which ſpeakes by their mouthes. Hence wee gather, that others needs not draw neere to giue comfort to the Church, but ſuch *as by whoſe mouth God ſpeakes*: for wee ought to reiect all ſuch as broach their owne inuentions, albeit they ſhrowd themſelues neuer ſo much with the title of Gods name.

But let vs a little ſee into the Prophets meaning. For hauing ſhewed that mens conſciences alwaies wauer, till the Lord haue ſecured them, it teacheth vs to hold this principle, that it is God, who ſpeakes by his Prophets: for otherwiſe our conſciences would remaine in doubtings and perplexities ſtill. There is alſo great weight in theſe words, in that he recites the commandement of God: for by the authoritie heereof, he was hartened on to performe his office. *Acts* 28.25. *Heb.*1.1.

And haue kept thee in the ſhadow of mine hand.] Though this was ſaid in Chap.49.2. yet was it no needleſſe repetition. For hence wee learne, that God will vndoubtedly defend his Miniſters at all times, that ſo being vpheld by his ſuccour, he may fit them to paſſe thorow the pikes. Now that we may be *couered with this ſhadow*, two things are required: First, that wee be well aſſured that we publiſh nothing to the people but Gods word: ſecondly, that we doe this at Gods command: for ſuch as raſhly intrude themſelues, may well crake of the title of teachers, but to no purpoſe; for they ſhall turne their backes, when it comes to the triall indeed. But if we haue the teſtimonie of a good conſcience, to witneſſe with vs that we are called of God, then may we reſolue our ſelues aſſuredly of Gods aid and protection, and that in the end we ſhall haue the victory. God will alwaies protect his Miniſters. 1 2

The end of the ambaſſage is added; *that I may plant the heauens*, ſaith he: that is to ſay, that I may bring all things into their right order. I grant this is diuerſly expounded: but the moſt natiue ſenſe, as I thinke, is, that *heauen* and *earth* are renewed by the doctrine of ſaluation; becauſe in Chriſt (as *Paul* ſpeakes) all things both *in heauen and earth*, are gathered together in one: Eph.1.10. For in regard that ſince the fall of the firſt man, we ſee nothing heere but ſuch horrible confuſions as burthen the very inſenſible creatures, and make them as it were to beare the puniſhment of our ſinne: Rom.8.22. this diſorder can no way be repaired but in Chriſt. Seeing then that the whole face of the earth is diſfigured by this wofull deſolation, it is not ſaid without cauſe, that the faithfull teachers doe reuiue the world, euen as if God did caſt heauen and earth into a new mould againe, by their hand. By this let vs take a taſte of the grieuouſneſſe of ſinne, ſeeing ſuch an horrible downefall hath ſucceeded in the nature of things. It is ſaid then that the *heauens* are planted, and the *earth* ſet vpon her *foundations*, when the Lord eſtabliſheth his Church by the miniſterie of his word. This he doth by the hands of the Miniſters, whom hee directs by his holy Spirit, and defends them againſt all the furie and plots of their enemies, that they may effectuallie accom- The world renued as it were by the the Goſpell preached.

pliſh the worke impoſed vpon them.

Laſtly, he ſhewes that this miniſterie tends to an higher end, then to the viſible forme of this world, which ſuddenly vaniſheth away; to wit, that hee will raiſe vp and nouriſh in the hearts of the faithfull, the hope of the bleſſed life. For the true reſtauration of the Church, and of the world, conſiſts in this, that the elect may be gathered into the vnitie of faith, and that they all with one accord may aſpire vnto God, ſeeing he ſo louingly allures them by theſe words, *I am thy God*. By this we may ſee what account God makes of his Church, and the ſaluation thereof, in that he not onelie preferres it aboue the whole world, but ſhewes that the ſtabilitie of the world depends vpon it. We are alſo to obſerue what word it is which God will haue preached: for in it we haue the rule of a godly life preſcribed, and beſides, it teſtifies vnto vs our adoption, wherein eſpecially conſiſts our ſaluation.

Verſe 15. and in this verſe, Thou art my people.

Verſ. 17. *Awake, awake and ſtand vp O Ieruſalem, which haſt drunke at the Lords hand the cup of his wrath: thou haſt drunke the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.*

IN regard the Church was to ſuſtaine and indure many afflictions, the Prophet furniſheth her with conſolation, and meetes with a difficultie that might come betweene; namely, the enemies tyrannizing ouer the poore Iews, when as in the meane while, they felt no fruit of theſe promiſes. His meaning is then, that the Church ſhould be reſtored and ſhall recouer her full ſtrength, though now ſhe be afflicted, and toſſed vp and downe with diuers tempeſts. And by the word *awake thee*, he raiſeth her from death, and as it were out of her graue. As if he ſhould ſay; No ruin can be ſo wofull, nor any deſolations ſo horrible, that can let God from effecting of this reſtauration. Such a conſolation doubtleſſe was of ſingular vſe: for when ſorrow hath ſeazed vpon our hearts, wee by and by thinke that the promiſes belong nothing at all vnto vs. It is very needfull then that wee be often put in mind of this, and may alſo haue it euer in our ſight; namely, that it is God who ſpeaks and thus calles, not ſuch as are in a flouriſhing eſtate, but thoſe that are brought low, yea and dead: for theſe hee can *awaken* notwithſtanding, and raiſe vp by his word: for this doctrine of ſaluation is not ordained for thoſe that are in good plight, but for the *dead*, which haue loſt all hope.

Which haſt drunke, &c. The cup of wrath, is taken two waies: for ſometimes it is ſaid, that the Lord giues vs *a cuppe of wrath* to drinke, when hee ſmites vs with giddineſſe, and depriues vs of ſenſe: and this wee ſee often befalles men in their affliction. Sometimes alſo it is taken ſimply for the bitter and ſmart blowes, wherewith hee corrects his children in wrath: in which ſenſe, this word ought to be taken in this place, as it appeares, becauſe the relative *His*, is thereunto added. Neither doth this croſſe that which is ſaid; to wit, that the Church was amazed and *drunke*: for this happened in regard the Lord chaſtiſed her ſo ſeuerely. Now this is a ſimilitude much vſed in the Scriptures, by which the Lord calles his rod, wherewith he corrects his children, a *drinke* or potion, diuided to euery one. Notwithſtanding when it ſpeaks of the elect, this word *cup*, ſerues to ſet forth the meaſure which God keepes in his iudgements: for he ſauours his blow, though hee chaſtiſeth his people ſharpelie. See Chap. 27.8. Ier. 30.11.

I take the word *Tarela*, for anguiſh, or trembling, wherewith men are ſeazed, when they feele themſelues oppreſſed with grieuous afflictions. Wee may alſo ſay they be *drunke*, in regard they haue ſwallowed al that was in the cup; ſo as their calamitie and miſerie is growne to the height: and to this belongs the word *preſſing*, or wringing out. Beſides, the Church is heere aduertiſed, that all her calamities whatſoeuer which befell her, proceeded from *Gods* immediate *hand*, to the end ſhee ſhould not imagin that ſhee was wrongfully afflicted, or that her miſeries fell out by chance: for the Prophets drift is to let the people ſee, that they bee iuſtly puniſhed for their iniquities. Neither can a man euer be raiſed vp, vnleſſe hee confeſſe firſt of all that he is fallen; nor rid out of his miſerie, except he acknowledge himſelfe miſerable by his owne fault. In a word, what haue we to doe with conſolations, vnleſſe the doctrine of repentance goes before?

The *dregs* then are not to be taken in this place, as they are in Ieremy 25.15. where he ſpeakes of the reprobates (whom the Lord chokes and ſtifles with the drinke of this cup) but for a iuſt and ample puniſhment, which yet the Lord meant ſomewhat to moderate. After he hath chaſtiſed vs then after his own will, and is purpoſed to put an end to our miſeries, he ſaith; *the dregs are drunke vp*: as wee haue ſeene, Chap. 40.2.

Verſ. 18. *There is none to guide her among all the ſonnes whom ſhee hath brought forth: there is none that taketh her by the hand of all the ſonnes that ſhee hath brought vp.*

THe Prophet heere deſcribes a pitifull eſtate wherein the Church was: for what greater griefe, then when the *children* which ſhee had *brought forth*, would not yeelde her any reliefe or comfort at all? But he ſets forth this her miſerie in this wiſe, to teach her to wait for conſolation from God, albeit ſhe were in this pitifull plight, becauſe God will neuer forſake his ſeruants, no not although they were plunged into the depth of hell. The doctrine is then, that albeit the Church be forſaken of men, yea of her owne *children*, whō ſhe hath nouriſhed vp in her lap, yet God will aſſiſt her. A mother cannot be more pinched at the heart, then to ſee her children to *abandon her*, of whom ſhe *expects* loue for loue. This ingratitude and inhumanity

The Church oft times findes leaſt reliefe of thoſe that come out of her owne boſome.

cuts

cuts her much more then the cruell rage of her enemies: for why doth ſhe nurce and bring vp children, but that they may be a ſtaffe vnto her in her age? But when children neglect their duty, what can ſhe elſe imagin but that ſhe hath loſt her coſt and labour? Thus then, howſoeuer the Church had performed the office of a *Mother*, and had *brought forth* and *brought vp* her children to mans eſtate, notwithſtanding *Iſaiah* pronounceth, that there is *no ſupport* nor *ſuccor*, to be looked for at the hands of the vngratefull.

And yet the Prophets ſpeech hath a further ſcope, to wit, that the children that will not relieue their mothers neceſſities, are baſtards and degenerate, that ſo ſhe might the more quietly beare their deſtruction. It was a very beauie and dolorous thing to ſee the Church ſtripped of all her *of-ſpring*, and to be left a widow. *And yet this befell her.* But the Prophet admoniſheth the Church, that her children deſerue not to be bewailed of her, but that ſhe ſhould rather deſire to haue others in their ſtead, as it is in Pſal. 102. 18. that the people which ſhall be borne, ſhall praiſe the Lord.

Who takes the miſeries of the church to heart?

Moreouer, that miſerie which the Prophet heere deſcribes belongs wholly to our time. Many now brag that they are the children of the Church, but which of them takes the miſeries of their mother to heart? Who laments her ruins? Who feeles his ſpirits ſo moued thereat, as to put his ſhoulders to vndergoe the burthen with her? How many are there which betray; and more cruelly perſecute her vnder this title, then the open & ſworne enemies? And therefore after all the reſt of her miſeries this comes in at the laſt to make vp the meaſure of them to the full. Againe, thoſe which will be reputed the pillars of the Church, and not only boaſt that they are *children*, but brag that they are her *fathers*, are euen they who cowardly and treacherouſly haue forſaken her when ſhe called them to ſuccor her. What maruell is it then if God cut them off, that he may hereafter giue his Church *naturall children* which may aſſiſt her.

Verſ. 19. *Theſe two things are come vnto thee: who will lament thee? Deſolation and* *destruction, and famine, and the ſword: by whom ſhall I comfort thee?*

*Or, bruſing.

THe Prophet vſeth the like words in a maner touching Babylon in Chap. 47. *Theſe two things ſhall come to thee* ſuddenly in one day, the loſſe of children, and widowhood. But here the Prophet promiſeth a better iſſue and end to the Church, becauſe the Lord wil draw her out of this bottomleſſe gulph of miſeries: yet he threatens an extreame miſerie, that he might fit the faithfull for patience, and that in the middes of their anguiſhes they ſhould not ceaſe to lift vp their prayers and ſupplications vnto God. The ſumme is, that the Church ſhall be ſo oppreſſed vnder all ſorts of calamities, that ſhe ſhall ſeeme euen to be ouerwhelmed with them. How ſo? Without, ſhe was to looke for many ſharp afflictions: ſecondly, ſhe ſhould receiue no comfort nor reliefe from her owne children, verſ. 18. Theſe are the *two* great euils whereof the Prophet ſpeakes. But yet this diuiſion ſeemes not to agree, for after he hath mentioned one euill, to wit, that none ſhall giue the Church comfort or conſolation, he names *three* kinds of euils, *deſolation, ſorrow*, or breaking, *ſword*, and *famine*. Some expound that the Church was *famiſhed* within, and *vexed* with both by her enemies. But I am of another opinion, as I haue already ſhewed. For it is a phraſe of ſpeech (to ſpeake by an interrogation) much frequented among the Hebrues, when they purpoſe to denie a thing abſolutely. And this hath its elegancie among them, though it hath not ſo much grace in another language. *Iſaiah* then mentions theſe two euils, the one *outward*, in regard ſhe was waſted and deſtroyed with *warre* and *famine*, which he hath ſignified by the foure former kinds. The other *inward*, in that ſhe ſhall be left deſtitute of conſolation, and none would lament her. For by the *interrogation* he ſhewes that ſhe ſhould haue no conſolation. This verſe then anſwers to the former, where we haue already told you to what end the Prophet deſcribes this ſo lamentable and wofull an eſtate of the Church.

The Church muſt make her account to meet not only with inward, but outward calamities alſo.

Verſ. 20. *Thy ſonnes haue fainted, and lie at the head of all the ſtreetes as a wild bull in a net, and are full of the wrath of the Lord, and rebuke of thy God.*

HE ſets forth this ſorrowfull condition of the Church at large, when he ſaith, that her *ſonnes* lie *proſtrate*. What ſorrow is more bitter to a naturall mother then to ſee the throtes of her children cut, and not only one or two of them, but the *ſtreetes* to be paued with the multitudes of them thus ſlaine? He addes a ſimilitude taken from a Beare, or from ſome other wilde beaſts, thereby ſhewing, that the ſtrongeſt among the Iewes were ſnarled as it were in the *net*.

A miſerie to a mother to ſee her ſonnes ſlain, from whom ſhe expects ſuccor.

In ſaying that they were *full of the wrath of the Lord*, it is to admoniſh them, that it came not to paſſe by fortune. For he would not haue them impute this worke to chance; neither yet to accuſe God of hard dealing, in that they were afflicted ſo ſore. Why ſo? Becauſe his iudgements are alwaies iuſt and right: which he ſhewes further, in telling them, that this plague proceeded from Gods *rebuke*, or threatning. But withall, wee muſt note his meaning, which I haue touched before, namely, that the faithfull ſhould not caſt away the hope of their ſaluation, notwithſtanding their many miſeries and deſolations daily ſolicited them thereunto.

Verſ. 21. *Therefore heare now this, thou miſerable and drunken, but not with wine.*

NOw he ſhewes more plainely, why he hath ſpoken of the calamities of the

A mitigation of the Churches sorrow in this and in the next verse. Quest.

Church, namely, that the faithfull should not doubt of the Lords readinesse to comfort them, though they indured many and great extremities. But wherefore calles hee the Church *miserable?* Is there any estate so blessed as to be in Gods favour, especially seeing this blessednesse cannot bee taken from vs? Fos it is not said without cause in Psa. 144.15. That the people are *blessed* which have the Lord for their God. I answer, she is miserable onely in appearance. Also the Lord calles her not by this name in vaine, for himselfe is the helper of the *miserable*, and of those that be destitute of succour; as wee have said before.

Ans. The Church miserable onely in appearance. See Hos. 14.4

Where he calles her *drunken*: we must note that the faithfull doe not alwaies indure their afflictions with such patience and constancy, that they are not sometimes astonied: but notwithstanding their amazednesse, they ought to conceave that the Lord chastiseth them justly; and also to be assured, that hee will succour them. For he speakes not to the strong and valiant, but to the feeble, *miserable*, the humbled, and to such as resemble those that are *drunken*: to such hee promiseth comfort. To be short, by this word he asswageth the Churches sorrow, and shewes that hee keepes a measure in the greatest afflictions, that he may draw her out of perdition; as if he raised a dead and rotten carkase vnto life.

Vers. 22. **Thus saith thy Lord God, euen God that pleadeth the cause of his people; Behold, I haue taken out of thine hand, the cup of trembling, euen the dregs of the cup of my wrath: thou shalt drinke it no more.*

*Or, Thus saith the Lord, thy ruler and thy God, the protector of his people.

IT is not without cause that he adds three epithetes to the name of the Lord: First, that he is the *ruler*, or patron: Secondly, *thy God*: And lastly, the *protector* of his Church. For we must alwaies consider what acquaintance we haue with God, who is such a one as beckens vs to come vnto him in familiar maner; because in making himselfe one with vs by a perpetuall covenant, he manifests that hee hath once chosen vs to bee his people. The Iewes in their time no doubt, were incouraged by this preface, boldly to imbrace that which is heere promised: and the new people, whom God hath now created, and receiued into his safegard and protection, as well as the people of old, haue no lesse cause to imbrace the same promises with them.

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Psal. 102.18

Now the Lord attributes to himselfe the title of *protector*, to teach vs that when we see great dangers approching, and that we suppose they will worke our ruine; euen then to run to this strong tower, namely, *that God is the protector of his people.* It ought also to bee a shield of defence vnto vs, as well against all Satans fierie darts, as against the assaults of our visible enemies.

Behold I haue taken. He propounds vnto the matter of good hope, to wit, that God chastiseth his Church *but for a time.* By which, the Iewes were to learne, that all the calamities which threatned them, were iust recompences of their transgressions: as also that the rod should bee tied to their backes, till God had receiued them to mercy. The summe is, that his wrath will be appeased in such wise, that he will mitigate their afflictions, and will cause the indgements wherewith he had for the present visited his Church, to cease. In the seuenteenth verse wee haue spoken of the similitude of the *cup*: and this place doth sufficiently confirme that which was said there. God mentions the cuppe of his wrath then, *which* caused his Church *to tremble*, as if shee had bin smitten with giddines: notwithstanding the Prophet vseth the word *Tarasta*, which some translate Anguish: others, Trembling. By the *dregs*, he meanes that the measure of Gods vengeance shall be full; so as God, for the loue hee beares to his children, will be satisfied.

God afflicts his Church but for a time.
1
2

Vers. 23. **But I will put it into their hand that spoile thee, which haue said to thy soule; Bow downe, that we may goe ouer: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the streete to them that went ouer.***

THis is the other part of the consolation, where hee promiseth, that the Lord will not onely content himselfe to deliuer his Church out of so many euils, but will also send vpon her enemies, all the calamities wherewith she was afflicted. Are wee pressed then, & persecuted? A time will come, wherein God will speedily turne our captiuitie, and our (enemies in their turne) shall be plauged to the vtmost. For it is just with God (as Paul saith) *to render affliction to those which trouble you, and to you that are troubled, rest with vs*, when the Lord Iesus shall shew himselfe from heauen with his mightie Angels in flaming fire, rendring vengeance vnto thé that know not God, nor obey not the Gospel of our Lord Iesus Christ: 2. Thes. 1.6,7,8.

God corrects his own first, but the wicked must keepe their turne next: Prou. 11.8. Hest. 7.10.

The temporall punishments then which God inflicts vpon them in this life, are the beginnings of their endlesse torments in hell, to which at the last they shall bee adiudged. And the better to describe the insolencie and pride of their enemies, (the like whereof we taste at this day from our aduersaries) hee sets downe their *words*, in which they shamefully tyrannized ouer the children of God: for pride & crueltie are the inseparable companions of impietie: for as the true knowledge of God makes men lowly; so the ignorance of God makes men proud and cruell. Wee see how such as know not God, flatter themselues, and proudly doe they insult against the Lord, and against his faithfull seruants. I grant this is a thing ful of misery, and a great indignitie; but seeing he is pleased to suffer his name to be exposed to the outrages of the wicked, let vs not much be moued, if we be wronged for his names sake: for wee are not

Bow downe, &c. True knowledge makes vs lowly: ignorance makes vs proud and cruell.
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Iohn. 13.16. not better then hee; neither muſt we expect better vſage from our aduerſaries now, then the Church of old had from theirs. *Dauid* vſeth another ſimilitude, when hee reſembles the Church to a field that is plowed and dreſſed many waies: 129.3. Whereby hee ſignifies, that ſhe muſt be often afflicted and trampled on; to teach vs, that we muſt looke for no better meaſure heere.

THE LII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Ariſe, ariſe, put on ſtrength O Zion; put on the garments of thy beautie, O Ieruſalem, the holy Citie: for henceforth there ſhall no more come vnto thee, the vncircumciſed and the vncleane.*

A confirmation of the former doctrine.

HEe confirmes the former doctrine, that he might the better awaken and rowze vp the peoples mindes, which were drenched in griefe & anguiſh: for it was neceſſarie this ſhould be added to the former, as a ſpurre to quicken them vp, and to make way for this doctrine, that it might the more eaſily enter into their amazed and inſenſible hearts. He ſpeakes to the Church, as to one aſtoniſhed and in a ſlumber, and bids her *ariſe* to gather new forces, and to reſume her ſoule afreſh. Which hee repeates *twice*, and not without cauſe: for it is very hard to awaken, and to cauſe ſuch to take heart againe vnto them, that are ſmitten; nay, laid flat vpon all foure with the feeling of Gods wrath.

Put on thy ſtrength.] As if hee ſhould ſay; Thou haſt hitherto wallowed thy ſelfe in duſt and aſhes, as one forlorne, by reaſon of thy anguiſhes: but now *ariſe*, and fit thy ſelfe to receiue that happy eſtate into which the Lord is purpoſed to ſet thee. Hee oppoſeth *ſtrength* then to fainthartedneſſe, with which we are vſually combred, when things grow deſperate; and the *beautifull* or *glorious garments*, to filthineſſe and naſtineſſe.

Then he addes the reaſon; to wit, that God will henceforth ſuffer the wicked *no more* to take their ſwinge, as they haue done in waſting and ſpoiling his Church at their pleaſures. She hath now cauſe therfore to reioice, being rid out of the tyrants hands: and alſo for her ſafetie, wherein there is plentifull occaſion of ioy and gladneſſe miniſtred vnto her for the time to come. But herewith *Iſaiah* ſummons vs to a common and generall reioicing, when the Church is receiued againe into Gods fauour: for queſtionleſſe, if there bee any ſparke of true godlineſſe in vs, wee ought to be exceedingly moued at her happineſſe, and *to laugh* and ſing for ioy when ſhe floriſheth, and to *vveepe* with her when ſhe is perſecuted. In a word, ſhe ſhould be the very fulneſſe of our ioy: according as the Pſalmiſt ſaith; Let my tongue cleaue to the roofe of my mouth, if I preferre not Ieruſalem *to my chiefe ioy*: Pſal. 137.6.

Rom. 12.15.

By the word *come*, hee meanes that which we ſay commonly, To haue entrance: for the Lord ſhuts vp the paſſage againſt the wicked, that they cannot range abrode at their pleaſures vnpuniſhed, as they were wont. By *vncircumciſed* and *vncleane*, hee meanes all ſuch prophane ones, as corrupt the pure ſeruice of God, and oppreſſe mens conſciences by their tyranny. They are wont to call all them *vncircumciſed*, who were ſtrangers from Gods Church, who had the ſigne of circumciſion; for with that all the faithfull were marked. But in reſpect that many bare this badge of the couenant, who were no whit better then the reſt; to remoue all ambiguitie, he addes, *the vncleane*. For the cutting away of the foreſkinne, was nothing in it ſelfe; and is by Saint *Paul* accounted as *vncircumciſion*, if the puritie of the heart bee not ioined therewith: Rom. 2.25. Gal. 3.6. Thus the Prophet ſhewes then, that ſuch kinde of perſons ſhall haue no place in the Church; that *all corruptions* being aboliſhed, and the true worſhip of God reſtored, ſhe may inioy a perfect and happy eſtate. In the meane while, I conſent to thoſe who refer this to the open enemies of the church, whom the Prophet brands with theſe odious names; that the ſeueritie of this chaſtiſement might put the Iewes in mind of the greatnes of their iniquities.

Anoir entré.

The ſigne of circumciſion auailes nothing, vnleſſe the puritie of the hart doth concurre therewith.

Verſ. 2. *Shake thy ſelfe from the duſt: ariſe, and ſit downe, O Ieruſalem: looſe the bands of thy necke, O thou captiue daughter Zion.*

An amplification.

THe Prophet deſcribes the Churches deliuerance more at large, and ſets it forth in very excellent termes. In bidding her *to ſhake off the duſt*, and to *ariſe*, let vs not by and by gather, that wee haue free will in our ſleeues to vſe it when we thinke good: for it belongs to God onely to *pull vs out of the duſt*, and to ſet thoſe that are fallen, *vpon their feet*, and to *looſe* the priſoners, by taking off, or breaking aſunder their *bands* and fetters. But wherefore doth the Prophet then inioine vs that, which ought not (as it ſeemes) to be required of vs, ſeeing it is not in our powers to performe it? I anſwere, that to ſpeake in this commanding ſort, hath much greater force in it to awaken vs, then if he had onely ſaid in naked termes, that we ſhould doe this or that: and therefore he pronounceth, that God hauing ſet her into her firſt libertie, ſhe ſhould now come forth of the mire.

No free will in vs to that which is good.

Queſt.

Anſ.

The word *to ſit*, ſignifies a floriſhing eſtate, and is oppoſed to the verb *to lie*, whereby is meant an extreame miſerie. I grant, that ſometimes to ſit downe, ſignifies to be made low: as when it is ſaid to Babylon, *Sit thou in the duſt*, Chap.47.1. But it is heere taken in another ſignification, for hauing commanded her to *ariſe*, he by and by addes, *and ſit downe*, meaning, that ſhe ſhould no more lie along, but ſhould be reſtored to her former eſtate, and ſhould no more afterwards be troden downe by her enemies.

Verſ. 3. *For thus ſaith the Lord, yee were ſold for nought, therefore ſhall yee be redeemed without money.*

It will be as eaſie for God to redeeme his Church, as it was for him to ſuffer her to be ſold.

THis verſe hath bin ill expounded by many, who haue deſcanted here too ſubtilly, for they haue inuented many things beſides the Prophets purpoſe. Now this agrees with that which he hath ſaid in the 50. Chapter verſ.1. where he asketh for the creditor to whom he ſold them: and here he ſaith in like maner, *you were ſold for nought*: as if he had ſaid, that he tooke no money, neither was he engaged to any creditor at all that could challenge them by right of ſale. This ſerues greatly to cõfirme the promiſe: for the Iewes might doubt touching the truth of this promiſed freedome, in regard the Chaldeans the mightieſt of all nations, held them priſoners a long time. But the Lord preuẽts this doubt, ſaying, *I neither ſold, nor pawned you*. You were ſold for nought, and therefore I may require you againe, and claime you as mine owne. Stand not ſo much then whether the matter be hard to compaſſe or no, ſeeing I haue promiſed you libertie, neither diſpute you too and fro of the matter by your carnall reaſon, for ỹ Chaldeans haue no right at all to kee pe poſſeſſion, neither can they be able to hinder your paſſage. To conclude, euen as in the place before alleaged he cleared himſelfe from the imputation of an vnthrift, who is compelled to make ſale of, or to pawne his children for debt, ſo in this place he ſhewes that they were taken from him, and were let go of him gratis, for no other cauſe, but in regard *they had prouoked him thereunto by their iniquities*, Chap.50.1. Therefore there is no more difficultie to *redeeme them*, then there was in *parting from them*.

Some expound this more ſubtillie, that we are redeemed freely by Chriſt. The doctrine no doubt is true: but it agrees not with the Prophets intention (in this place) for his meaning is to correct the diffidence of the Iewes, that he might aſſure them of their freedome. Let it ſuffice then that when God is purpoſed to redeeme his Church, he will not ſtand much about beating the price with the Chaldeans, whom he will eaſily chaſe from their vniuſt poſſeſſion, and that whether they will or no.

Verſ. 4. *For thus ſaith the Lord God, My people went downe afore time into Egypt to ſoiourne there, and Aſhur oppreſſed them without cauſe.*

An argument taken from the leſſe to the greater, in this, and in the next verſe.

THe expoſitors ſoare aloft heere, and in the meane while come nothing neere the matter. The Iewes forge three captiuities heere. The Chriſtians differ from them, in ſuppoſing that it is ſpoken heere of the third captiuitie vnder Antichriſt, frõ which Chriſt ſhall deliuer them. But in my iudgement the Prophet hath a farre other meaning, for he argues from the leſſe to the greater, and alleageth the captiuitie vnder *Pharaoh*, from which the people in old time were deliuered by the wonderfull power of the Lord. His argument ſtands thus then: If the Lord *puniſhed the Egyptians* becauſe they dealt ſo barbarouſlie with his people, much more will he be reuenged on the Chaldeans, who no leſſe cruellie tyrannized ouer them. For *Pharaoh* had much more ſhew of reaſon to domineere ouer the Iewes then the Chaldeans had. For *Iacob* going downe into Egypt with his familie, ſubiected himſelfe therby vnder *Pharaohs* power, who in thankfulnes for the good ſeruice which *Ioſeph* had done him and the kingdome, aſſigned out to his father and brethren a very large countrie, fit to nouriſh their cattell in for their abode. The ſucceſſors of *Pharaoh* prouing vnthankfull, and forgetting the benefits receiued by *Ioſephs* meanes, they afflicted all *Iacobs* poſteritie diuers waies. Neither was the Lord behind hand with them in recompenſing this vnkindnes and ingratitude with a ſwift and ſeuere vengeance. But the wickednes of the Chaldeans was farre worſe, and more inſupportable, in that they caſt the Iewes out of their countrie, vnto which they had a iuſt title, to leade them away captiue. If the Lord then could not indure the ingratitude, nor the vniuſt taxes which the Egyptians laid vpon the Iſraelites, though they might claime a iuſt poſſeſſion, how much leſſe would he ſuffer this violence and crueltie of the Chaldeans, who had no right at all to retaine his people, but oppreſſed them by force and tyrannie? See Chap.49. 24. 25.

By *Aſhur*, he meanes the Chaldeans, who were ioined vnder one Monarchie with the Aſſyrians: but he names the *Aſſyrian* eſpeciallie, becauſe he was the firſt who greatly afflicted Iudeah, and made a way to this captiuitie.

Verſ. 5. *Now therefore what haue I heere, ſaith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought, and they that rule ouer them make them to howle, ſaith the Lord? and my name all the day continuallie is blaſphemed?*

HE proſecutes, and confirmes that which I haue ſaid, namely, that he hath no reaſon to ſuffer his people to lie any longer vnder this ſeruitude: in theſe words therefore he doth as it were blame his owne delay. As if he ſhould ſay, Shall I not manifeſt my power? Shall I not defend my people? If *Pharaoh* who

who was ſo lawfull a poſſeſſor, could not reſiſt me; ſhall theſe theeues and robbers bee ſtronger then he?

In the next place he recites the cauſes that ſhould mooue him to call backe their captiuitie. But we muſt heere ſupply a cloſe oppoſition in the word *taken*: for the Egyptians led not *Iacob* captiue forcibly: hee went downe thither willingly when famin preſſed him; and yet his poſteritie was ſet free. How much more ſhall they bee violently plucked out of their hands, who forced them out of their owne Country, to ſubdue them as ſlaues againſt their will?

Afterwards, to augment the indignitie of the fact, he ſaith his people were conſtrained to *howle*, or *cry*, without ceaſing. Some expound it otherwiſe: but I thinke it is ſaid to augment the fault, in regard hee expreſſeth what violence and oppreſſion the Chaldeans exerciſed ouer the Iewes: for they contented not themſelues to vſurpe an vniuſt dominion ouer them, but they handled their priſoners cruelly. Moreouer, to *cry* or *howle*, argues a deeper miſerie then when we ſigh or weepe. Doubtleſſe there is appearance that the ſorrow is violent, when the ſame extorts yellings and pitifull cries. It is indeede a ſimilitude taken from wilde beaſtes, which ſhewes an extreme deſpaire.

And that my name ſhould be expoſed all the day long to blaſphemies.] This is the third and principall reaſon why the Lord will deliuer his people; namely, that his name may not alwaies be made a ſcorne, nor laid open to the outrages of the wicked; for hee reſpects his owne honour, and therefore conſerues his Church, and the worſhip of his *name*: but when the Church is ſcattered, then the wicked by and by take occaſion to belch forth their blaſphemies, and offer proud contempt euen againſt the higheſt Maieſtie. It is rightly ſaid then, that in deliuering his people, he will defend his own cauſe. I will neither ſtand to recite nor confute the diuerſities of expoſitions vpon this place, becauſe I thinke it ſufficient that I haue briefly touched the natiue ſenſe of the Prophets words.

Verſ. 6. *Therefore my people ſhall know my name: therefore they ſhall know in that day, that I am he that doth ſpeake: behold* it is I.*

*Or, I will be preſent.

The concluſion.

THe Prophet concludes that from this verſe, which hee touched in the two former verſes; namely, that the people ſhould in the end bee deliuered by the Lord, who will not be found contrary vnto himſelfe. For if hee hath redeemed their fathers: and if hee hath alwaies aſſiſted his Church (in former times) he will neuer ſuffer their ſucceſſors to be ouerwhelmed, whom he hath adopted. We are diligently to obſerue the verb *Shall know*: for the *knowledge* of the *name* of God, conſiſts

1 firſt, in reiecting all ſuperſtitions: ſecondly,
2 to know him in his word, which is his liuely
3 image: and thirdly, by his works. We muſt not forge a god after our owne fantaſies & luſts; but ſo comprehend him, as he hath manifeſted himſelfe vnto vs. Thus the Lord concludes then, that he will effectually aſſiſt and accompliſh whatſoeuer hee hath promiſed; that the people may know their expectation is not in vaine, and may heereby bee more and more confirmed in the knowledge of his name.

But we muſt remember what we haue ſaid heeretofore touching that experimentall knowledge, which ſubſcribes to the authoritie of the word. Moreouer, Gods *ſpeaking* is to bee referred to his promiſes, and his *preſence* to his actuall power. As if he ſhould ſay; Albeit you heare nothing now but the ſound of words, in which I promiſe you things almoſt incredibe, yet heereafter you ſhall ſee the performance thereof: for I purpoſe really to act that which I haue promiſed. Hence we may gather a generall doctrine; namely, that the promiſes and the execution thereof, are knit together with an inſeparable bond. As oft as Satan then ſolicites vs to diſtruſt, as if God had quite and cleane reiected vs; let vs remember this point, and let vs truſt boldly in the name of our God, who neuer promiſeth ought in vaine: and if it falles out that he performes not the ſame forthwith, yet he will doe it in conuenient time.

Experimentall knowledge.

The promiſes and the execution thereof, inſeparably knit together.

Verſ. 7. *How beautifull vpon the mountaines are the feete of him that declareth and publiſheth peace! that declareth good tidings*, and *publiſheth ſalnation, ſaying vnto Zion; Thy God raigneth.*

THe Prophet confirmes the faithfull againe in the certaintie of Gods word: Another confirmatio.
1 Firſt, to giue them certaine aſſurance of being reſtored to their firſt freedome: and
2 next, that hee might in the meane while ſuſtaine their hearts in good hope, during this ſore bondage. Hee ſpeakes elegantly in the commendation of this meſſage, that the faithfull might content themſelues in this calamitie, with the offer of the hope of their ſaluation to come. For indeed, they were to imbrace this conſolation propounded vnto them, that being fortified therewith, they might quietly and patiently expect an happy iſſue of the promiſe. That the faithfull then might bridle their deſires by patience, he *adornes the word of God with excellent titles*. (As if hee ſhould ſay) Can you be ſo vnthankfull, as not to content your ſelues with this ineſtimable treaſure of God word, which brings ſo many commodities with it? Will you let looſe the raines to your vnbridled affections? Will ye indeed complaine of God? For his meaning is to call backe the people from their diffidence, who were ouercarried through diuers allurements, and would not reſt ſecurely vpon the truth of Gods word. For this cauſe hee extolles the excellencie of his doctrine, and ſhewes, that the Lord will giue much more by it, then wee can aske or thinke.

Beſides, it is plaine that hee ſpeakes not heere of euery kind of doctrine, but of that onely which is fit to yeeld conſolation. Hee ſhewes then that the *feete* of ſuch as *bring glad tidings* from Gods mouth, are pleaſant and deſirable. Why ſo? Becauſe this conſolation ſerues not onely to aſſwage our ſorrows, but brings with it ineſtimable ioy: for he ſpeakes heere of the doctrine of ſaluation; and therefore he ſaith, that by it, *peace, good tidings*, and *ſalvation* is *publiſhed*. By the word peace, hee vnderſtands an happy and proſperous eſtate: but wee haue heeretofore intreated at large touching the ſignification of this word.

Saying to Zion, &c.] Hence we gather what the beginning of this doctrine is, which *Iſaiah* publiſheth, and what it is wee ought principally to deſire; namely, that the *kingdome* of God may be eſtabliſhed amongſt vs: for if he reigne not, all things muſt needes fall to ruine, and ſo by conſequence, our eſtate muſt be miſerable. As on the contrary, the onely way to *ſalvation* is, when God vouchſafes to take the care of vs: and it is alſo the meanes whereby wee obtaine *peace*, how confuſed or deſperate ſoeuer things otherwiſe are.

Let vs alſo remember that this meſſage appertaines to *Zion*; that is to ſay, to the church. For what haue the prophane and ignorant ſort to doe with it? The Apoſtle Saint *Paul* alleageth this place, Rom. 10. 15. to proue that the preaching of the Goſpell is of God, and not of men; and that it is hee who ſends the Miniſters, which bring the glad tidings of ſaluation. Now he vſeth this gradation; *Whoſoeuer ſhall call on the name of the Lord, ſhall bee ſaued: but vve cannot call vpon him vvhom vve know not?* For what giues praier entrance but faith, by which, hauing imbraced God for our father, we may familiarly diſcharge all our cares into his boſome? But whereupon is this faith grounded? Vpon the doctrine of the Goſpell, whereby the Lord manifeſts his loue vnto vs: and for this end vſeth the labours and miniſtry of men. In concluſion therefore, the Apoſtle addes, that none is fit to preach this word, *vnleſſe he be ſent of God*. But it ſeemes as if Saint *Paul* wreſted theſe words of the Prophet, to ſerue his owne turne: for hee ſpeakes not heere of Gods ſending forth of Miniſters, but rather how welcome their comming ought to be vnto vs. I anſwere, that the Apoſtle hath held this reſolued principle; namely, that we muſt deſire none, but ſuch as are *ſent of God*. But from whom comes this ſaluation? Comes it from men? No, ſuch matter: for a benefit ſo excellent, can come to vs from none but God himſelfe. He rightly concludes then, that this *ſalvation* proceeds from God, and not from man.

1
2 Faith giues praier entrance.
3
4 Obiect. Anſ.

Verſ. 8. *The voice of thy watchmen* ſhall bee heard: *they ſhall lift vp their voice, and ſhout together: for they ſhall ſee eye to eye when the Lord ſhall bring againe Zion.*

A continuation of the former confirmation.

HE continues on his ſpeech, ſhewing, that the reſtauration of the people ſhall be ſuch, as the meſſenger ſhall boldly publiſh it.

By the *lifting vp of the voice*, he ſignifies the ſame that he ſpake of before touching theſe words, *vpon the mountaines*: for the thing ſhall not be done in a corner, but it ſhall be ſo manifeſt and apparant, that all ſhall be ſmitten with aſtoniſhment. Thoſe who ſpeake of things doubtfull, mutter them out betweene the teeth, and dare not *lift vp their voice*: but this ſhall be no perplexed or doubtfull matter. The Prophet borrowed this ſimilitude from *watchmen*, whom they were wont to place in Cities: though all the Prophets indeed are called by this name, becauſe they are placed in the watch-tower to watch for the peoples ſafetie. *Hab.* 2. 1. *Chap.* 21. 11.

When hee ſaith, they ſhould *lift vp their voice*, it is to ſhew, that during the captiuitie, there ſhould be ſilence; becauſe the tongues of the Prophets ſhould then cleaue to the roofe of their mouthes: for albeit they admoniſhed euery one priuatly, yet they ſhould not haue liberty to preach publikely. In which reſpect alſo, *Ieremiah* ſaith, I will put my mouth in the duſt: Lam. 3. 29. But when the Lord ſhall cauſe the captiuitie of his people to returne, then the *watchmen* which were dumbe before, ſhould haue their mouthes opened *to publiſh* their freedome: for they ſhould not ſpeake in hugger mugger, neither ſhould they content themſelues to giue ſome priuie token of this conſolation; but ſhould boldly proclaime this *ſalvation* vpon the *mountaines*: verſ. 7. Which alſo appeares by that in Chap. 40. 1, 2, 3. where wee haue handled this matter more fully. *Ezek.* 3. 16.

Eye to eye.] That is to ſay, plainly and *openly*. Theſe things are indeed to bee extended to our ſpirituall conuerſion. I grant wee are to tie our ſelues to the literall ſenſe; yet ſo, that we are to comprehend vnder the ſame, that fauour which God ſhewed to this ancient people: for theſe things were accompliſhed when he ſet the Iewes free; and for this end hee vſed the miniſtrie of *Zerobabel, Ezra*, and *Nehemiah*. But yet wee muſt ſtretch the ſame euen to Chriſts comming, at which time the Church was gathered from all the parts of the world: yea, more then that, euen to Chriſts laſt comming, in which all things ſhall be ſet into their perfect eſtate.

Verſ. 9. *O yee deſolate places of Ieruſalem, bee glad and reioice together: for the Lord hath comforted his people: he hath redeemed Ieruſalem.*

An exhortation to reioice.

HE exhorts the faithfull to thankſgiuing. But his ſpeciall drift is to confirme their hearts in the expectation and aſſurance of this *ſalvation*, as if the inioying of the thing called them preſently to thankfulnes. For the truth is, we are too little affected when the Lord proteſts that he will aſſiſt vs: yea, wee thinke he doth but mock vs, vnleſſe he effect that which he hath promiſed. The Prophets therefore are wont to inſiſt very much vpon this point, namely, in confirming the peoples harts, & in ſetting their deliuerance as it were before

Why the Prophets inſiſted ſo long in preſſing the promiſes.

before their eies. Now howsoeuer it seemes auke and absurd to call to *songs of ioy* in the time of heauines, as in Psal. 137. 4. yet wee haue formerly shewed; that this maner of speech is very fit to awaken such as grone vnder the burthen of care, feare, or sorrow. He mentions the deserts, or *desolate places of Ierusalem*, to the end they should hope for the re-edifying thereof, notwithstanding the now lay in the dust: for this title agrees better for the remouing away of feare, then if he had called her an happie or flourishing citie. From the time then that she fell into this most miserable estate, they would haue thought these promises had concerned them nothing at all, vnlesse the miseries against which they were to encounter had bin manifested vnto them. Which taught them to wait for this restauration in assured hope, though they now saw nothing but horrible ruins, and desolations.

For the Lord hath comforted.] The Lord turned the peoples mourning into ioy, and of captiues, set them free. Some may obiect that this was not yet come to passe. But in Gods promises we must behold those things plainly, which as yet appeare not to our senses, how farre soeuer they surpasse the reach of our reason.

Obiect. Ans.

He hath redeemed his people.] Heere wee see that the deliuerance of the Church is the proper worke of God. And if this ought to be affirmed in regard of that deliuerance out of Babylon, which was but a figure or shadow, what shall we say of our spirituall deliuerance it selfe? Can that be attributed to men, without offring great wrong vnto God? Let vs conclude then, that as it appertaines to God only to deliuer his Church, so none but he can preserue her free estate.

Vers. 10. *The Lord hath made bare his holy arme in the sight of all the Gentiles, and all the ends of the earth shall see the saluation of God.*

God discouers his arme two waies.

HATH *made bare.*] This is a similitude taken from men of armes, who turned vp their sleeues when they prepared themselues to the combate. Though to *make bare* heere signifies not so much the making of the arme naked, as the *manifesting* of it, and stretching it forth. For when wee sit still, our armes are lightly folded one in another, or wee couer them: so in regard of our senselesnes, we imagin that God sits idle, as men are wont to do, vntill he manifest his power.

He calles it *the arme of his holines*, in regard that he should display his power for the saluation of the people: for there is heere a mutuall correspondencie betweene God and his Church, which is consecrated vnto him. I grant that his arme is *made bare* in the gouernment of the whole world: but it is neuer called the arme of *his holines* (as in this place) but when he giues some speciall relefe vnto his Church. The power of God must be considered two waies: first, generally, in the conseruation of all the creatures: then, especially in the protection of his Church, for the care he hath thereof is particular, and not common to others.

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In the sight of all the Gentiles.] His meaning is, that this deliuerance shall be worthie of so great admiration, that euen the blind themselues shal see it. Whereas this noble spectacle is manifested to the *ends of the earth*, we therein perceiue that the Prophet speakes not only of the *bringing againe of Zion*, as in vers. 8. which should happen some few yeeres after, but of the generall restauration of y whole Church both of Iewes and Gentiles. The Rabbins therefore do malitiously restraine this to the deliuerance out of captiuitie from Babylon. And the Christians on the other side vnaptly to our spirituall deliuerance, which wee obtaine by Christ: for we must begin at the deliuerance vnder *Cyrus*, and goe on still euen till our owne times. Thus then the Lord began to manifest his *arme* among the Medes and Persians, but afterwards he made it appeare in the sight of *all nations*.

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Vers. 11. *Depart ye, depart ye: go out from hence, and touch no vncleane thing; goe out of the midst of her: be ye cleane, that beare the vessels of the Lord.*

An exhortation, incouraging the Iewes to depart out of Babylon.

HE now exhorts the people to be alwaies readie *to depart*, and yet in the meane while patientlie to indure their miserie: for as the ouer-great haste of the people to be loosed deserued to be represled, so their drousines was to be quickned, in respect that before their deliuerance euery ones desire was wonderfullie kindled to returne, but whe the time was expired, their *long expectation* had abated their heate, and had depriued them not only of all hope, but of all will or desire to returne, so as the number of those that came back againe into Iudea was very small. They were mingled amongst the Babylonians, who had so entised and corrupted them, that they made little or no reckning at all of their countrie. It was very needfull therefore that they should be awakened and quickned vp to be of good courage in this their long attendance, and that they should not suffer themselues to be stained with the filthinesses of the Babylonians.

The second member wherein he forbids them to *touch any vncleane thing*, doth better confirme that I was about to say. For he commands them to keepe themselues pure and cleane frō the pollutions in which the Chaldeans plunged themselues, because there was danger that they might be corrupted with heathenish superstitions, to which vice wee are by nature too much enclined, and are therefore easily misled by euill examples. He exhorts them then notwithstanding their captiuitie, not to yeeld to any thing whereby to please their cruell Lords, in hope to mend their condition: not to be drawne away by any allurements from the pure worship of God; nor to defile themselues with Babylonish Idolatries: that they should not so much as in outward shew bow downe to the Idols,

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To what temptations captiues are subiect, that are oppressed vnder Tyrants.

nor consent to false religion, for this is that accursed *pollution* which the Lord exhorts them heere to auoid. Such temptations as these aforenamed, are incident to poore prisoners that are oppressed vnder Tyrants, which sometimes so faint, that they giue themselues leaue to doe many wicked and vnlawfull things, vnder pretence that they would thereby asswage the furie of Tyrants. But in this place we see how friuolous their excuses be. For the Prophet not only requires this puritie of the Iewes when they shall be set free, but also during the time of their slauerie and bondage, yea, though it were with the losse of their liues in the very place.

Doubtlesse these aduertisements also belong vnto vs, who by S. *Paul* are exhorted to purge our selues from all impuritie both of body and minde, 2. Cor. 7. 1. Moreouer, *Esaiah* directs this exhortation particularly to the *Priests* and *Leuites*, who were to shew themselues most constant, in regard they were the standard-bearers: not that it was lawfull for others to defile themselues, but he speakes principallie to them, that they might giue good example to those ouer whom God had placed them as Captaines and Leaders. We are also to remember what we haue seene heretofore, which *Isaiah* also will repeate againe in the end of his booke, namely, that there should be a new Priesthode planted ouer the redeemed people. And yet I willinglie consent, that the Leuites & Ministers of the Temple are heere mentioned by way of excellencie, for all the people. Thus this doctrine then appertaines at this day not only to the Ministers of the word, but to all Christians in generall, who are also called a royall Priesthood, 1. Pet. 2. 9. and are not only appointed *to beare* the vessels of the temple, but are also themselues the temples of God, 1. Cor. 3. 6. For this cause *Ezechiel* hath foretold, that in the restauration of the Church, the *Leuites* should be high Priests, and all the people should be put in the place of Leuites. Seeing then that the Lord hath aduanced all vnto so high a degree and dignitie, it necessarilie followes, that this puritie is required of all without exception, and therfore S. *Paul* applies this place to the whole Church, 2. Cor. 6. 17.

Vers. 12. *For ye shall not goe out with haste, nor depart by fleeing away: but the Lord will goe before you, and the God of Israel will gather you together.*

An amplification.

THe Prophet againe amplifies this benefit of their redemption, for they were all so swallowed vp with despaire, that they thought it a matter incredible. He especiallie speakes to them that were to goe into captiuitie, that they should not faint in being brought to such a wofull condition. But he promiseth them that this deliuerance shall not be by flight, as that out of Egypt was. For there is heere a close comparison betweene their deliuerance out of Egypt, and this out of Babylon. For they fled by night out of Egypt, fayning as if they had only meant to haue gone three dayes iourney to offer sacrifice vnto God, Exod. 3. 5. and 8. 27. Afterward, they went forth hastily and with tumult, as it was enioined them, Exod. 12. 31. and then *Pharaoh* pursued them, thinking vtterly to haue destroyed them, Exod. 13. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.

But heere it is said, it shall be farre otherwise with the Iewes (at this time) for they shal goe forth like *Conquerors*, so as none shall dare to stop their passage. In a word, they should depart thence (as wee are wont to say) with banner displayed. This deliuerance then shal be much more excellent and admirable, then that of Egypt.

Ils s'en iront a en seigne desployee.

The Lord shall goe before you.] That is to say, hee shall leade you, and be your Captaine in the way. But will some say, Did not God also *conduct* the ancient people, when he brought them out of Egypt? It is true indeed: but he shewed not his maiestie so fully then as hee did heere. For now he brought out his people as a valiant Captaine doth his souldiers, after her hath gotten the field of the enemie. To this appertaines the word, *shall gather*: for they should not bee scattered one from another, as it falles out in some sudden astonishment; neither should they wander to and fro, but should march in troupes in good aray, as vnder their colours. It is as much then as if he had said, God will conduct you like an armie assembled by himselfe, one shall not follow another as it were by stealth, but being knit all together, you shall march boldly without feare, none shall hinder you, for you shall be gathered vnder the leading of God, to returne home into your countrie.

Quest.

Anſ.

Vers. 13. *Behold, my seruant shall prosper: he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.*

The restauration of the Church consists wholly in Christ.

ISaiah hauing spoken of the restauration of the Church, comes now to Christ, in whom all things in heauen and in earth are gathered together, as saith the Apostle, Ephes. 1. 10. Some expound the verb *Iascil*, Shall behaue himselfe prudentlie: but because it is by and by added, that he shall be *exalted*, the scope of the text requires it (as I think) that we should rather translate, *He shall prosper*, seeing the infinitiue, *Sacal*, signifies so much. Hee speakes then touching the *prosperous* estate of the Church. But because there was no such thing to be seene in outward appearance, he brings vs to the *soueraigne King*, who should set all things in their perfect estate, and bids them to wait for him. Now the oppositions which the Prophet heere vseth are diligentlie to be marked, for he opposeth the *highnes* of this King whom the Lord would *exalt*, to the poore and miserable condition of this people, who were almost brought into despaire. And he promiseth that this King shall be the head of the people, who shall florish vnder so worthie a leader, though now they be afflicted and brought to the gates of destruction. Why so? Because all things shall *prosper* that their King takes in hand.

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He calles Christ a *seruant*, in respect of the office which God had imposed vpon him. For Christ is not to bee considered of heere, as bearing the person of a priuate man; but with that office which the Father had committed vnto him, namely, that he might be this leader and conducter of the Church, and might restore all things. And let vs for our part know, that the things heere spoken of Christ, doe also belong vnto vs. Christ is giuen vs of God, and therefore haue wee interest in his office. For the Prophet might haue said in a word, that he should be exalted and be verie high: but in attributing to him the name of a *seruant*, it is as much as if he had said; Hee is *therefore exalted for your sakes.*

Chap. 9. 6.

Vers. 14. *As many were astonied at thee, his visage was so deformed of men, and his* *forme of the sonnes of mens.*

*Or, beautie.

A preuention in this and the next verse.

HEe vseth this preuention, in regard this maiestie and dignitie of Christ appeared not at the first bluish: for which cause they might take occasion to reiect him. Therefore the Prophet shewes, that Christ must first be humbled and made low. And thus he preuents the doubts which might haue caused them to stagger, in beholding his abiect and deformed estate. As if he should say; You must not despise this his baseneſse and deformitie, for it brings with it forthwith eternall felicitie.

By men, I vnderstand not this by way of comparison, as many expound it, to wit, More then men: or, Aboue that which falles out among men. But I willingly accept of the plainest sense; namely, that Christ was deformed *amongst men*: or, that his beautie was defaced, in regard of the peruerse iudgements of men.

All were astonished.] Some take this astonishment for that admiration which men were in, when they saw the miracles which Christ did: and yet being brought to the Crosse, they straightway reiected him. But they come nothing neere the Prophets meaning: for hee saith, that Christ shall be so deformed, that all shall be *astonied* at him: his baseneſse of birth was such, as all despised him; his glory was hid vnder the infirmitie of flesh. And howsoeuer a maiestie worthy of the onely begotten Sonne of God, shined in him; yet men discerned it not: but they rather *gazed* vpon that his *abasement*, which eclipsed and darkened his glory. See heere the true cause of this astonishment then, namely, because he conuersed among men, without any outward pompe. For the Iewes expected not a Messias of so meane an estate. Now at his crucifying this *astonishment* was augmented much more.

Luke 9. 58.

Saint *Paul* speakes of this abasement of Christ, and then of his exaltation, when hee saith; He being *in the forme of God*, thought it no robberie *to be equall with God*: but he *humbled* (or emptied *himselfe*) by taking vpon him the *forme of a seruant*, and was made like vnto men; and was found in shape as a man. Hee humbled himselfe and became obedient vnto the death, euen vnto the death of the Crosse. Wherefore God hath also highly *exalted* him, and giuen him a name aboue euery name, that at the name of Iesus, euery knee should bow, both of things in heauen, and things in earth, and things vnder the earth: and that euery tongue should confesse that Iesus is the Lord, vnto the glory of God the Father. It was needfull the that Christ should *first be humbled* and shamefully intreated, and that this glory into which hee was exalted, should not appeare at the first. But after his humiliation vpon the Crosse, came a *glorious resurrection*, with a soueraigne degree of honour.

Phil. 2. 6. and he vnto following.

Christ humbled before he was exalted.

Vers. 15. *So shall hee sprinkle many nations: the Kings shall shut their mouthes at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see, and that which they had not heard, shall they vnderstand.*

OThers expound; He shall distill: so, vnder a figure, taking it To speake. But seeing the verbe *Nasa* signifies to *sprinkle*; and being so taken in the holy Scriptures, I had rather follow this interpretation. His meaning is, that the Lord shall *spread* his word among many nations. In the next place he addes the effect of this doctrine, in saying, that *Kings* shall *shut their mouthes* in signe of astonishment: but yet diuers from that which he mentioned before: for men *shut their mouthes* and stand astonished, when the matter is of such consequence, that they are vnable to expresse it, because they can finde no wordes wherewith to vtter the same.

They shall see that which was not told them.] The Prophet shewes that this astonishment shall not proceede from the bare sight of Christs person, but rather from the preaching of the Gospell: for though he rose againe, yet all esteemed him dead, if the glory of his resurrection had not been published. The preaching of the gospel therfore manifested those things which neither the eye had seene, nor the eare *heard* of before: as also in regard the publishing of this doctrine came to Kings and nations farre off, euen to the ends of the world.

1. Cor. 2. 9.

Saint *Paul* alleadgeth this text, and shewes that it was fulfilled in his ministerie, reioicing that hee had preached the Gospell to those who had neuer heard of it: Rom. 15. 21. For this is the office of an Apostle, and not of euery Minister now. Thus then our Prophet shewes, that the kingdome of Christ shall not be shut vp in so narrow bounds, as within the land of Iudeah; but should spread it selfe further off. The Iewes vnderstood somewhat by the Law and the Prophets; but the Gentiles knew nothing at all. This therefore by consequence belongs vnto them.

The Apostles office.

Shall vnderstand.] By this hee shewes that faith consists in certentie & in assured knowledge:

Faith consists in certaintie of knowledge.

No faith without certaintie of knowledge.

ledge: for where this wants, there faith questionlesse is not. Whence we may discerne how ridiculous the opinion of the Papists is, touching their *implicite faith*, in beleeuing as the Church beleeues: which indeede is nothing else but an absurd ignorance, or to say better, a meere circle and blinde imagination.

THE LIII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Who will beleeue our report? and to whom is the arme of the Lord reuealed?*

An holy complaint in the person of all the Ministers of the Gospell.

WEe will not stand to speake of the diuision, or rather dismembring of this Chapter: for it should rather haue begunne at the 13. verse of the former Chapter. And this ought to be ioined to that which was said a little before: for the Prophet staies heere as it were in the middle of his speech. For hauing said before, that the name of Christ should be published farre and neere, euen amongst strange nations; and yet that he shall be so contemptible, that these things shall in a sort be esteemed no better then fables, he now suddenly stops in the mid way as it were, and cries, *that none would beleeue him.* And therewithall he also expresseth his *griefe*, to think that men should be so incredulous, as to reiect their owne saluation. This is an holy complaint then: for his will is, that all should know Christ, and yet he sees *but a few* which beleeue the Gospell: which makes him to vtter this lamentable cry; *Who hath beleeued our report?*

Vse.

Let vs then sigh and complaine with the Prophet: yea, let vs be euen greeued in our soules, if wee see little fruit to come of our labours, and let vs powre forth our complaints before God. For thus ought the faithfull seruants of God to bee affected, if they meane sincerely to discharge their duties. *Isaiah* shewes then, that the number of those shall bee very small, that shall submit themselues to the Gospell of Christ: for when hee cries; *Who will beleeue our preaching?* it is as much as if he had said; That of an *hundred* that heare the Gospell, scarcely *one* of them will proue a *beleeuer.*

If they that haue preaching continue blind, how miserable blinde must they be that haue no preaching at all.

Neither speakes hee of himselfe onelie heere, but as one representing the person of all the faithfull Ministers. Although God send many of his seruants then, yet there are *but a few that beleeue*: What shall become of them that inioy no preaching at all? shall we need to wonder much at their extreame blindnes? If the earth that is well husbanded, brings forth but little fruit; what is to bee expected from that that is vtterly barren, and vnhusbanded? But the Gospell loseth no whit of his excellencie, though it get but few followers: neither doth the small numbers of beleeuers diminish the authoritie thereof, nor yet obscure the infinit glory of it; but rather so great is the mystery of it, that it can hardlie find any welcome in the world: for it is esteemed folly, 1. Cor. 1. 23. because it is far aboue the reach of their carnall reason.

The reason why so few beleeue.

In the second member *Isaiah* more cleerly sets downe the reason why there are so few beleeuers. What is that? None can come vnto God, without the especiall illumination of his holy Spirit. But those are deceiued in my iudgement, who thinke that *arme* heere signifies Iesus Christ. For it is a *rendring of the cause*, why the Gospell gets no more attendants; namely, they cannot comprehend the mysteries thereof by the dexteritie of their turall wit. This is a very worthy sentence therefore, and it is alleadged both by Saint *Iohn* and Saint *Paul* to this very purpose: *Iohn* saith; that albeit Christ had done so many miracles, *yet they beleeued not*: that the word which *Isaiah* had spoken might bee fulfilled; *Lord, who hath beleeued our report? and to whom is the arme of the Lord reuealed?* Iohn 12. 37 And Saint *Paul* saith; *But all haue not obeied the Gospell: for Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath beleeued our preaching?* Rom. 10. 16.

Both of them shew, how we are not to wonder if that which was so long since foretold, doth still come to passe, that so they might remoue that scandall which otherwise would remaine, in regard of this peoples reuolt, who in stead of acknowledging and receiuing Christ when he came, did obstinately resist him. And yet *Isaiah* meant not to tax his own Countrymen alone with this sinne, but comprehends all those that shall succeed them to the end of the world: for as long as Christ shal haue any kingdome on earth, this prophecie must be daily accomplished. And therefore the faithfull ought to be confirmed with this testimonie, against such an offence. Moreouer, this refutes their ignorance, who imagin that faith is in euery mans power, because the word preached is common to all. For though all be called to saluation by the ministery thereof, yet the Prophet expresly affirmes, that the outward voice which calles, profits nothing, vnlesse the particular grace of the holy Ghost concurre therewith. But whence is this difference? Onely from Gods secret election, who reserues the cause thereof hid in his owne counsell.

This incredulitie common both to Iewes and Gentiles.

Many called, but few chosen.

Vers. 2. *But hee shall grow vp before him as a branch, & as a roote out of a dry ground: he hath neither forme nor beautie: when we shall see him, there shall be no forme that we should desire him.*

This sentence hath reference to vers. 14. where it was said, that at the first appearing

Wee must not iudge of

Chriſtes glorie by outward appearances, but according as the Scriptures deſcribes him vnto vs.

ring of Chriſt, he ſhould haue no forme nor beautie in mens eyes; but *before God*, he ſhould be highly exalted into a ſoueraigne degree of honour, and greatly eſteemed. By which wee are taught, not to iudge of Chriſts glory according to outward appearance, but by faith; ſo to apprehend him, as the holy Scriptures haue deſcribed him. And therefore this particle *Before him*, is oppoſed to humane reaſon, which cannot comprehend this his admirable greatneſſe.

He vſeth almoſt the very ſame ſimilitude with that in Chap. 11. 1. where he ſaid, that a rod ſhould come forth of the ſtock of *Iſhai*: for the houſe of *Dauid* was then like a withered ſtock of a tree, which had no ſap nor any appearance of beautie left. And therefore in that place hee names not the *houſe royall*, but of *Iſhai*, whoſe name was then little renowned. Onely the Prophet addes heere, *a dry ground*: thereby ſignifying, that Chriſt ſhould take no force from the moiſture of the earth, to cauſe him *to grow as trees do*: but ſhould increaſe after a ſupernaturall manner. Thoſe who allegorize heere, and thinke that the Virgin *Mary* is called *a dry ground* in this place, becauſe ſhee conceiued by the holy Ghoſt, and not by the ſeed of man, doe miſſe their marke: for the queſtion is not heere touching Chriſt his birth, but of his whole kingdome.

Now the Prophet ſaith that he ſhall be like *a branch* iſſuing out of a *dry ground*, which in appearance will neuer grow to any ſtature. For indeed, if wee ſhall conſider by what meanes Chriſt hath eſtabliſhed his kingdome, and what perſons he hath vſed; the weake beginnings; and the numbers of aduerſaries that reſiſted him, we ſhall eaſily perceiue that all things came to paſſe as *Iſaiah* foretold. What were his Apoſtles, that they ſubdued ſo many Kings and Nations by the ſword of the ſpirit? May they not well be compared to *little ſprigs*? Thus the Prophet ſhewes then by what meanes Chriſtes kingdome ſhould be erected and eſtabliſhed, that we ſhould not iudge thereof as of a worldly kingdome. The *deformitie* whereof he ſpeakes in the next place, is not only to be referred to Chriſtes perſon, which being contemptible and deſpiſed of the world, was at laſt adiudged to a ſhamefull and curſed death: but alſo to his whole kingdome, which hath *no forme*, beautie, nor glorie at all in the eies of men: in a word, no appearance at all to procure any great admiration in the eies of worldlings. For albeit Chriſt roſe againe, yet the Iewes alwaies eſteemed him a man crucified, and full of reproch, ſo as they proudly diſdained him.

1 2 3 4

Iob. 12, 36.

This deformitie is not only to be referred to Chriſtes perſon, but to his whole kingdome.

Verſ. 3. *He is deſpiſed and reiected of men: he is a man full of ſorrowes, and hath experience of infirmities: We hid as it were our faces from him: he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not.*

The doctrine of this verſe is all one

THis preſent verſe tends to the ſame purpoſe with the former; namely, that men ſhould reiect Chriſt, becauſe nothing was to bee ſeene in him but *ſorrowes* and infirmities. The Iewes needed to haue this often repeated vnto them, that they might not conceiue a falſe opinio of Chriſt, nor of his kingdome: for he that wil righely ſee his glory, muſt paſſe from his death, to his reſurrection. Many are offended at his death, as if he had been ouercome and ouerwhelmed of it. But they muſt paſſe forwards to that diuine power and maieſtie which ſhined in his reſurrection: Rom. 1. 4. Yet if any ſhall begin at his reſurrection, hee ſhall not follow the order heere preſcribed by the Prophet; neither ſhall he comprehend the mightie power of the Lord.

with the former.

He that will take a right view of Chriſtes glorie, muſt paſſe from his death to his reſurrection.

We almoſt hid our faces from him.] It is not without cauſe that hee vſeth this word *we*: for thereby he ſhewes, that thus all men ſhall iudge of him. Neither ſhall any man be able euer to conceiue otherwiſe, vnleſſe the Lord correct and reforme his iudgement by the holy Ghoſt. And howſoeuer he ſeemes heere to taxe the Iewes principally, who ſhould diſdainfully reiect the Sonne of God promiſed and offered; yea and puts *himſelfe* in the number, as being a member of that body: yet let vs learne from this place notwithſtanding, that the whole world is here taxed and condemned of ingratitude, for contemning of Chriſt; becauſe they iudge him vnworthy the *looking vpon*, nay they *turne their eyes* from him, as from an abominable thing.

Verſ. 3. *Surely hee hath borne our infirmities, and carried our ſorrowes: yet we did iudge him as plagued, and ſmitten of God, and humbled.*

Now the Prophet ſets downe the cauſe why Chriſt was thus farre humbled.

THe particle *Surely*, is not onely an affirmatiue, but alſo ſerues for an expoſition; to wit, when any thing is brought to light that ſeemes ſtrange and vnwonted. For is it not wonderfull, nay monſtrous, that hee to whom God hath giuen ſoueraigne power ouer all creatures, ſhould be thus abaſed and humbled? So then, if the cauſe were not rendred heere, all would eſteeme this no better then a fable. Why was Chriſt thus couered ouer with dolours and infirmities? Surely becauſe he bare *our ſorrowes*. Saint *Matthew* alleadgeth this propheeie, after he hath told how Chriſt healed diſeaſes of diuers kindes: Chap. 8. 17. And yet it is moſt certaine, that he was appointed rather a Phyſition of mens ſoules, then of their bodies. Adde alſo that the Prophet ſpeakes of ſpirituall *ſorrowes*. But in the miracles ſhewed in the healing of mens bodies, Chriſt manifeſted a plaine proofe of that power hee had to heale the ſickneſſes of their ſoules. This healing then whereof S. *Matthew* ſpeakes, extended further then to their bodies: for he was ordained a Phyſition of ſoules: Matth. 9. 11, 12. And this is the cauſe why *Matthew* attributes that to the ſigne, which agrees to the thing ſignified.

In the ſecond member the Prophet ſhewes the greatneſſe of this peoples ingratitude and peruerſitie, in that they did not ſee the cauſe why Chriſt was thus farre humbled

and afflicted, but did rather iudge that hee was smitten of God for his owne sinnes: and yet they knew well enough that hee was an innocent; yea the Iudge himselfe testified it: Matth.27.24.Luk.23.4.14.22.Iohn 18.38. Since then they saw well that he being not guiltie, *bare* the punishment of sinnes which hee neuer committed, wherefore did they not conceiue some rare excellencie to be in him? But in regard they saw him *smitten* and despised, they neuer stood to examin the cause, but iudged onely by the euents, as the fooliſh are wont to doe. And for this cause *Iſaiah complaines of the frowardneſſe of mens iudgements*: which considered not of the reason why Christ was so greatly afflicted. And especially he bewailes the senslesnesse of the Iewes, in esteeming *God the sworne enemie of Christ*, without thinking of their owne iniquities, which by this meanes were done away.

Verſ. 5. *But hee was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, hee was broken for our iniquities: the chaſtiſement of our peace* was *vpon him, *and with his ſtripes we *are healed.*

*Or, In his wounds is our medicin.

HE once again repeats the cause of these so great afflictions of Christ, to preuent the scandall that might arise: for the spectacle of the Crosse driues many farre from Christ. That is to say; whilest they onely consider of that which is present before their eies, not looking whereunto the same tends. But all offence is remoued, when they see that by his death, he hath not onely *done away our iniquities*, but hath also *obtained saluation for vs*.

A repetition of the cause, lest any should be offended at Christs abasement.

Some thinke that *chaſtiſement*, is here called the chastisement of *peace*; because men were growne senslesse, and hardened in their sinnes: and therefore it was needfull Christ should suffer. Others referre this *peace* to the conscience; namely, that Christ hath suffered, to giue our consciences rest. To which purpose Saint *Paul* saith; Being iuſtified by faith, *wee haue peace with God:* Rom.5.1. But I take this word simply for *reconciliation*; because Christ bare the chastisement which was due vnto vs. And thus the wrath of God iustly inflamed against vs, is appeased, and the *peace* made betweene God and vs, by meanes of this mediator, so as wee are now reconciled.

Hence wee gather a generall doctrine; to wit, *that wee are freely reconciled vnto God, becauſe Chriſt hath paid the ranſome of our peace.* The Papists will confesse thus much I grant: but by and by they restraine this doctrine to originall sinne: as if after baptisme, free reconciliation had no more place; but that we are to satisfie for the rest by our workes and merits. But our Prophet deales not heere with *one kind of remiſſion* onely, but extends this benefit *to all the parts of our liues*: so as it cannot bee lessened nor restrained to one certaine time, without committing horrible sacrilege. And by this also it is easie to ouerthrow the friuolous distinction of the Sophisters, touching the remission of the punishment and the fault: for they will not haue the punishment remitted, vnlesse it be abolished by *satisfactions*. But the Prophet plainlie shewes, that the *punishments* due to vs for our sinnes, is laid *vpon Christ*. What doe our Papists then but make themselues ioint redeemers with Christ, attributing vnto themselues the same power with him?

A generall doctrine.

A friuolous distinction of Sophisters, touching the fault and punishment answered.

And vvith his ſtripes vvee are healed.] Hee brings vs againe vnto Christ, that wee may haue recourse to his *vvounds*, if euer wee meane to recouer life: for the Prophet heere opposeth him to vs, in respect that there is nothing to bee found in vs, but death and damnation; and in Christ onely life and saluation. It is he alone that hath procured vs a plaister; yea, by his *ſickneſſe* hath he giuen vs *health*, and by his *death*, *life*: for he alone it is, who hath pacified and reconciled the Father with vs. I confesse heere is ample occasion afforded mee to speake of many things touching the fruits that come to vs by the passion of our Lord Iesus Christ: but my purpose is now rather to expound, then to preach. Let vs therfore content our selues now with this short and plaine exposition. And I wish euery one by himselfe to gather consolation from hence, and to apply the fruit of this doctrine to his particular vse: for these matters doe as well concerne all in generall, as euery one in particular.

Verſ. 6. *All wee like ſheepe haue gone aſtray: wee haue turned euery one to his owne way, and the Lord hath laid vpon him the iniquities of vs all.*

THat he might the better imprint the benefit of Christs death in our hearts, hee shewes how necessarie this *healing* is, which he mentioned in the latter end of the former verse. For if we acknowledge not our miserie and pouertie, wee shall neuer know how desireable the remedie is, which Christ hath brought vs; neither shall we euer hunger or thirst after the same, with such a longing affection as we ought; but being acquainted with our owne forlorne estate, then feeling our wants, we will runne with greedinesse to receiue the remedie, which otherwise wee shall lightly esteeme. That Christ then may bee receiued as hee deserueth, let euery one consider and examine himselfe, and acknowledge that he *is lost*, vntill Christ seeke him out.

The necessitie of this healing described.

Luke 19.10.

We see heere that none are excepted, seeing the Prophet comprehends *all*: for all mankind had been vtterly lost, if Christ had not wrought our saluation. No, he excepts not the Iewes, who yet were puffed vp with a false opinion of their dignitie; but hee euen wraps them vp in the same condemnation. Now he compares them to *sheepe*, not to lessen their fault, as if themselues for their parts were harmlesse: but the more plainly to shew that the proper office of Christ, consists in gathering from among the dispersed, those *who resembled brute beasts*.

None excepted out of this lost condition.

In adding afterwards *euery one*: he descends from

The Prophet deſcends frō the generall, to euery one in particular.

from the generall in which hee comprehended *all*, to the particular: to teach *euery one* apart, whether it be not ſo indeede: for a ſentence generally propounded, moues vs not ſo much, as when euery man conſiders that it belongs to him in ſpeciall. Let *euery* one then awaken vp his owne conſcience, and let him preſent himſelfe before the iudgement ſeate of God, confeſſing his miſery.

In the next place the Prophet ſhewes wherein this *ſtraying conſiſts*, namely, that euery one hath followed his *owne vvay*: that is to ſay, *hath lined after his owne pleaſure*. And thus he ſhewes that there is but *one vvay* to walke in; out of which, if any one turnes, he can doe nothing but wander and loſe himſelfe. Neither ſpeaks he of *vvorkes* only, but of our *very nature*, which *cauſeth vs all to go aſtray*. For if wee could recouer the right way againe, and deliuer our ſelues from error, either by the inſtinct of nature, or by our owne wit, Chriſt had died in vaine. Wee are all loſt then till Chriſt hath deliuered vs: and the more wee ſhall relie vpon our owne wiſdome or induſtry, the more ſhall we draw perdition downe vpon our owne heads.

Thus then the Prophet ſhewes in what eſtate weare, till we be regenerated by Chriſt: for *all* are wrapped vp in the ſame condemnation: there is *none* righteous, *no not one*: there is *none* that vnderſtands, there is *none* that ſeeketh God. They haue *all* gone out of the way, they are *all* become vnprofitable: there is *none* that doth good, *no not one*: Pſal. 14.3. & 53.4. As S. *Paul* alſo manifeſts it more fully, Rom.3.10,11,12.

And the Lord hath laid vpon him.] Heere is a goodly oppoſition: for in our ſelues wee are 1 *ſcattered*, in Chriſt we are *gathered*: by nature 2 wee *erre*, and run headlong into deſtruction; 3 in Chriſt we find the *vvay* by which wee are 4 directed to the hauen of ſaluation: our ſinnes 5 *preſſe vs downe to hell*; Chriſt *diſchargeth vs of* 6 *them, to lay them vpon his owne backe*: whileſt we were loſt then, and ſo eſtranged from God, that we runne poſt haſte to hell, Chriſt tooke vpon himſelfe all our filthineſſes and iniquities, that hee might deliuer vs from eternall death. But we muſt refer this only to his condemnation and puniſhment: for hee was no way guiltie, otherwiſe then by imputing of our ſinnes vnto him. Let euery one of vs then make a diligent examination of his own iniquities, that ſo he may bring himſelfe to a true taſte of this grace, and may feele the fruit of the death of Chriſt.

Verſ. 7. *Hee was oppreſſed, and hee was afflicted; yet did hee not open his mouth: hee is brought as a* *ſheepe to the ſlaughter; and as a ſheepe before her ſheerer is dumbe, ſo opened hee not his mouth.*

*Or, lambe.

Chriſts obedience commended.

HE here praiſeth Chriſts obedience which he ſhewed, when he was to ſuffer death. for had hee not done it willingly, hee might haue ſeemed not to haue ſatisfied for our diſobedience. As by the diſobedience of one then, all were made guiltie, (as *Paul* ſaith) Rom.5.19. ſo by the obedience of one, many were made righteous. And in another place; Hee was obedient to the death, euen to the death of the Croſſe: Phil.2.8. This is the cauſe why he *held his peace* before *Pilats* iudgement ſeate, Mat.27.12.14. though hee might haue pleaded his iuſt defence. But in regard hee had bound himſelfe to ſuffer for vs, hee willingly ſubmitted himſelfe to an vniuſt iudgement, *vvithout muttering one vvord*; that wee *vvith full mouth* might reioice, in being freelie iuſtified by faith, and ſo acquited from the righteous ſentence of our condemnation.

Chriſts patient ſuffrings, our example.

And heere alſo by the way wee are exhorted to patience and meeknes, that by Chriſts example wee may be readie to indure reproches, iniuries, wounds, and tormens for his ſake. In which ſenſe, Saint *Peter* alleageth this place, 1.Pet.2.22,23. ſhewing that wee ought to be conformed to our head Chriſt, that ſo wee may follow him in patience and modeſtie.

For the further explication of this and the verſe following, reade his Comment vpon Act.8. 32,33.

In the word *lambe*, there may bee an alluſion to the ſacrifices vnder the Law: in which ſenſe hee is called the Lambe of God: Iohn 1.29.

Verſ. 8. *Hee was taken out of priſon, and from iudgement: and who ſhall declare his age? For hee was cut out of the lande of the liuing: for the tranſgreſſion of my people was hee plagued.*

Hauing ſpoken of Chriſts death, he paſſeth to his reſurrection.

THis place is diuerſly expounded. Some thinke the Prophet proſecutes the argument which he beganne to handle, verſ.6. namely, that Chriſt was ſmitten with Gods hand, and afflicted for our ſinnes. The Greeks tranſlate; And in his abaſing, his iudgement appeared. Others, He was lifted vp without delay. Others expound; That he was lifted vp vpon the Croſſe: that is to ſay, Chriſt was led to the place of execution, immediately after his apprehenſion. For mine owne part, I rather agree with thoſe who thinke that the Prophet paſſeth now to the glory of his reſurrection, hauing before ſpoken of his death: and by this meanes, meant to meete with mens perplexed thoughts, which might trouble and greeue the hearts of many.

For when wee ſee nothing but ſtripes and ſhame, we remaine aſtoniſhed: mens natures abhorre ſuch ſpectacles. The Prophet then teacheth, that Chriſt was *liſted vp*: that is to ſay, deliuered from *priſon*, and from *iudgement* or condemnation; and afterwards was exalted into a ſoueraigne degree of honour, leſt any ſhould iudge that hee was ouercome, or ſwallowed vp by this horrible and ſhamefull kind of death. Truly hee triumphed ouer his enemies in the midſt of death it ſelfe: yea, he was ſo condemned of it, that now himſelfe is ordained the ſoueraigne Iudge of all, as it well appeared in his reſurrection. *Iſaiah* then keepes the ſame method that *Paul* doth, who hauing in Philip.2. ſpoken of Chriſts *humili-*

Pauls method agrees with Isaiahs in this place.

tion euen to the death of the Crosse: addes, that for this cause, he was aduanced to an high exaltation; hauing now obtained a name, vnto which euery creature in heauen, earth, and vnder the earth, must bow their knees, and yeelde their obedience.

Arians. Heretikes must be conuinced not with shewes, but with plaine euidences of truth.

As touching the exclamation following, it hath been racked and rent by diuers expositions. The ancient Fathers abused this place to confute the Arians, who denied the eternall generation of Christ. But they should haue contented themselues with plaine and manifest proofes of the holy Scriptures, that so they might not haue made themselues a scorne to heretikes, who by this meanes oftentimes take occasion to grow the more impudent: for they might haue replied, that the Prophet had no such meaning. *Chrysostom* referres it to Christs humanitie, because he was miraculously cõceiued in the virgins wombe, without the vse of mans helpe: but he roues farre off from the Prophets meaning. Some others thinke that the Prophet cries out vpon them that crucified Christ. And some againe refer it to the posteritie which should succeede; to wit, that Christs linage or offspring should greatly increase, though himselfe died. But seeing the word *Dor*, signifies Age, or lasting; I doubt not but he speakes of Christs *age*, namely, that notwithstanding the sorrowes wherewith he was ouerpressed, hee shall not onely be freed from them, but shall also haue *a florishing age*, yea such a one as should indure for euer. For hee shall not resemble those that are deliuered from death, and yet must die neuertheless afterwards, because hee rose againe to liue eternally. For as S. *Paul* saith, Rom. 6.9. *Hee can die no more, death can haue no more dominiõ ouer him*. And yet we must remember that the Prophet not onely speakes of Christs person, but comprehends vnder it, the whole body of the church, which must neuer bee separated from her head. Wee haue heere then a notable testimony touching the perpetuity of the church: for as Christ liues for euer, so will he not suffer his kingdome euer to perish: Iohn 14. 19. In the next place wee are to appropriate this *immortalitie* to euery member in particular.

Chrysostom.

Psal. 102. 24. 27.

Christ can die no more.

A note touching the perpetuitie of the Church.

For he was cut off.] It may seeme strange at the first blush, that *the death of Christ* should be the cause and *well-spring of life*. But in regard hee indured the punishment due to our offences, all the ignominie which appeared in the Crosse, ought to bee laid and charged *vpon vs*. And yet in the meane while we may see a wonderfull goodnesse of God shining in Christ, who hath so manifestly discouered his glorie to vs, that we ought to be carried into a wonderfull admiration of it.

For this cause hee once againe repeates, that he was *plagued for our transgressions*: that wee might diligently cõsider how he suffered for vs, and not for himselfe: for he bare the torments which wee had deserued; and should for euer haue borne them, had not this ransome and satisfaction come between. Let vs acknowledge then that the fault is ours, whereof hee bare the punishment and condemnation, by offering himselfe to his heauenlie Father in our name, that in his condemnation wee might receiue our absolution.

Vers. 9. *And hee made his graue with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no wickednesse, neither was any deceit in his mouth.*

SAint *Ierom* translates; And hath giuen the wicked for buriall; as if the Prophet spake of the punishment, whereby the Lord will auenge himselfe of those which crucified Christ. But he rather speakes of Christs death, and of the fruits of it, and toucheth not this vengeance. Others thinke that the particle *Et*, signifies As: and they translate, Hee hath made his graue as that of the wicked. Some againe translate *With*: and by the *rich*, vnderstand *Ioseph* of Aremathea, in whose sepulchre Christ was buried: but this exposition is constrained. Where he addes, *and to the rich*: I thinke the singuler number is put for the plurall, according to the custome of the Hebrewes. I see no reason why *Oecolampadius* hath translated; Hee hath exposed his high places to the rich. By the *rich*, vnderstanding tyrants and proud men; for they are wont to wax insolent and intemperate, in regard of their riches, which they abuse to play the Tarmogants.

Saint Ierom.

Christ seemed to be buried as it were in the hands of the wicked.

Oecolampadius.

Thus I thinke that by the *wicked* and *rich*, he vnderstands one and the same thing. *Isaiahs* meaning is then, that Christ was subiect to the contumelies, insolencies, and lusts of the wicked. For the Scribes and Pharisies on the one side rushed vpon him with a desperate fury: and on the other side, the factious people cried nothing but crucifie him, crucifie him: Matth. 26. 66. *Pilat* contrary to all equity & law, gaue an vniust sentence of death vpon him, though hee were informed of his innocencie: Marke 15. 14. And the Roman souldiers greedy of any pray, put the cruell and wicked sentence cruelly and wickedly in execution: Iohn 19. 16. Who would not haue thought now, but that Christ had been *vtterly ouerwhelmed, and buried amongst the bloody hands of these cruell murtherers*? For I take the *graue* heere by a metaphor, in regard the wicked and their executioners had almost ouercharged him. And if any obiect that Christ was buried honourably; I answere, that this burriall was the beginning of his glorious resurrection. But heere hee speakes of his death, which is often signified by the graue. This then I take to be the true meaning: and yet I giue euery man leaue to iudge as it pleaseth him.

Scribes and Pharisies.

The factious people. Pilat.

The Roman souldiers.

Obiect. Ans.

Though he had done none iniquitie.] The Prophet sets Christs innocencie heere before vs, not so much to defend him against the slanders of the wicked, as to recommend vnto vs the fruit of his death, least wee should imagin that he suffered at aduenture. He was innocent and suffered by Gods decree, *not for his iniquities*, but for ours: for he bare the punishment due to vs. Now in two words he expresseth Christs

Chriſts perfect innocencie; to wit, that hee ſinned neither in *word* nor *deed*. Surely euerie one will confeſſe that this cannot be affirmed of *any mortall man*: it followes then, that it appertaines to Chriſt onely.

Verſ. 10. *Yet the Lord would breake him, and make him ſubiect to infirmities: when hee ſhall make his ſoule an offering for ſinne, hee ſhall ſee* his *ſeede*, and *ſhall prolong* his *daies; and the will of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand.*

The fruit of Chriſts death expreſſed.

BY this we may the better diſcerne of that which I haue briefly touched; to wit, that the Prophet propounding Chriſts innocencie, had a further drift then to defend him againſt the contumelies and reproches of the wicked. The marke hee aimes at then, is to make vs looke vnto the very cauſe, that ſo we might feele the effect thereof in our ſoules: for *God* neither ordaines, nor executes ought at random. Whence it followes, that the cauſe of Chriſts death was lawfully vndertaken. The expoſition alſo is ſtill to bee remembred of vs, which we touched in verſ. 6. There was no ſinne in Chriſt: but why *would* the Lord then haue him ſuffer? Euen becauſe hee ſuſtained our perſon and cauſe: for there was nothing at all that could ſatisfie Gods iuſtice, but the death of his only begotten Son.

Obiect.

Anſ.

The word *Aſham*, ſignifies ſinne, and oblation for ſinne; and ſo oftentimes it is found in the latter ſignification in the Scriptures: Exod. 29.14. Ezech. 45.22. For the beaſt ſacrificed, was ſo offered, as that bearing the puniſhment and curſe of the ſinne, it alſo blotted it out. And the Prieſts ſignified ſo much by the impoſition of hands; euen as if they had laid vpon the beaſt *the ſinnes* of the whole people: Leuit. 4.4. And if any priuate man had offered, he alſo put his hands vpon the head of the beaſt; as if hee had thereby tranſlated his ſinne from himſelfe, vnto it: Leuit. 4.27.29. And therefore Saint *Paul* calles Chriſt the curſe, or execration, ſaying; *Chriſt hath redeemed vs from the curſe of the law being made a curſe for vs*: Galat. 3.13. And in another place; *Hee made him to be ſinne for vs, who knew no ſinne*, that wee might be made the righteouſneſſe of God in him: 2. Cor. 5.21. Alſo in Rom. 8.3. For that which was impoſſible to the law, in that it was weake by reaſon of the fleſh, that hath God done by ſending his owne Sonne in the ſimilitude of fleſh, ſubiect to ſinne, and for ſinne, hath condemned ſinne in the fleſh, that the righteouſneſſe of the law might be fulfilled in vs. The Prophet then by this word *Aſham*, ſignifies the ſame, which *Paul* calles *curſe*, and *ſinne*, in the places formerly alleadged.

Now heere the fruit of Chriſts death is expreſſed, in regard that by his *ſacrifice*, ſinnes are done away, and God is pacified towards man: for the vertue of this word *ſacrifice* muſt be referred heereunto. Hence it followes, that the aboliſhing of ſinne, and ſatisfaction for ſinne, is no where to bee found, but in Chriſt. Now that we may the better remember theſe things: firſt, wee muſt note that we are *all guiltie* before God; ſo as we are accurſed and lothſome in his preſence. Will wee then bee brought againe into his fauour? *Sinne muſt be taken away*. But this cannot bee done with purgations deuiſed by man. How then? We muſt reſort to *Chriſts death*, becauſe wee cannot otherwiſe make *ſatisfaction* to God. In a word, *Iſaiah* teacheth that ſinnes cannot be pardoned, vnleſſe wee flee to this death. If this language ſeemes harſh, and not ſeemly for the perſon of Chriſt, let ſuch a one enter into his owne heart, and conſider in good earneſt, how fearefull and terrible Gods iuſtice is, when nothing is able to appeaſe it but the ſacrifice of Chriſt. And ſo the meſtimable grace, which ſhines in the curſe of Chriſt, will eaſily remoue all offence.

No ſatisfaction can be made to God for our ſinnes, but by chriſts death.

Hee ſhall ſee his poſteritie.] The Prophets meaning is, that it ſhall bee ſo farre off, that Chriſts poſteritie ſhall be diminiſhed by his death, that contrariwiſe, it ſhall be *the meanes to raiſe vp ſeed vnto him*. For in quickening the dead, he begets a people which he afterward will cauſe to multiply exceedingly. Neither is there any abſurditie at all in it, to call the faithfull *the poſteritie* of Chriſt (though they bee his brethren) for they bee his offſpring.

Where hee addes; *Hee ſhall prolong his daies*, ſome ſupply the relatiue *Aſher*, Which: ſaying, that the *poſteritie* ſhall indure long. But I expound it more ſimply; that *the death* which Chriſt ſhall ſuffer, ſhall *not cut off* the length of his daies: that is to ſay, from liuing eternally.

Some departing out of this life, doe leaue children which ſhall ſuruiue them; yet vpon condition that their fathers be firſt dead. But Chriſt ſhall haue his children with him: for he dies not as men doe, but obtaines eternall life both for himſelfe and his. And thus the Prophet ſhewes, that both the head and the members ſhall liue eternally.

The will of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand.] This word *hand*, is often taken for miniſtrie: as where it is ſaid, that the Lord gaue the Law by the *hand* of *Moſes*: Numb. 36.13. Alſo the Lord did this by the *hand* of *Dauid*: 2. Sam. 3.18. meaning, that he vſed his *ſeruice*. In this ſort alſo ſhall the will of the Lord proſper in the *hand* of Chriſt: that is to ſay, *the Lord will cauſe Chriſts miniſtrie to bring forth his fruit*, that it may not ſeeme he was expoſed to ſo many cruell torments in vaine. Vnder theſe foure or fiue words, is comprehended a very large and ample doctrine, which euery one may collect by himſelfe: for wee will content our ſelues now with expounding the text onely.

The will of the Lord, is taken in the ſame ſenſe heere, as it was in the former member: for he vſeth the word *Kephets*, which ſignifies a franke and liberall affection, full of mercy. This text then ſets two benefits of God before vs: Firſt, *that hee ſpared not his owne Sonne, but deliuered him vp for our ſakes, to redeeme vs from death*: Rom. 8.32. Secondly, *that he ſuffers not this his death to be fruitleſſe, and vnprofitable, but cauſeth it to fructifie very largely: for what*

Two benefits to be learned in this verſe.

benefit should we reape thereby, vnlesse wee felt the power and efficacie thereof in our selues.

Vers. 11. *He shall see the trauaile of his soule, and shall bee satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous seruant iustifie many; for hee shall beare their iniquities.*

The former argument further prosecuted.

ISaiah prosecutes the same argument. For he shewes that after Christ hath suffered death, he shall reape the fruit thereof, from the saluation of men. To the words *shall see* therefore, must be supplied the fruit and efficacie. Surely these things containe wonderful consolation in them: for *Isaiah* could no way better expresse Christs infinit loue to vs, then in shewing that hee takes a singular pleasure in the worke of our saluation: and doth herein as it were refresh himselfe, as with *the fruits* of his owne *labours*. Euen as one that reioiceth to see that which aboue all things hee desired to inioy, as if nothing but that could *content* him.

In the next place he shewes the meanes by which we may feele the vertue and power of Christs death; to wit, by his *knowledge*. This word *knowledge*, or doctrine, may be read in a double sense; to wit, in the actiue, or passiue: but in whether of them you reade it, we shall easilie see the Prophets meaning. Neither shall the Iewes be able to cauill so impudently, but wee will force them to confesse that which is heere said; to wit, *that Christ is the onely Doctor and author of righteousnesse*: for the Prophet manifests so much by the effect, saying, *that he shall iustifie many*. Thus then men shall not only learne in the schoole of Christ, to define what this righteousnes is, but themselues also shall be made *iust*, really and effectually thereby.

Note.

The difference betweene the righteousnes of the law, and that of faith.

And heere behold the difference betweene the righteousnes of the law, and that of faith. For albeit the law shewes what it is to bee iust; yet Saint *Paul* shewes it is impossible to obtaine righteousnes by it. Which he proues *by experience*, in regard the law is but *a looking glasse, serning to manifest* vnto vs our owne *vnrighteousnesse*: Rom. 3.9,10. But the doctrine to obtaine the righteousnesse which Christ sets before vs, is nothing else but a *knowledge of him*; to wit, *faith*: that is, when we accept the benefit of his death, and doe wholly rest our selues therein.

Philosophers.

The Philosophers giue many goodly precepts, wherein they thinke *all iustice* is comprehended: but they were neuer able yet to make any man righteous by them. For where is he that had euer yet the power to liue according to their rules? It is a small matter to know wherein true iustice consists, vnlesse therewithall we taste the benefit of it. But to let the Philosophers passe, we see the law it selfe, which containes a perfect rule of a godly life, is not able to conferre righteousnesse (as we haue said:) Not because there is any want in it, for *Moses* testified and protested that hee did set before them in it, good and euill, life and death: Deut. 30.19. But the law is vnable to confer righteousnes to vs, in regard of the corruption of our nature: as S. *Paul* well affirmes, that this impossibilitie proceeds *from our flesh*, and not from the law: Rom. 8.3. For *our nature is enmitie vnto it*, and our lusts ouercarry vs violently, as wild beasts, to rush against the commandement of God. And thus, *the law ingenders vvrath, rather then righteousnesse*: Rom. 4.15. The law then condemnes all men, and hauing discouered their sinne, makes them without excuse. We must therefore seeke out another meane whereby to obtaine *righteousnes*; namely, *in Christ* himselfe, whom the very law points vs vnto, as to the end of it: Rom. 10.4. But what is that righteousnes of the law? Doe these things, and thou shalt liue: Leuit. 18.5. Gal. 3.12. But none can doe them. Then you must seeke another righteousnes, which S. *Paul* collects out of a place of *Moses*; The word is neere thee, in thy mouth, and in thine heart. This is the word of faith which wee preach: Deut. 30.14. Rom. 10.8. By this doctrine we are iustified: not as it is nakedly and barely propounded, but as it offers vnto vs Christ and all his benefits, by which our sinnes are done away, and we set at peace with God: *for if vvee imbrace this benefit by faith, vve are reputed iust before him.*

Why the law is vnable to confer grace.

Christ our righteousnes. Ier. 23.6. & 33.16.

And our Prophet also expounds his owne meaning, in shewing wherein this *knowledge* consists; for these two members must be ioined together. *By his* doctrine, or *by the knowledge of himselfe, he shall iustifie many; because he shall beare their iniquities.* For as hee hath once offered himselfe for the purgation of all our iniquities: so now hee daily allures vs to receiue the fruit of his death, by the preaching of the Gospell. The publishing of which his death and passion, is the substance and foundation thereof, that by hearing of it, wee might be iustified. Saint *Paul* also accords very well with this sentence of the Prophet. For hauing shewed that Christ was offered for the remission of our sinnes, that wee might bee made the righteousnesse of God in him; hee addes, we are ambassadors for Christ, and do beseech you that you will be reconciled vnto God: 2. Cor. 5.20.

My righteous seruant.] The Prophet teacheth that Christ iustifies vs, not onely as he is God, but also as he is man; in regard he hath obtained righteousnesse for vs *in his flesh*. For hee calles him not *My sonne*, but *My seruant*: that whilest we consider him as *God*, we may also apprehend *his humane nature*, in which hee yeelded that obedience which absolues vs before God. This is the foundation of our saluation then, namely, that hee offered vp *himselfe* in sacrifice: as he testifies in the Gospell. And *for their sakes sanctifie I my selfe*, that they also may be sanctified through the truth: Iohn 17.19.

Christ iustifies as he is both God and man.

The foundation of our saluation.

Vers. 12. *Therefore will I giue him a portion with the great, and hee shall diuide the spoile with the strong, because hee powred out his soule vnto death, and he*

he was counted with the tranſgreſſors, and he bare the ſin of many, and praied for the treſpaſſers.

The victory that Chriſt obtained by his death.

ISaiah ſhewes further, what iſſue Chriſts death ſhall haue: for it was neceſſary hee ſhould adde this doctrine touching the victorie which he obtained by his paſſion; becauſe the *knowledge* of our reconciliation with the Father by his death, would not otherwiſe haue ſufficiently confirmed our hearts. Now hee borrowes a ſimilitude heere from thoſe who vſed triumphes. For hauing obtained the victory, they were gloriouſly apparrelled, and receiued with ſtately ſhewes: ſo Chriſt, as a valiant and noble Generall, triumphed after the conqueſt ouer his enemies.

He ſhall diuide the ſpoile with the ſtrong.] It is the ſame with the former member, and a repetition much vſed among the Hebrewes: for thoſe which before he called *great*, now hee calles mightie and *ſtrong*. Thoſe who tranſlate; I will giue him a portion with many; peruert the meaning of the Prophet, as I thinke. All the difference in the two members is, that God firſt ſhewes what he *gaue* to Chriſt: and in the ſecond hee addes, that Chriſt inioied this benefit. Now *he inioies* it not for himſelfe, but for vs: for the fruit of this victory is made ours. How ſo? Chriſt hath ſubdued death, the world, and the diuell, for vs. In a word, the Prophet heere extolles this victory which Chriſt atchieued by his ſufferings, who though he died concerning to the infirmitie of the fleſh, yet hee was raiſed againe by the wonderfull power of the holy Ghoſt: 2. Cor. 13.4. and triumphed ouer all his and our enemies.

1 2

Chriſt conquered Satan, ſin, and death, not ſo much for himſelfe, as for vs.

Heereunto appertaines the ſimilitude of *ſpoiles*, which the Prophet vſeth. For he aſcended into heauen, led captiuitie captiue, and gaue gifts vnto men: Pſal. 68. Eph. 4.8. And afterwards he adds, that the abaſing of Chriſt, was the beginning of his imperiall dignitie. As alſo S. *Paul* ſaith, that after Chriſt had taken away the hand writing which was againſt vs, *he triumphed* vpon the croſſe, Col. 2.14. So far was it off then, that the reprochfull death which he ſuffered, did any thing diminiſh his glory; that it was rather a meanes by which God his Father aduanced him into an high degree of honour.

Iſaiah alſo expreſſeth the kinde of death: as S. *Paul* alſo, who hauing ſet forth Chriſts obedience, and ſhewing that hee humbled himſelfe vnto the death, addes by and by, that it was no common death, but *the death of the Croſſe*: that is to ſay, *a ſhamefull and an accurſed death*: Phil. 2.8.

Now the Prophet minding yet to amplifie this contumelie to the full, ſaith, that *Chriſt was counted among the wicked*. But the greater the contempt was before men, ſo much the greater was the glory of his reſurrection. Saint *Marke* alleadgeth this place, when hee tels vs how Chriſt *was hanged betweene two theeues*: Mark. 15.28. for then was this prophecie truly accompliſhed indeed.

But the Prophet *ſpake generally*, to ſhew that Chriſt died not a common death. For that they might make him the more odious, they hanged theſe two theeues with Chriſt, and himſelfe in the midſt, as the Captaine. And thus Saint *Marke* alleadgeth this text to very good purpoſe, and according to the circumſtance of this place.

He bare the ſinne of many.] This is added by way of correction, leſt in hearing tell of the ignominie of this death, we ſhould conceiue ſomewhat that might redound to Chriſts indignitie. With which conceit our mindes being poſſeſſed, we might happily be depriued of the victory which hee hath purchaſed for vs; to wit, the fruit of his death. The Prophet then ſhewes, that all this was done to the end hee might receiue the *burthen* of our ſinnes vpon himſelfe: as alſo, that when mention ſhould bee made of Chriſts death, wee might forthwith remember our owne purgation. This fruit ſwallowed vp all the ſhame of his croſſe: ſo as his maieſtie & glory ſhined more fully, then if we had ſeene him ſit in the heauens. Why ſo? Becauſe in him we haue a memorable teſtimonie of Gods loue, in that he was thus humbled, ſcorned, and miſuſed, with all the indignities that might be, that we who were appointed vnto eternall deſtruction, might with him inioy immortall glory and happineſſe. 1 2 Note.

I haue followed the common tranſlation in theſe words; *he hath borne the ſinne of many*: although by the Hebrew word *Rabbim*, wee may vnderſtand the Great and Noble: and ſo the oppoſition would be the more manifeſt; namely, that Chriſt being *accounted among the wicked*, is appointed and offered as a pledge of the *moſt noble* and excellent, and *bare* the ſhame which thoſe that are in higheſt degree in the world had deſerued. But I leaue it to the iudgement of the readers to chuſe whether of both readings they like beſt. In the meane while I approue the common tranſlation; that hee alone hath borne the ſinne of many: in reſpect the condemnation of the whole world was laid vpon him. And the word *many*, is ſometimes taken for All: as it appeares by many teſtimonies, eſpecially in Rom. 5.19. For as by one mans diſobedience, *many* were made ſinners, &c.

The word Many ſometimes taken for All.

And praied for the treſpaſſers.] Becauſe the purgation wherewith we are cleanſed, that is, the death of Chriſt, was ratified and approued in regard of his *interceſſion* towards the Father, it was neceſſary this ſhould be added. For as in the old Teſtament, the high Prieſt, who neuer entred without blood, *made prayers* alſo forthwith for the people, Exod 30.10. Heb. 5.7. ſo that which was there prefigured, was accompliſhed in Chriſt. Firſt, he offered his body in ſacrifice, and ſhed his blood for the ranſome of our ſins: & then, that the purgation might be auaileable, he performed the office of *an aduocate and interceſſor* for all thoſe that imbrace this his ſacrifice by faith: as it appeares in that famous *prayer* which himſelfe hath left vpon record in Iohn 17.10. *Father, I pray not* onely for theſe, (that is, for my Diſciples) but alſo for all thoſe that ſhall beleeue in me through their word. If wee then be of

Chriſt ſuffers and praies for treſpaſſers.

that number, let vs know for certaine, that Christ hath suffered for vs, that now we might injoy the fruit of his death. He makes expresse mention of the *trespasses*, to aduertise vs that it is our duties to runne with boldnesse to the crosse of Christ, when the dread and horror of sinne affrights vs. For, for such is he an aduocate and intercessor: without which, our transgressions would hinder vs from approching neere to the maiestie of God.

THE LIV. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Reioice, O barren, that didst not beare: breake forth into ioy, and reioice thou that didst not trauel with child: for the * desolate hath mo children then the married wife.*

*Or, widow.

From the doctrine of Christs passion & death, the Prophet turnes his speech to the Church, that she might seek the fruit and efficacie thereof.

HAuing handled the doctrine of Christs passion, hee now fitly turnes his speech to the Church; to the end we might feele in our selues the efficacie of his death. For we cannot perceiue it in Christ, if we consider him by himselfe: and therefore wee must come presently vnto his Church, which is his body, because hee suffered for it, not for himselfe. This order wee know is obserued in the articles of our Creed. For hauing confessed that *vve beleeue in Iesus Christ, vvho suffered and vvas crucified for vs*, we adde, *I beleeue the Church*; which hath issued as it were out of his side: Gen. 2. 1, 21, 23. And therefore after *Isaiah* hath deliuered the doctrine of Christs sufferings, of his resurrection, and triumph he descends now in due season to mention the Church, which can neuer be separated from her head: to teach all the faithfull *from their owne experience*, that Christ hath not suffered in vaine. If he had omitted this doctrine, the faithfull could not so well haue confirmed their hearts in the hope of the restauration of the Church.

Barren.

Now this exhortation to *reioicing*, plainely shewes, that after Christ by his death shall haue got the conquest ouer death, sinne, and hell, that hee shall not liue so much for himselfe, but that he therewithall will inspire life into the members of his body. He calles his Church *barren*, because shee seemed to haue none issue, whilest this wofull seruitude lasted. And indeed, if a man had onely looked vpon her outward estate, hee would surely haue iudged her neere to destruction. Moreouer, besides the misery that appeared externally, there was nothing sound within, all were corrupted and defiled with superstitions. They had also prophaned themselues with the idolatries of the heathen.

A widow.

Neither contents hee himselfe to call her *barren*, but he also termes her a *widow*: although one of them had been sufficient enough to haue taken from her all hope of posteritie. But when both are ioined together, what was to bee expected but an horrible desolation? Notwithstanding he exhorts the people to bee of good courage, in the midst of so many miseries: for she that is *desolate*, shall haue more children then the *married wife*. This place may bee expounded two waies; either that the Church is compared to the Gentiles, which florished like a woman that had an husband: or to the estate she was in before her captiuitie: both senses wil agree well. But I had rather follow one lesse constrained: for I doe not thinke the Prophet makes a comparison heere betweene two estates. But it is rather a forme of speech vsuall with him, to signifie the extraordinarie fruitfulnesse of the Church, that so we should not iudge of her, according to the order of nature. Why so? Because God will worke in his behalfe wonderfully and miraculously. And yet I confesse that shee was then in widowhood; for long time before, God had put her away by his Prophets, and sued out a diuorce betweene him and his people, which was then effected, when he banished them out of their country. But the Prophet pronounceth that this iudgemnt shall bee temporarie, as wee shall more fully perceiue heereafter.

Desolate.

Vers. 2. *Inlarge the place of thy tents, and let them spread out the curtaines of thine inhabitation: spare not, stretch out thy cords, and make fast thy stakes.*

3. *For thou shalt increase on the right hand, and on the left: and thy seede shall possesse the Gentiles, and dwell in the desolate Cities.*

A prosecution of the former doctrine vnder other figures.

HEe prosecutes his argument vnder other figures, and promiseth that the Lord will not onely restore his Church, but will also dignifie her with a more excellent estate. Those who thinke that there is a comparison heere betweene the Church and the Synagogue, are deceiued, as I thinke. Neither doe they ought else heereby, then confirme the Iewes in their obstinacie, who perceiue well enough that violence is offered to the sense of this text, by such an exposition. For mine owne part, I doe indeede confesse that these things appertaine to the kingdome of Christ, and that they were then onely fulfilled, from the publishing of the Gospell. But it doth not therefore follow, that the Prophet should not also respect that time which went before Christs comming: for the accomplishment of this prophecie beganne vnder Cyrus, who gaue the Gospell leaue to returne: then it extended it selfe to the comming of Christ,

in

in whom it receiued the full accompliſhment. The Church then *conceiued*, when the people returned home: for at that time the body of the people was gathered, of whom Chriſt ſhould be borne; that ſo the pure worſhip of God, and his true religion might againe be planted amongſt them. I grant this *fruitfulnes* did not then appeare; for the conception was hid as it were within the mothers wombe, which outwardly could not be any whit diſcerned. But after the people multiplied; and after the birth, they were at the firſt like a child: then they grew to mans eſtate, euen till the publiſhing of the Goſpel. Which time indeed, was the true infancie of the Church. Afterwards, ſhe grew to womans eſtate, and ſhall ſo continue euen till Chriſts laſt comming, when all things ſhall be ſet in their perfect eſtate. Wee muſt therefore comprehend all theſe things together, if we wil attaine to the true meaning of the Prophets words. And in this ſenſe it is that *Zacharie*, *Malachi*, and *Haggai* doe incourage the people touching the hope of their eſtate to come, whileſt they thought they loſt ſo much time in reedifying the Temple: Zach.2.5. Hag.2.7. Mal.4.2. For they promiſed that the glory of the ſecond Temple ſhould bee more glorious then the firſt: but yet this was not perceiued. And therefore they extended theſe promiſes to Chriſt: for it was needfull they ſhould be ſuſtained with the expectation of him, and with the aſſurance of his comming, in the building of the Temple. This conſolation then was common both to the Iewes that liued vnder the Law, and to vs, who now ſee this reſtauration of the Church in Chriſt more euidently.

1 2 The infancie of the Church.

The perfect eſtate of the Church.

Of thy tents.] This is a ſimilitude taken from Tabernacles which were commonly vſed in that country. The Church then is compared to *pauilions*, becauſe ſhe hath no ſetled habitation in this world: for ſhe ſeemes to be fleeting, and a pilgrime, in regard ſhe is ſubiect to be often tranſported hether and thether, by reaſon of her diuers changes. And yet I doubt not but he aimes at that firſt deliuerance, (according to the cuſtome of the Prophets) at which time, the Iſraelites dwelt vnder *tents* the ſpace of fortie yeeres: for which cauſe, they euery yeere celebrated a ſolemne feaſt of Tabernacles by the commandement of God: Leuit.23. from 33. verſe, to 43.

Why the Church is compared to a tent.

Obiect. But ſome will obiect, that the building which the Miniſters of the word do reare vp, is ſo firme, that it ought not to be compared to tents. I anſwere, that this ſimilitude of Tabernacles is rather to be referred to the outward eſtate of the Church, then to her ſpirituall or inward eſtate: for the true building of the Church, is the very kingdome of God, which is not *vnſtable*, nor like vnto pauilions. And yet the Church ceaſeth not for all that, to be tranſported hether and thether, in regard ſhe can find no ſure reſting place in this world. But ſhe is more firme then a rocke touching her inward eſtate: for in reſpect ſhe is vpheld by the impregnable power & ſtrength of God, ſhee boldly contemnes as dangers. Shee reſembles *tents* alſo, becauſe ſhe is not built vpon riches nor earthly forces.

Anſ. The Church compared to a tent, rather in reſpect of her outward, then of her inward eſtate.

In the next place the Prophet addes the reaſon why he commands her to *ſpread abroad the cords*, to inlarge her pauilions; namely, becauſe a little place would not containe that great multitude of people which God would gather together in one, from all parts. Now in as much as Iudeah was waſted with ruines and deſolations which had befallen it: therefore hee ſaith, that the *deſolate Cities ſhall bee inhabited*.

Verſ. 4. *Feare not, for thou ſhalt not be aſhamed; neither ſhalt thou be confounded: for thou ſhalt not be put to ſhame; yea, thou ſhalt forget the ſhame of thy youth, and ſhalt not remember the reproch of thy widowhood any more.*

HE heere confirmes (as before) the hearts of the faithfull, and ſpeakes to the whole Church: for the calamitie was vniuerſall, and her eſtate was almoſt vtterly ruinated. Now he bids her be of good cheere, and addes the reaſon; namely, that her deliuerance ſhould be ſo famous, that ſhee ſhould not be *confounded*. As if hee ſhould haue ſaid; Though now for a while thy caſe be deſperate, yet thy matters ſhall ſucceed proſperouſly: for thoſe that truſt in the Lord, ſhall not be confounded: as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, Pſal.25.2. Chap.49.23. A confirmation.

He repeates it twice, *be not aſhamed*: that is to ſay, Hope ſtill, and truſt confidently. For ſuch *bluſh* for ſhame, who being fruſtrated of their hopes, are forced to *hang downe the head*. Then hee addes the like reaſon to the former, in the word *Ci*, for I take it heere as before, for a particle rendring the cauſe: ſo as it is one and the ſame ſentence repeated in diuers wordes; vnleſſe you will, that the firſt member be referred to the inward affection, and the other to an outward cauſe. But the plaineſt ſenſe will be, that there is in both a promiſe touching an happy and ioyfull iſſue. As if hee ſhould ſay; Thy calamitie ſhall haue an end.

But thou ſhalt forget thy ſhame.] This is a confirmation of the former member, by which he vnderſtands the calamities that ſhould befall the Church, when ſhe ſhould begin to grow: for the felicitie ſhee ſhould afterwards inioy, would vtterly deface the memory of them. Wee told you ere while, that ſhee is called a *vvidow* in reſpect that at this time God had forſaken & put her away frō him: Chap.50.1. *Verſ.1.*

Verſ. 5. *For hee that made thee is thine husband (whoſe name is the Lord of hoſtes) and thy redeemer the holie one of Iſrael ſhall bee called the God of *the world.*

*Or, all.

HEere he renders a reaſon why ſhee ſhall forget all the ſorrowes and afflictions which ſhe ſuſtained before; namely, becauſe God would accept her into his fauor againe: for the captiuitie was a kind of diuorce; as we haue ſhewed in Chap.50.1. Now he ſaith, he that Reaſons by which he confirmes the former conſolations.

that *made* thee, ſhall be thine *husband*: for ſo the words ſhould be ſo conſtrued. Hee calles himſelfe the *maker* or creator of his Church, not onely becauſe hee hath *created* her with the reſt of the world, but in regard hee hath vouchſafed to adopt her for his ſpouſe: which prerogatiue is as a new creation. Now albeit the Iewes were fallen from their excellencie, (in regard men are apt by and by to decline out of the right way, if they be not regenerated by the power of the holy Ghoſt) yet their ſpirituall creation was not wholly defaced, for the memorie of the couenant remained ſtill, by meanes whereof, God alſo created them anew.

Creation taken for regeneratiō.

Where hee calles himſelfe *the Lord of hoſtes*, it is to be referred to his power, in which we haue cauſe to reioice, if wee be his children: for the greater his power is, and the more renowned his name is, the greater is our glory, as long as hee accounts of vs as of his children; and that we boaſt not of ſuch a title in vaine. Now the Prophet amplifies this benefit, when he ſhewes that God doth vs the fauour, to admit vs into the place of his *wiues*; for ſo we may indeed lay claime to this his almightie power.

Thy redeemer.] He attributes this name to himſelfe, that hee might the better confirme the people in good hope; and alſo to aſſure them, that notwithſtanding the firſt deliuerance out of Egypt ſeemed to bee aboliſhed when they were now carried away captiue; yet they ſhall be ſo reſtored, that they ſhall well perceiue Gods grace ſhall not be fruitleſſe. The verbe, *Shall be called*, may be either referred to the redeemer, or, to the *Holy one*: or to them both. For mine owne part, I willingly refer it to both; to wit, *The holy one of Iſrael ſhall be called thy redeemer, and the God of the whole earth.* Hee mentions *all the earth*, (that is to ſay, the whole world:) for before, the name of God was onely knowne in Iurie, Pſal. 76.1. but after the publiſhing of the Goſpel, the Gentiles were alſo called to one hope of ſaluation with them. God is now the God of the Gentiles, as well as of the Iewes: Rom. 3.29. With whom he hath aſſembled vnder his dominion the Gentiles alſo, who before were farre off.

Verſ. 6. *For the Lord hath called thee, being as a woman forſaken and afflicted in ſpirit, and as a young wife when thou waſt refuſed, ſaith thy God.*

A preuention of an obiection.

HE meetes with a doubt which might haue troubled the mindes of the faithfull, vnder this grieuous ſeruitude: for they ſeemed to be ſo reiected of the Lord, as if they were to expect nothing but vtter ruine. The Prophet therefore admoniſheth them betimes, not to quaile, tho ugh they were *forſaken*, becauſe God accordi ng to his wonted fauour, is inclined to bee reconciled with them againe: yea, and to recouer them out of their graues.

Hee calles her *a young maried wife*, or wife of youth; that by this ſimilitude he might the better confirme the peoples hope: for the *new maried* couples are eaſilier reconciled, then thoſe that haue dwelt long together. Yong yeeres, and tender loue, allures young folkes to keepe amitie. And thus he ſhewes that God will be eaſilie pacified. As if he ſhould ſay; I grant thou art now diuorced from me, but the diuorce ſhall not long hold, but the Lord will be at one with thee: yea, of his owne accord he will allure thee to be reconciled.

Simile.

Verſ. 7. *For a little while haue I forſaken thee: but with great compaſſion will I gather thee.*

8. *For a moment in* mine *anger I hid my face from thee for a little ſeaſon: but with euerlaſting mercy haue I had compaſſion on thee, ſaith the Lord thy redeemer.*

THe Prophet now expounds the former ſentence at large, and ſhewes the maner of this diuorce; to wit, that the Church ſhall be ſhortly reſtored to her firſt eſtate. Now he ſets forth this mercy of God very excellently, and thereby aſſwageth the dolour which might preſſe downe the hearts of the faithfull: for it was not enough to put them in hope of ſome kinde of reſtauration, vnleſſe they were therewithall aſſured that God would alſo be quickly appeaſed. We are out of heart by and by, and quaile, if ſo bee the Lord be not neer preſently to reach forth his hand vnto vs. And therefore after *Iſaiah* hath mentioned the Churches *reſtauration*, hee forthwith addes, that her reiection ſhall *not long indure*, but that God will haue compaſſion on her *with euerlaſting mercy*.

An expoſition of the preuention.

I

When he ſaith, he *forſooke his people*: it is as much as if he had confeſſed it to bee ſo: for God hath in ſuch wiſe adopted vs, that mens diſloialtie cannot fruſtrate the ſame. Why ſo? Becauſe he is faithfull, and will neuer therefore finally reiect or forſake his elect. This *reiection* then, muſt bee referred to our apprehenſion, and to our ſeeming in outward appearance: *for we thinke God hath caſt vs off, when we neither feele his preſence, nor protecti-on.* And yet it is neceſſary we ſhould taſte the bitterneſſe of Gods wrath, (as the wife whom her husband hath put away, laments her eſtate) that we may know he hath iuſt cauſe to deale ſo ſeuerely with vs. But on the other ſide, it is as needfull that we forthwith ſhould drinke a deepe draught of his mercy, which being infinite and euerlaſting, will make all our afflictions ſeeme light; yea, and of ſhort continuance, in reſpect of that. As often then as calamities doe preſſe vs downe, let vs haue our recourſe to this conſolation.

God neuer forſakes his people: See 1. Sam. 12. 22. Lam. 3. 31. 32.

We may alſo note that this was ſaid, and that truly, of the whole body of this people, who had made this diuorce by their iniquities: Chap. 50. 1. And howſoeuer God did not indifferently receiue them all to grace, but that remnant which he had choſen; yet there is no abſurditie nor inconuenience at all in it, that he directs his ſpeech vnto all. Hee repeates

peates the ſame thing againe in the next verſe, that it might take the deeper impreſſion in the hearts of the faithfull: as alſo, that no aduerſitie might too much diſmay them. And had he iuſt cauſe to doe ſo? Yea doubtleſſe: for in this horrible darkneſſe, the poore captiues could not eaſilie behold the louing countenance of the Lord. And howſoeuer that which is heere ſaid, *for a moment in mine indignation*, is properly to be vnderſtood, that God in fit ſeaſon brought his baniſhed home againe into Iudeah: yet thence wee may gather a generall doctrine, namely, that the afflictions of the Church are but for a ſhort ſpace, when we lift vp the eies of our mindes to the eternall & bleſſed life. For we muſt remember the admonition of Saint *Paul*, to wit, that all the afflictions of the faithfull, are light to beare, and ought to be eſteemed *very ſhort*, if wee looke to that eternall waight of glory which is laid vp for vs in heauen: 2. Cor. 4. 17. Rom. 8. 18. And if this compariſon come not betweene; daies will ſeeme vnto vs as long as yeeres. Neither were there any reaſon to compare ſeuentie yeeres captiuitie to a *moment*, if the continuall progreſſe of Gods fauour were not oppoſed vnto it.

If we ſet not the eternall weight of glory againſt our momentany afflictions, daies will ſeeme to vs as long as yeeres.

Verſ. 9. *For this is vnto mee as the waters of Noah: for as I haue ſworne that the waters of Noah ſhould no more goe ouer the earth, ſo haue I ſworne that I will not bee angry with thee, nor rebuke thee.*

As God ſatisfied himſelf with one deluge, ſo hee will ſatisfie himſelfe with this laſt waſte of the Church.

THis may bee read two waies: firſt as wee haue tranſlated, *This is to me as the daies of Noah*: but the matter is not great. The principall therefore is to haue an eye to the Prophets meaning: for the expoſitors haue but roued a farre off at it, as I thinke. They expound in generall termes; that the Lord by oth promiſed *Noah*, there ſhould neuer be any deluge againe, and that this oath ſhould remaine for euer: for without this, the good man might haue trembled and feared death at the next ſhower of raine that had fallen, but that the Lord had ſworne to him *it ſhould neuer come to paſſe*. And thus, when afflictions are at hand, wee may iuſtly feare to be ouerwhelmed by them, vnleſſe the Lord had promiſed that his Church ſhould bee preſerued in ſafetie. But as I thinke, this ſhould be reſtrained to the captiuitie of Babylon: *for hee compares this captiuitie to the deluge*, which then deformed the face of the whole earth; ſo as the Church ſeemed to be vtterly waſted, the people were all in a maner carried away, and transformed into a ſtrange nation, the kingdome and gouernment were ouerthrowne, their bondage was extreame, and no man would haue imagined but that their memorie and name had been wholly blotted out. And queſtionleſſe that which our Prophet ſaid in the firſt Chapter, came to paſſe, namely, that if the Lord had not left a ſmall remnant, they ſhould haue been like to Sodome and Gomorah.

It is not without cauſe then, that he compares this captiuitie to the *waters of Noah*: that is to ſay, to the deluge. For which cauſe, I am of their opinion who reade; *For this is to me as the waters*; becauſe this reading ſeemes more ſolid, as I thinke: and all the Rabbines haue followed it. Theſe words, *This ſhall be to me*, ought to bee well weighed alſo, as I take it; which the expoſitors notwithſtanding haue lightly paſſed ouer. For his meaning is, that this calamitie *ſhall be vnto him* as the deluge: that is, as he contented himſelfe with one deluge, ſo as he will neuer ſend a ſecond: ſo will he alſo ſatisfie himſelfe with this onely waſte of the Church, and he will neuer ſuffer it to be any more thus ruinated againe. Thus then I ſuppoſe this text ought to bee expounded and applied to the ſimilitude, namely, that the ouerthrow of the Church ſhall bee the ſame now vnto God, as the deluge was, which happened in the daies of *Noah: for euen as hee then ſware, neuer to puniſh the ſinnes of men more vnlike this ſo horrible a chaſtiſement, ſo will he neuer conſume the Church any more, as he hath done vnder the captiuitie of Babylon*. And truly whatſoeuer waſte there happened after, yet the Church alwaies ſtood, and continued in ſome forme, till Chriſt his appearing: for then the ſeed of the Goſpell was ſowen abroad euery where, that it might bring forth children to the Lord, out of all the nations vnder heauen. To conclude, the Lord promiſeth heereafter to mittigate his wrath, and neuer to puniſh his people ſo ſeuerely againe.

But ſome will obiect, that ſince that time the Church hath indured wonderfull ſtraits, ſo farre forth as in mans iudgement ſhee was welnie brought to nought: which being ſo, then haue not I giuen a right expoſition of the Prophets words? I anſwere, God neuer afterwarde ſo afflicted his Church, that the whole face thereof was aboliſhed, as it fell out when the people were caried away captiue into Babylon. For albeit *Antiochus* and others made terrible waſtes, after which followed thoſe reuolts which Saint *Paul* foretold, 2. Theſ. 2. 3. 1. Tim. 4. 1. And that all the world in a maner was defiled with infinit ſuperſtitions, ſo as Chriſtianitie was almoſt raced out: yet there euermore remained ſome forme of a Church, though much disfigured. Neither was the building ſo defaced, but ſome relikes thereof remained vnwaſted aboue the deluges, that ſo this *oath* of God might ſtand faſt. Obiect. Anſ. Antiochus

So haue I ſworne.] This muſt not be barely vnderſtood as it is in it ſelfe, but by way of compariſon, for he oppoſeth this member to the former, promiſing neuer to correct his people ſo ſeuerely againe, but that hee will both mittigate and moderate his ſtripes. Although tyrants then play the wilde beaſts in running vpon vs with a deſperate furie; and that Satan on the other ſide leaues no plot vnattempted to bring the Church to deſtruction; and that God for our vnthankfulnes lets looſe the raines vnto them, yet wil he neuer ſuffer it to be vtterly ſwallowed vp of the

Verſ. 10. *For the mountaines ſhall remoue,*

moue, and the hils ſhall fall downe: but my mercie ſhall not depart from thee, neither ſhall the couenant of my peace fall away, ſaith the Lord, that hath compaſſion on thee.

A confirmation of the former ſentence.

HE confirmes the former ſentence, and ſhewes, that heauen and earth ſhall paſſe and come to nought, before his mercie ſhall faile. Some are ſo fond to demand here *how mountaines can remoue*, or, *how hilles ſhall fall downe?* But they deſerue none anſwere, for it is a compariſon taken from things that ſeeme to be faſt and firmely rooted, thereby ſignifying, that the Church is much more ſtable and vnmoueable. The mountaines are very firme and ſtrong; neither doe earthquakes happen ſo often there as in plain and champian countries. The Lord then pronouceth, that though theſe great and huge mountaines ſhould remoue, or that heauen and earth ſhould meet, Pſal.46.2, yet his couenant ſhall ſtand immoueable, and his mercie ſhall be perpetuall towards his Church.

And to this purpoſe it is ſaid in Pſalm.93.1. That the Lord ſhal reigne, and that the world ſhall be ſtabliſhed that it can not be moued. And in Pſal.102.26.28. The heauens ſhall periſh, but the Church of God ſhall remaine for euer. In the word *mercie* we are to note what the foundation of this *couenant* is: for we can haue no acquaintance with God, vnleſſe he freely receiue vs by pardoning our ſinnes.

Peace, taken for all proſperitie.

The couenant, is by him called *the couenant of peace*, becauſe the Lord therein offers vs all that which belongs to our chiefe good: for vnder this word *peace*, the Hebrues vnderſtand all happines and proſperitie. Seeing this couenant then conteines a firme and ſtable bleſſednes, it muſt needs follow that all thoſe are miſerable which are excluded out of it. In that he ſaith, it is he who hath *compaſſion*, he againe confirmes that which we haue ſaid, namely, that he hath no other reaſon to ſhew mercie, but becauſe he is pitifull, and readie to forgiue, Chap 55.7.

Verſ. 11. *O thou afflicted and toſſed with tempeſt, that haſt no comfort: behold, I will lay thy ſtones with the Carbuncles, and lay thy foundation with Saphirs.*

The glorie of the ſecond Temple greater then the firſt, in this and the next verſe.

HE proſecutes the ſame argument, and promiſeth, that the Lord will put the Church into her firſt glorie; yea, that he will cauſe her to ſhine exceeding clearely, in that ſhe ſhall be more gloriouſlie beautified then before, euen as if ſhe were whollie built with pretious ſtones. *Haggai* in Chap.2.10. ſhewes the ſame in a word, when he ſaid *that the glorie of the ſecond temple ſhould exceed the firſt.*

Wee neede not ſtand to decipher out the qualities of theſe precious ſtones, which *Iſaiah* heere mentions, ſeeing the Hebrue expoſitors themſelues agree not together in this behalfe. It is enough that wee haue the ſenſe of the place. Now this maner of ſpeech hath great weight in it to aſſwage the ſorrowes of the faithfull: for it is as much in effect, as if he had ſet the little barke of the Church cleare off the ſands, when it was now in danger of drowning. As oft therefore as we ſee her ride in boiſterous *waues*, and preſſed with infinite calamities, yea, and depriued of *all conſolation*, let vs remember that theſe miſeries are meanes to prouoke God to giue her ſuccor.

Verſ. 12. *And I will make thy windowes of Emerandes, and thy gates ſhining braſſe, and all thy borders of pleaſant ſtones.*

BY theſe ſimilitudes he ſhewes, that the eſtate of the Church ſhall be more excellent then it was wont to be, as we haue noted before. The Church is heere compared to *a building*, a ſimilitude which we often meet withall in the holy ſcriptures, and therefore the Prophet layes downe a platforme of a ſtately and ſumptuous building. But wee are to note, that *God* is heere made the *maiſter workeman* of this building, for the whole worke muſt be attributed vnto him.

Obiect.

Some may aske what the Prophet meanes by *Carbuncles*, *Saphires*, verſ.11. *Pearles*, and other *pretious ſtones*: for S. *Paul* hath noted out the doctrine of the Goſpell by a like ſimilitude: *I haue laid* (ſaith he) *the foundation* as an expert maſter-builder: and if any build vpon this foundatiō, *gold, ſiluer, pretious ſtones*, wood, hay, or ſtubble, euery mans worke ſhall be made manifeſt, 1.Cor.3.10.12.13. I anſwere, the verſe following will ſhew whether the Prophet meant the ſame thing heere or no.

Anſ.

Verſ. 13. *And all thy children* ſhal be *taught of the Lord, and much peace ſhall be to thy children.*

The former things ſpoke not of doctrine, but of men.

HEnce wee may eaſily collect, that *Iſaiah* ſpake not in the former verſes of doctrine but of men, whereof the ſpirituall building of the Church is compact. I grant, the Church is builded by doctrine, but that is done in gathering men in, and by fitting them to be liuely ſtones in this building, 1.Pet.2.5. See the difference now betweene *Paul* and *Iſaiah*. *Paul* referres pretious ſtones to doctrine, and *Iſaiah* to the gifts of the holy Ghoſt, wherewith men are inriched and endued, that of them a Church may be reared vp. But the diuerſitie of gifts wherewith the Lord adornes his ſeruants are to be obſerued. For all are not Saphires or Carbuncles: the Lord diſtributes to euery one his meaſure according to his owne wil, 1.Cor.12.11. Eph.4.7.11. Whence wee alſo are to remember, that whatſoeuer ſerues for the adorning of the Church, proceeds only from the meere grace of God. For if wee be *Carbuncles* and *Saphires* becauſe wee are *taught of God*, then it followes that we get not this honor by nature.

Now the Lord teacheth vs two waies, namely, by the externall miniſtrie of man, and by the ſecret reuelation of the holy Ghoſt. Ieſus

Chriſt

Chriſt ſhewes in Ioh.6.45. which of theſe teachings the Prophet heere ſpeakes of: for he alledgeth this text, and therefore we neede not ſeeke for a better expoſitor. It is written in the Prophets (ſaith he) *And they ſhall be all taught of God*. Whoſoeuer then hath heard and learned of the Father, commeth vnto me. If this place then ſhould be vnderſtood of *the externall preaching*, that which Ieſus Chriſt concludes hence would not be firme enough. For this is no good conſequence, The Goſpell is preached, therefore all beleeue: for many reſiſt it, others openly ſcorne it, and ſome are hypocrites. The elect only who are choſen to eternall life become teachable, to whom properly it belongs to be accounted in the number of Chriſt his true diſciples. The Goſpell I grant is preached indifferentlie both to the elect & caſtawaies, but the elect only *come to Chriſt*, becauſe they are *taught of God*. Hence let vs conclude then, that the Prophet ſpeakes in this place of them, and of none other.

Chriſt the beſt expoſitor of this place.

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By this we may ſee, how and by what meanes wee are made liuing and pretious ſtones to ſerue in the building of the Lords ſpirituall temple, to wit, *vvhen the Lord hath ſquared and poliſhed vs by his holy ſpirit*: and *to the outward preaching of his vvord, ioines the inward power and efficacie of the ſame ſpirit*. And thus we are alſo taught how great the peruerſitie of mans vnderſtanding is, in that it can not be bowed nor reformed, vnleſſe the Lord worke vpon the ſame mightily by the powerfull operation of his bleſſed ſpirit.

The maner how we become pretious ſtones, fit to ſerue Gods ſpirituall building.

Our Prophet hath conioined theſe two maners of teaching together, to wit, both the inward, and the outward. For he calles thoſe the *children of the Church*, who are taught of *the Lord*: if they be *children*, then haue they bin conceiued in her womb, and nurced vp in her lap, firſt with milke, afterward with ſtrong meate, 1.Cor.3.2. Hebr.5.12. 13.14. vntill they grow vp, and become perfect men in Chriſt Ieſus, as *Paul* ſpeakes Epheſ.4.13. The outward miniſtrie of the word then is required if we will be his diſciples.

Whence it appeares, how abſurd and blockiſh the raging of thoſe fantaſticall ſpirits is, who peruert this teſtimonie, to ouerthrow the preaching of the word, and the miniſtrie of the Church. For children of the Church can they not be, vnleſſe they will be nouriſhed vp in her lap. Let them goe then with their ſecret reuelations; for the holy Ghoſt teacheth none but ſuch as ſubmit themſelues vnder the Churches miniſtrie. Well may ſuch be the diſciples and children of Satan, but not of God, ſeeing they contemne the order which hee hath eſtabliſhed. For theſe two points, to wit, *the children of the Church*, and *the ſchollers of God*, are ſo linckt together, that thoſe who refuſe to be taught of the Church ſhall neuer be Gods diſciples. I grant they muſt be aptly diſtinguiſhed, euen as *Iſaiah* alſo doth, leſt that be attributed to men which only belongs to the power of the holy Ghoſt. And yet they muſt be ſo linckt one to the other, that we muſt know that in this worke God will ſerue his turne by man.

Anabaptiſticall reuelations tixed.

Whoſoeuer refuſeth to be taught of the Church, ſhal neuer be Gods diſciple.

Moreouer by this verſe we are taught, that Gods calling works with efficacie in his elect. S. *Auguſtine* hath prudentlie pondered this place, and very fitlie applies it againſt the Pellagians, who extolled mans free will againſt the free grace of God. Theſe Heretiks I grant ſeemed to attribute ſomewhat vnto Gods grace, but in ſuch ſort, that they left it to the free will of man either to chuſe or refuſe: which our Papiſts do at this day, who affirme that euery one may reiect or receiue this grace. But *all*, ſaith S. *Auguſtine*, ſhall be *taught of God*. His diſciples therefore are taught with efficacie, and follow his calling, Ioh.10.27. He alſo alledgeth that ſixth of Iohn by vs cited before, whence it manifeſtly appeares that it proceeds not from any free election that man hath in himſelfe, to be able to bow his will which way him liſteth.

S.Auguſtine.

Pellagians, Heretiques.

The Papiſts become Pellagians.

We are alſo to note hence what account the Lord makes of his doctrine, whereby he fits vs for this building, to the end we may be Pearles, Saphires and Carbuncles. For thoſe that goe about to erect a Church without the preaching of the word, ſhall rather build a Stie for Hogs, then a Church for God. By this alſo we may learne what to iudge of that infolded faith wherof ỹ Papiſts tattle ſo much: for thus they would make men to differ in nothing from brute beaſts, that ſo they might play the Merchants with them openly, without controle. But I trow, if we be *taught of God*, it is no reaſon we ſhould reſemble vnreaſonable beaſts.

Thoſe that will build a Church without the preaching of the word, ſhall rather build a Stie for Hogs, then a Church for God.

It may be demanded, whether the Patriarks, Prophets, and other of the faithfull *were taught of God vnder the law* or no? Certainely they were. But our Prophet ſpeakes heere by way of compariſon. For vnder Chriſt the Lord ſpake *ſo euidentlie*, that he openly manifeſted himſelfe to be the *teacher* of his Church, and after he gathered to himſelfe a great number of diſciples. Moreouer, this place accords with that of Ieremiah, Chap.31. 34. And they ſhall teach no more euery one his neighbour, nor euery man his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord, *for all ſhall know me from the leaſt of them to the greateſt*, ſaith the Lord. Wherefore if it were of neceſſitie that all the children of God in old time were the diſciples of ỹ holy Ghoſt, much more ought we to be ſo in theſe times, ſeeing this propheſie properly belongs to the kingdome of Chriſt.

Queſt.

Anſ.

And there ſhall be abundance of peace.] By the word *peace*, he meanes felicitie, that is, all good things. Hence we are to gather wherein mans chiefe happines conſiſts, namely, in hauing our minds illuminated of God, to comprehend that ſaluation which is manifeſted to vs in Chriſt. For as long as wee bee ſtrangers to this knowledge wee are the vnhappieſt people vnder heauen; for ſo the very bleſſings of God are turned into curſings, Mala.2.2. till they be ſanctified vnto vs by faith.

Peare, taken for felicitie.

Mans chiefe felicitie.

Verſ. 14. *In righteouſnes ſhalt thou be eſtabliſhed*, and *be farre from oppreſſion*,

for thou shalt not feare it: and from feare, for it shall not come neere thee.

As God is the teacher of his Church, so will he be her protector.

HIs meaning is, that God shall bee the workeman and Master builder of his Church. I am not ignorant that others expound it otherwise, and take *righteousnesse* for good workes: which exposition hath some shew of reason in it, because the Prophet hath before spoken of the doctrine of faith: and wee are *taught*, to the end we should liue holily and righteously. But the Prophet hath another scope, namely, that the Church shall bee restored vnder the conduct of God, who would bee her protector and defender. For heere hee opposeth *righteousnesse* to that violence and oppression, whereby the Church was ruinated: or rather, by this word he notes out the firmnes and stabilitie of it. As if hee should say; This shall be no building of stones nor timber, which may haue some faire glosse set vpon it for a time, because God will faithfully maintaine the worke of his owne hands: and in regard he is *iust*, he will cause her, being restored to her perfect estate, to stand for euer. Let men conspire what they will then to worke the ruin of the Church, their practises shall all come to nought; because God will preserue her by his *righteousnesse*. Wee haue seene the like speech heertofore. This plaine interpretation therfore contents me, though the other may seeme more plausible to many.

Reade the exposition of the verse following, for the better vnderstãding of this.

Verse. 15. *Behold*, the enemie *shall gather himselfe, but without me: whosoeuer shall gather himselfe in thee, against thee, shall fall.*

The Church must not promise to her selfe any secure resting place in this world.

THe summe is, that albeit many rise vp to ouerthrow the Church, yet shall all their plots and assaults be defeated, and vanish into smoke. Yea, it seemes that God not onely promiseth helpe against the open enemies, but also against them *within*: for many creep into the bosome of the Church, as if they meant to be her children: but afterward, they fall like vipers to eate out the bellie of their mother. Some translate; In assembling, he shall assemble against thee: vnderstanding this of all the enemies of the Church in generall. This is the most receiued interpretation: neither doe I reiect it, prouided that wee therewithall comprehend the wiles, ambushes, and treasons wherewith the Church is assailed. And no doubt but that is heere expressed, which is contained in the second Psalme; to wit, the tumults and conspiracies against Christ and his Church: for not one, but many nations rise vp against her, and yet it is very likely that the Prophet heere expresly ioines the domestike enemies, and those from without, who crept in to assaile her in her owne bosome as it were. For it is said, *in thee, against thee*: that is to say, they shall set vpon thee from within, yea euen in the middest of thee.

To bee short, his meaning is, that the Church shall neuer inioy such *abundance of peace*, but she must looke for many *aduersaries* that will assaile her. But how agrees these things together, may some say? for in the former verse he said shee should be *farre from oppression*, and from feare, for *it should not come nigh her*? And now he shewes she shall haue *intestine* conspiracies. But the Prophet hath added this in very fit season, lest the faithfull should promise vnto themselues a secure resting place in this world, as if the wicked and hypocrites should no way molest her. The Church then you see, is so deliuered from reproches and oppression, that she is perpetually to incounter with open and secret enemies: for Satan wil euery day be raising vp of new alarums against her, so as by his good will, she shall not haue a minute of rest. This therefore is a correction as it were of the former sentence, teaching the faithfull to be alwaies vpon their watch, and neuer to promise themselues any truce. But for our comfort, the Prophet addes a promise; namely, that *the Lord will protect her in the midst of all dangers.*

Obiect.

Ans.

Without God, signifies as much, as in vaine, or without any good successe. For his meaning is, that the plottings of the wicked shall come to nought, though they busie all their wits, and doe the worst they can. They shall cast themselues headlong into an headlesse rage, but *the onely hand* of the Lord shall giue his people an happy euasion and issue. Now hee alludes to that which was said before, namely, that the Chaldeans should come vnder the conduct of God, to destroy the land of Iudeah. The people were then destroied because God was their enemie: but now the enemies comming to assaile the Church *without God*, that is to say, without his fauour, they shall flee and be confounded.

The plots of the wicked shall be all brought to nought: and why?

Which hee better expresseth by and by after, saying; *Hee that shall gather himselfe in thee, against thee*, shall *fall*. That is, whatsoeuer hee hath imagined against thee, shall fall vpon his owne head: yea, though the whole world should rise vp against thee, yet should it crush and ouerwhelme it selfe by the owne burthen.

The particle *in thee*, is to bee noted: for when the Lord driues our enemies farre off from vs, then we grow confident: but if they approch and draw neere, then wee are out of heart. Therefore he saith, though they pierce euen to thine *inward parts*, yet will the Lord destroy them, and deliuer thee.

Verse. 16. *Behold, I haue created the smith that bloweth the coales in the fire, and him that bringeth forth an instrument for his worke, and haue created the destroier to destroy.*

God knowes how to work well by euill instruments.

THe Lord sheweth how easie it is for him to deliuer his Church from the wicked enterprises of his enemies: for they can accomplish no more then that which hee permits them to doe; yea he vseth them as his instruments to chastise his children withall. Now this may as fitly bee referred to the Chaldeans, as to the rest of their enemies, which afterward molested the chosen people of God. If wee receiue the first sense, God plainly

phainly ſhewes, that in a moment hee can chaſe them away, whom he hath brought together; and bring them downe, whom hee hath exalted. And if we referre it to *Antiochus*, and his like, the ſenſe will not be much different; to wit, that euen thoſe ſhall not hurt as they would; for they ſhall not ſo much as remooue their leaſt finger without Gods leaue.

Obiect. But doth not the Prophet ſeeme to contradict himſelfe? For in the former verſe hee ſaid, that the wicked ſhould aſſaile the church *without the Lord*: and heere hee ſhewes that they fight as it were vnder his colours, and that vnder his conduct and authoritie, they waſte and deſtroy the Church? *Anſ.* I anſwere, we muſt conſider the oppoſition; namely, that the Lord had raiſed vp the Babylonians to ſcatter the Church: for wee are to note the ſimilitude of the deluge, mentioned in the ninth verſe, whereby he ſignified an vtter deſtruction: ſo as the Church was then in a maner cleane waſted by the Babylonians, whom he vſed for that ſeruice. But he there proteſts to moderate his indignation ſo as he will neuer ſuffer the enemy to aboliſh his Church againe, though for a time he giue the ſame ouer to be chaſtiſed by their hand. Indeed that is the enemies drift; for they imploy the vtmoſt of their power and force, to bring the Church to confuſion and vtter ruine, but the Lord repreſſeth their rage, in regard they doe it without him, verſ. 15. that is to ſay, *without his commandement.*

Some expound, that the *Smith* is created for his worke: that is to ſay, to practiſe his owne death: and the *deſtroier* to deſtroy himſelfe. But I thinke the firſt ſenſe is more ſimple, where the Lord ſaith, that hee createth the *deſtroier*; it is not onely referred to their nature, as they are borne men, but to the act of deſtroying: and yet wee muſt not lay the blame vpon God, as if he were the author of the vniuſt crueltie which remaines in men: for God conſents not with their wicked will, but diſpoſeth of their indeuors by his ſecret prouidence, and vſeth them as the inſtruments of his wrath. But we haue handled this matter in another place.

Verſ. 17. *But all the weapons that are made againſt thee ſhall not proſper: and euery tongue that ſhall riſe againſt thee in iudgement, thou ſhalt condemne. This is the heritage of the Lords ſeruants, and their righteouſneſſe is of mee, ſaith the Lord.*

HE againe repeates that which was noted before; namely, that the wicked ſhall loſe their labours, let them plot as much as they will: for their violent determinations are conducted and held ſhort by the ſecret counſell of God. Now he vſeth the particle *All*, ſignifying that the wicked ſhould haue meanes of all ſorts, and in great number, to worke the Churches ouerthrow: but *all* ſhould vaniſh like ſmoke, becauſe the Lord would repreſſe them. God indeede permits them to worke their wils for the triall of the faithfull: but after patience hath had her perfect worke in them, he ſtrippeth the wicked of all the force and power in which they truſted. Now hauing ſpoken in generall of the *weapons* and inſtruments of warre, wherewith the vngodly inuade the Church; hee names the *tongue* expreſſly, which is the moſt peſtilent and deadly weapon of all: Iames 3. 8. For the wicked content not themſelues to rent and teare the ſeruants of God by outrages and ſlanders, but they alſo labour as much as in them is, to extinguiſh the truth of God, and to alienate mens mindes from the loue of it: and this ought more to pierce and wound our hearts, then if we were to loſe our liues an hundred times. Adde alſo that good men are more deeply wounded with falſe imputations, then with the deepeſt gaſh that can be giuen them with a ſharpe ſword: and therefore we muſt not ouerpaſſe this mortall and deadly *weapon* of the *tongue*. The tongue a peſtilent enemie.

Afterwards when hee addes, that theſe *tongues* riſe vp in iudgement: it is to ſhew that the wicked ſhall be ſo bold and inſolent, that they ſhall malicioufly prouoke and moleſt the children of God; yea they ſhall doe it in *iudgement*: for they couer themſelues vnder goodly pretences, that they may make the world beleeue their cauſe is exceeding good. As when the Papiſts call vs dogs, heretikes, and ſchiſmatikes; they plead againſt vs in iudgement (as you would ſay) and will be eſteemed the defenders of the Catholike faith, though they onely be the vpholders of idolatry and lies. And yet their accuſations are painted ouer with ſuch colours, that ſo they may make vs the more odious among them, who are ignorant of our iuſt cauſe. But admit they aſſaile vs with open violence by the *ſmitings of the tongue*, Ier. 18. 18. or with any other weapon, yet let vs not doubt but we ſhall be more then conquerours, as this propheeie witneſſeth: for the victorie is heere promiſed vs. Seeing therefore we may be bold to relie vpon the truth of it, let vs buckle our ſelues to the combat, with a ſtout and inuincible courage.

This is the heritage.] Hee ſhewes that the Lord hath giuen this to his ſeruants as it were by the right of their inheritance, whereof they ſhall not be defrauded: for as there is no title ſo ſure as that of an inheritance, ſo he alſo ſhewes, that the *ſeruants of the Lord* ought to aſſure themſelues of this priuiledge aboue any thing in the world beſides, namely, of his protection and perpetuall ſafegard, by which he defends and keepes all his, from all dangers whatſoeuer.

Righteouſneſſe is heere taken for that which we commonly call, Their right. To conclude, his meaning is, that the Lord will ſhew himſelfe the protector of his Church, that he may maintaine their innocency. As oft then as men offer vs any violence, let vs learne to run ſtraightway to God: for in regard we ſeeke to other helpes, it comes to paſſe that wee are deſtituted of his defence and protection. *Leur droit.*

THE LV. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and ye that haue no ſilver, come, buy, and eate: come I ſay, buy wine and milke without ſilver, and without money.*

A generall ſummons.

THE Prophet here greatly magnifies and extols Gods goodnes, which ſhould be ſpread abroad largely, and in greater abundance then was wont vpon the Church, vnder the kingdome of Chriſt, vnto whoſe cuſtodie all the treaſures of Gods graces are committed, for in him God giues himſelfe wholly vnto vs. So as the ſaying of S. *Iohn* is truely accõpliſhed, namely, that of his fulnes we all haue receiued grace for grace, Ioh. 1. 16. I grant the fathers vnder the law felt this goodnes and ſpirituall liberalitie of God, which is here mentioned: Oh how great ſaith *Dauid* is the goodnes which thou haſt laid vp for them that feare thee? Pſal. 31. 19. notwithſtanding this goodnes was much more fullie and liberallie ſhed abroad vnder Chriſt. Behold heere then a ſingular commendation of Gods grace, which is ſet before vs in Chriſtes kingdome. The Prophet then not only teacheth that which ſhould be once done, but that alſo which is dayly effected when the Lord ſummons vs by his doctrine to the inioying of all theſe benefits.

Some referre the word *waters* to the doctrine of ỹ Goſpell, others to the holy Ghoſt: but both (as I thinke) are deceiued. For thoſe that vnderſtand it of the doctrine of the Goſpell which they oppoſe to the Law (whereof the Iewes ſuppoſe the Prophet ſpeakes in this place) do only comprehend one part of that which *Iſaiah* meant to ſay. For the others, who referre it to the holy Ghoſt, they haue a little more colour, and they alleage that place of S. *Iohn*: If thou kneweſt the gift of God, and who it were that ſaith vnto thee, Giue me drinke, thou wouldſt haue asked of him, and hee would haue giuen thee *waters* of life, Iohn 4. 10. And a little after, it ſeemes that Chriſt expounds this text of the Prophet, when he ſaith, *Whoſoeuer ſhall drinke of this water ſhall thirſt againe; but, he that drinks of the water that I ſhall giue him ſhall neuer be more athirſt; but the water that I ſhall giue him, ſhall be in him a well of water ſpringing vp into euerlaſting life, verſ.* 13, 14. Yet I doubt not but *Iſaiah* vnder theſe words *waters, milke, wine,* and *bread*, heere comprehends whatſoeuer is neceſſarie to the ſpirituall life: for they are ſimilitudes taken from that ordinarie foode wherewith wee are dayly ſuſteined. Looke then how we are nouriſhed with bread, wine, milke, and water, ſo alſo let vs know that our ſoules are fed and ſuſteined with the doctrine of the Goſpell, with the holy Ghoſt, and with the other gifts of Chriſt.

Why the Prophet is faine to make this exclamation.

Now the Prophet makes a loude exclamation, and cries *Ho*, for men are rocked ſo faſt aſleepe, that they can hardly be wakened: they feele not their pouertie though they be affamiſhed, neither do they deſire that meate whereof they haue great neede. This drouzines of men therefore ought to be rouzed with great and continuall cries. The careleſnes then of ſuch as are deafe at this exhortation, is ſo much the more hatefull and deteſtable, and the ſlothfulnes of ſuch as flatter themſelues in their ſloth, albeit they haue bin ſpurred to the quick.

Moreouer this is a generall ſummons. For who is he that ſtands not in neede of theſe *waters*, or, to whom Chriſt can not bring much profit? for this cauſe he calles *every one*, without exception of perſons. But men are ſo wretched, that notwithſtanding they feele well enough what neede they haue of Chriſt, yet they ſeeke out meanes which way to deprive themſelues of ſuch a benefit: and doe rather giue credit to Satan, who furniſheth them with ſundrie impediments, then to giue eare to this ſo gracious and gentle a *call*.

We are to know then wherein the true preparation conſiſts to receiue this grace, which he expreſſeth in ſaying, *he that thirſteth*: for ſuch as are ſwollen vp with a vaine cõfidence, and are full gorged: or, who being bewitched with earthly delights, feele not the pouertie of their ſoules; neither will they giue place vnto Chriſt. Why ſo? Becauſe they feele no reliſh in the ſweetnes of this ſpirituall grace. They may well be compared to ſick folks that haue neede of good nouriſhment, but becauſe they are filled with winde, with diſdaine they reiect their meate; or, being caried with ſome fond imagination, they feede vpon their owne dreames, as though they ſtood in neede of nothing at all. And in this ſort, ſuch as are ſwollen with pride, or with a falſe perſwaſion of their owne righteouſnes; or, poſſeſſed with the allurements of the fleſh, do either deſpiſe, or reiect this grace of God. It is then required that we be *athirſt*, that is to ſay, to haue an ardent deſire, that we may be fitted to be partakers of ſo great benefits.

Buy without ſilver.] The Prophet meanes not that there are any which haue *ſilver* in abũdance: but it muſt be thus reſolued; Notwithſtanding you be extreamely poore and needie, yet the way is open for you to *come* vnto Chriſt, through whom theſe gifts are freely giuen. But will ſome ſay, How can a man be ſaid to *buy, without paying ought?* I anſwere, That the meanes whereby we attaine any thing, is heere improperly called *buying*. The verb *to buy* heere then, is taken for to get, or obtaine. And the *price*, for the labor or induſtrie; or, any other way where-

Obiect. Anſ.

by

by men obtaine any thing. He ſhewes then that we are vtterly poore and beggerly, hauing nothing in the world to get this grace of God, but are heere gently allured to receiue all things of his hand freely, without any recompence on our part.

Verſ. 2. *Wherefore doe yee lay out ſilver, and not for bread? And your labour without being ſatisfied? Hearken diligentlie vnto mee, and eate that which is good: and let your ſoule delight in fatneſſe.*

A generall complaint.

HEe complaines of mens folly and ingratitude, who either reiect or diſdaine Gods bountie, in offering them all things liberally: and yet in the meane while, wearie themſelues much in following after ſundry toies, which can bring them no profit at all. For the diuell hath ſo bewitched them, that they had rather erre in their forlorne by-paths, yea and to kill themſelues for *nothing*, then to reſt vpon that grace which God preſents before them. The experience of the time in which we liue ſhewes ſufficiently, that the Prophet tooke not vp this complaint onely againſt them of his owne nation, but againſt all men, of what time or age ſoeuer. For all the ſucceſſors of *Adam* are caried away with this rage, namely, that whileſt they pretend to ſeeke the way to eternall life, they whollie erre and goe aſtray, and rather follow their vaine opinions then the voice of God. The Prophet then complaines not onely of their ſlothfulneſſe, who hauing vtterly forgotten both God and themſelues haue no care at all of the ſpirituall life of their ſoule, (the numbers of which kind of perſons are very many) but of thoſe who ſeeme to deſire life, and yet neither keepe nor obſerue the way or means to attaine vnto it, but wander in their owne crooked paths.

Heere then are condemned all ſuch means to obtaine ſaluation by, as men haue forged vnto themſelues, without Gods word; and are therefore called *vnprofitable coſts*. For by *ſilver*, he vnderſtands all induſtrie, ſtudie, and paines of men: not that God eſteemes a ruſh of all that which wee offer him in vaine to ſerue him; but in regard the ſenſe of the fleſh eſteemes thoſe labours very precious, which we haue fooliſhly taken vp.

By the word *bread*, hee vnderſtands that which he ſaid before touching *waters*: and by *labour*, that which he called *ſilver*. As if he ſhould ſay; Men wearie themſelues much for nothing. For when they follow their inuentions, they muſt looke for no reward, though they vex and martyr themſelues neuer ſo much. Therefore the Prophet ſaith, that thoſe who *labour inconſiderately*, ſhall *neuer be ſatisfied*. For if they forſake God, to ſeeke out new meanes of ſaluation, they ſhall neuer be filled, becauſe, as *Hoſea* ſaith, they are fed with wind. Chap. 12. 1. They may well ſeeme to be full, whileſt a vaine conceit blinfolds them; but they ſhall be like thoſe, who being ſwollen *with wind, feele not their hunger*. And yet it were much better for them to bee ſo pinched with hunger and thirſt, that they might thereby be prouoked to cry earneſtlie vnto the Lord to be filled: according to that in Pſalme 63. 2. *My ſoule thirſteth for thee, like the dry ground*. But bread or water alone, would not ſuffice to fill vs, neither can our life bee ſuſtained with one of them. That is the reaſon then why the Prophet hath vſed *diuers words*, to ſhew that God furniſheth vs with all things abundantly, that are neceſſary to preſerue life, leſt we ſhould vſe any vnlawfull ſhifts to ſuccour our ſelues elſewhere.

But becauſe euery one ruſheth himſelfe into error by his owne counſels; and all hauing forſaken God, doe vaniſh away in their owne peruerſe imaginations, the Prophet heere addes a remedy, namely, that we whollie depend vpon the *mouth of God*. For whoſoeuer ſubmits himſelfe vnto *his* word, needes neuer feare that hee hath miſpent his time. And heere we ſee a wonderfull goodneſſe of God, in that he offers his grace, though men be vnthankfull and vnworthy of it.

Yet notwithſtanding he addes *a condition*, for the entrance into life, cannot bee made, vnleſſe wee giue *eare* vnto him. And as the cauſe of our ruine is, that we ſtop our eares againſt Gods word: ſo the way to heauen is open vnto vs, if wee *hearken vnto him diligently*. He repeates the ſame admonition againe, the better to moue our affections: and redoubles the word, *Heare, in hearkening*. And that hee might the better win vs with ſweete allurements, he proteſts the fault to be our owne, if we be not fully ſatisfied with all ſorts of good things.

Verſ. 3. *Incline your eares and come to mee: heare, and your ſoule ſhall liue: and I will make an euerlaſting couenant with you*, euen *the ſure mercies of Dauid.*

The ground of Gods couenant.

BY this heape of words wee may the better conceiue of that which I haue ſaid before, namely, that God omits no meanes to awaken and correct our dulneſſe: and yet heere is a reprehenſion. For it muſt needs be granted that ſuch are too drowzie headed, who being ſo louingly called, doe not forthwith yeelde their obedience. An excellent place: which ſhewes that our happineſſe conſiſts in that obedience which wee ought to yeeld vnto the word. Now when he ſpeakes thus, his meaning is, to bring vs to ſaluation: and therefore the fault reſts wholly in our ſelues; for wee contemne this ſauing & quickening word. Moreouer, if God ſhould onely command vs to doe that he hath inioined vs, hee ſhould therein ſhew vs the way indeede how to obtaine life, but yet without any profit to vs. For the law, as it comes forth of Gods mouth, is the miniſter of death, 2. Cor. 3. 7. but when he *calles vs to himſelfe*, and adopts vs for his children, when he promiſeth remiſſion of ſinnes and ſanctification; this cauſeth them which *heare*, to receiue *life* of him. We are the

to consider what kinde of doctrine it is that hath *life* in it, that we may therein seeke our saluation.

From this place also we gather, that there is no hope of saluation, vnlesse we be obedient to God and his word: and by this all men are conuinced, so as they can pretend no cause of ignorance; for he that vouchsafes not to *heare*, shall neuer be able to alleage one sound reason for his owne defence. But, as I haue said, these repetitions set forth the patience of God in calling vs. For he summons vs not for once only; but if he perceiue that we be slow, he admonisheth vs the second, yea, the third time, that he might ouercome our stubbornnes. He reiects not those then at the first which disdaine him; but after he hath many times allured them.

The nature of faith.

Furthermore heere is expressed the nature of faith, when he commands vs to *come vnto him*: for wee must so *heare the Lord*, that the fruit thereof may also follow. Those also who receiue the word of God in faith do cast away their lusts, and reiect the world wherewith they were fast bound, that they may willingly draw neere vnto God, and that with much ioy and gladnes of heart. Yet faith can not be conceiued without hearing, Rom.10.17. that is to say, without vnderstanding of the word, and therefore he commands vs to *encline our eare* before we *come*. When mention shall be made of faith then, let vs remember that it must be ioined to the word, in which it hath her foundation.

1 2

Gods word the ground of faith.

Where he addes, *and I will make a couenant*: some demaund, whether God had not made a perpetual couenant with the Iewes before: for he seemes to promise a new and vnaccustomed thing heere. I answere, he promiseth no new thing, but that which God had before contracted with the people, and therefore it is but a renuing and a confirmation of the couenant, to the end the Iewes should not thinke that Gods promise was abolished, though they saw themselues so long banished. For whilst they were driuen out of that countrie which was promised and giuen them, being without the Temple, and without the sacrifices, and had no marks at all left, but the couenant of Circumcision; who would not haue thought but that God had vtterly shaken them off? *Isaiah* then hath fitted this phrase of speech as you see to the capacitie of the people, that they might know how the couenant of God made with their fathers was firme, stable, and eternall, and neither mutable nor temporarie.

Quest.

Ans.

He signifies the same thing by the *mercies of Dauid*: but by this clause he shewes that the couenant is free, because it hath its foundation laid in nothing but in the *meere goodnes* of God. As oft then as wee meete with this word *Conenans* in the Scriptures, wee must therewithall call to minde the word *mercie*, or grace.

Couenant, and mercie, must alwaies be matched together.

Now he pronounceth he will be *faithfull* therein: and forthwith he signifies, that he will be found true and constant, so that none shall be able to charge him with double dealing, as if he had broken his couenant. Nay, the Iewes themselues rather were become trecherous and disloyall, in regard they had reuolted from him: for, he for his part can not repent himselfe touching the promise or couenant, which he had made.

He calles them mercies of *Dauid*, because this couenant which was now so solemnly confirmed, was made *in Dauids hand*. True it is that the Lord made the couenant first with *Abraham*, Gen.15.5. and 17.7. and afterwards confirmed it by *Moses*, Exod.3.15. and lastly he established and ratified it in the hand of *Dauid*, 2.Sam.7.12. that it might continue for euer. When the Iewes then thought of the redeemer, that is to say, of their saluation, they were to remember *Dauid* as the mediator, representing the person of Christ. For *Dauid* must not be considered heere as a priuate man, but with that title & person aboue mentioned.

1 2 3

Dauid, a figure of Christ.

The time also is to be noted, for the dignitie of the kingdome being extinct vnder this captiuitie of Babylon, and the royall title obscured and prophaned, it might seeme that the truth of God was abolished in the ruine of this familie. He therefore commands them *by faith* to looke vnto that *royall seate of Dauid*, which for a time was throwne downe.

See Psal.89. 38. &c.

Vers. 4. *Behold I gaue him for a witnes to the people, for* * *a Prince and a master vnto the people.*

* Or, a Leader.

NOw the Prophet explanes that yet better which he briefly mentioned before touching *Dauid*, to wit, because the promise of the redeemer was made to him; and that this speech therefore was fitlie applied to his person, in regard he was the pledge of the couenant: for he was not placed in that office to performe his owne affaires, but was set there as the mediator betweene God and the people. Notwithstanding, it is certaine that *Isaiah* brings vs directly vnto Christ, to whom wee may easily descend from *Dauid*: as if he should say, *this successor of Dauid shall come*, by whose hand perfect saluation and felicitie is promised. And in calling him a *witnes*, he signifies that the couenant by him contracted shal be ratified & established in Christ. There is great weight in this word *witnes* then: for the Prophet shewes, that this couenant shall be approued in Christ, through whom Gods truth shall be manifested, because he shall testifie that God is true.

An explanation of the former verse in this, and the verse following.

Wee must descend from Dauid, to Christ.

A witnes.

But this testimonie consists in doctrine, for without it we should receiue but little profit by Christs comming, in which sense it is said in Psal.2.7. *I will preach the decree*. And in the same sense *Isaiah* in Chap.49.2. saith, *that Christs mouth should be like a sword*, or, *an arrow*. For this cause also he calles him a *Leader*, and a *Master*, that to him and to his *doctrine audience* might be giuen: for if we *heare* him not speake, nor with certaine affiance imbrace that which he saith vnto vs touching the good will of his Father, his power is abolished. For after this sort the name of Christ makes a great sound among the Papists: but seeing they will not receiue him for their *Doctor and Master*,

A Leader.

A Master.

Maſter, but onely acknowledge him in name, their brags which they make thereof, are but vaine and ridiculous.

These words, *to the peoples*, are added by way of amplification: for the Church could neither bee eſtabliſhed in her firſt dignitie, nor get increaſes, but by the vocation of the Gentiles. It was therefore neceſſary that the voice of Chriſt ſhould ſound thorow all the quarters of the world, becauſe he is ordained to be the *witneſs, conductor, and teacher* of all mankind.

Verſ. 5. *Behold, thou ſhalt call a nation that thou knoweſt not; and a nation that knew not thee ſhall runne vnto thee, becauſe of the Lord thy God, and the holie one of Iſrael: for he hath glorifiſied thee.*

Iſaiah expounds that now at large, which he touched before but in a word: for hee ſhewes that *Chriſt* ſhall be the conducter, not of one people onely, but *of all*. *To call* heere, notes out the poſſeſſion: ſo as there is a correſpondencie betweene the word *To call*, and, to anſwere. Chriſt then being *called* by authoritie, as hee which is furniſhed with a ſoueraigne power, hee *calles* the nations to bring them in order touching their duties, and to ſubiect them to the word. Now he ſaith they ſhall be readie to obey, though they were not *knowne* of him: not that the Sonne of God who created them, knew them not what they were, Pſal. 94. 9. but it is ſpoken in regard they were reiected and deſpiſed, vntill they beganne to haue a place in the Church: for God had particularly called the Iewes; and the Gentiles ſeemed to be vtterly excluded, as if they had nothing at all appertained vnto them. But now, ſpeaking to Chriſt, he promiſeth that he ſhall conſtraine them to obey, though before they were wholly eſtranged from vnder his dominion.

Afterwards, he declares this more plainely in the progreſſe of the text, where indeed he vſeth the plurall number, that he might the better ſhew that the Church ſhall be gathered out of diuers nations: ſo as thoſe who were ſeparated and ſcattered, ſhould now be aſſembled into one body: for the word, *ſhall runne*, is to be referred to the conſenting of faith.

Moreouer, he ſaith heere, that the Gentiles *haue not knowne*: but it is to be take otherwiſe then that which he ſaid before, namely, that Chriſt *knew nowthem*: for ignorance is properly attributed to the prophane and vnbeleeuers, in regard they are deprined of the heauenly doctrine, without which we ſhall neuer know God. And howſoeuer this knowledge is naturally ingrauen in the hearts of all, yet it is ſo obſcure & confuſed, and wrapped in ſo many errors, that if the light of the word bee not added thereunto, whileſt they know God, they ſhall be ignorant of him, and not know him at all, but ſhall miſerably erre in darkneſſe.

A teſtimony touching the vocation of the Gentiles.

Wee haue heere an excellent teſtimonie then touching the *vocation of the Gentiles*: for whom Chriſt is ordained a redeemer, as well as for the Iewes. Whence alſo we gather, that God hath now care of vs, if wee will ſubmit our ſelues vnder his gouernment: ſo as hee will not onely watch ouer vs, as he doth ouer the reſt of his creatures, but as a father that is vigilant ouer his children. The word *ſhall runne*, doth better expreſſe the efficacy of this vocation: for the end thereof is, that we may obey God, in yeelding our ſelues reachable with a ready and glad heart in his preſence, and willingly to receiue from his mouth, the leaſt of his commandements. For as S. *Paul* ſaith, Rom. 1. 5. and 16. 26. Obedience is the end of our vocation. But becauſe the Gentiles were farre eſtranged from God, it was neceſſary they ſhould valiantly inforce themſelues to breake thorow all impediments, to draw neere vnto him.

Becauſe of the Lord.] *Iſaiah* ſhewes from what fountaine this willingneſſe and cheerfull alacritie ſhall ſpring, namely, the Gentiles ſhall know they haue to doe with *God*. For if we conſider Chriſt as man onely, his doctrine will not much moue vs: but if we apprehend *God* in him, we ſhall be inflamed with a wonderfull affection. Now he is heere deſcribed vnto vs as a Miniſter, ordained of God to perfect his worke. For in taking vpon him our nature, he therewithall tooke vpon him the forme of a ſeruant: and in this behalfe it is no diſparagement to him to ſee him ſubiected vnto the Father, as one of vs.

Moreouer, we are to remember that which we haue often touched before, touching the coniunction of the head with the members. For that which is ſaid of Chriſt, appertaines to his whole body: and therefore glorification is common to the whole Church. I grant that Chriſt alwaies holds the ſoueraigne degree: for being highly exalted, he rules ouer the whole world, to the end all nations may *runne* vnto him. To conclude, the Prophet ſhewes that men yeeld obedience to Chriſt, and ſubmit themſelues to his doctrine, becauſe God hath exalted him, and would that his excellencie ſhould bee acknowledged of all men: for otherwiſe, the preaching of the Goſpell would profit very little, vnleſſe God gaue efficacie to the doctrine, by the power of his holy Spirit.

Verſ. 6. *Seeke the Lord whileſt hee may be found: call ye vpon him whileſt he is neere.*

The Gentiles ſet before the Iewes, to prouoke them to follow them.

HAuing ſpoken of the fruit of the Goſpell among the Gentiles, who were before eſtranged from Gods kingdome, he now pricks forward the Iewes, that they may be aſhamed to ſleepe whileſt others *runne*: for ſeeing they were firſt called, it were a ſhame for them to come lag. This exhortation therefore properly belongs to the Iewes, before whom *Iſaiah* ſets the example of the Gentiles, that hee might prouoke them to follow them: which the Lord alſo had foretold, namely,

that he would prouoke the Iewes to iealousie by a foolish nation: Deut. 32. 21.

The time *To find*, is not taken altogether in the same sense heere, as it is in the 32. Psalme: but for that time wherein God offers himselfe; as in other places he hath set down a certaine limited day, within the compasse whereof his fauour and saluation shall bee found. And yet I grant that *Isaiah* also notes the time wherein necessitie presseth vs to aske helpe of God: but we must principallie remember *that God is sought in a fit time, vvhen himselfe comes forth to meete vs*; for it shall be in vaine for the drowzie and sleepie to bewaile the losse of that grace, which themselues haue wittingly reiected. The Lord beares with our slothfulnes for a time, and patiently waits for vs; but if he gets nothing by it, hee will leaue vs, and bestow his grace vpon others. Christ therefore admonisheth vs to walke whilest it is day, because the night will come, in which wee can walke no more forward: Iohn 12. 37.

Hence wee are to gather a singular consolation, namely, that we are heere assured not to lose our time in seeking God: *Seeke*, saith Christ, and you shall *finde*; *knocke*, and it shall be *opened*; *aske*, and you shall receiue: Matth. 7. 7.

The word *call*, may be taken heere generally: but I thinke hee notes out a particular seeking of God, such an one as is principall aboue others: as if he commanded vs to haue recourse vnto him by praiers and supplications. Now hee then shewes himselfe to bee *neere*, when hee summons vs familiarly vnto him, in opening the gate, or presents himselfe before vs, to the end we should not wander hither and thither to seeke him.

While he is neere.] Saint *Pauls* distinction is to bee noted, who saith, the preaching of the Gospell is signified by these words: Rom. 10. 10. The Lord is *neere*, and offers himselfe vnto vs, when the voice of the Gospel sounds in our eares. Neither ought we to seeke him a far off, nor to fetch many circuits, as the vnbeleeuers doe: for he presents himselfe vnto vs in his word, to the end wee for our parts may draw *neere* vntó him.

How God is said to be neer vnto vs.

Vers. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his waies, and the vnrighteous his owne imaginations, and returne vnto the Lord, and hee will haue mercie vpon him: and to our God, for he is *very readie to forgiue.*

*abundant in pardon.

A confirmation of the former sentence.

HE confirmes the former sentence: for hauing called men to receiue Gods grace, he at large describes the way how to recouer the same. We know how the hypocrites yell and cry with open mouth after God, when they would bee succoured in their miseries, and in the meane while they harden their hearts through a wicked obstinacie. That the Iews then might not disguise themselues in seeking of God, *Isaiah* exhorts them to true pietie. Whence wee gather, that the doctrine of repentance ought perpetually to be ioined with the promise of saluation: for men can neuer taste Gods goodnesse, vnlesse first of all they bee displeased in themselues for their sinnes, and haue both *renounced the vvorld, and themselues also*. For no man will euer in good earnest desire to be reconciled vnto God, nor to obtaine remission of his sinnes, vnlesse he be touched with a true and sound repentance.

The doctrine of repentace must alwaies be ioined with the promises of saluation.

The Prophet describes the nature of repentance three waies, or by three phrases of speech; *Let the vvicked forsake his vvaies, and the vnrighteous his imaginations*; and then, *let him returne vnto the Lord*. Vnder the word *vvay*, he comprehends the whole course of our liues: and thus hee requires that they bring forth fruits of righteousnesse, to shew their newnesse of life. In adding *thoughts*; he signifies that it is not enough to correct the outward actions, but that wee must begin at the heart. For though according to mens iudgements, we haue as it seemes, changed our life from worse to better, yet wee haue indeed made but a weak beginning, if the heart be not first changed. Repentance therfore cõtaines in it the change of the whole man. Wherein wee haue first to consider the *imagination*, then the *deliberations*, and lastly, *the outward actions*. Men see the actions: but the roote from whence they proceed, is hidden within the heart: it behoueth therefore that it bee first renued, that afterward from thence there may flow forth fruitfull workes. First the *vnderstanding* must be clensed from all the filthinesse that is in it: and then must we cast off the wicked *affections and lusts*, that from thence, outward testimonies may afterward manifest themselues. If any one boast that hee is changed, and yet liues a disordered life; his reioicing is vaine: for these two things must be required together, to wit, *the conuersion of the heart*, and *the change of the life*.

The nature of repentãce described.

Note.

The conuersion of the heart, and the change of the life must go together.

Besides, God calles vs not to *turne* to him, till the former reuolt be amended. For hypocrites would be well enough contented that that which they doe should be praised, so they might still bee suffered to rot in their filthinesse: but we can haue no acquaintance with God, vnlesse we come forth of our selues, especially when we haue estranged our selues from him, by a wicked backsliding: wherefore the renouncing of our selues, goes before our reconciliation with God.

The renouncing of our selues, goes before our reconciliatiõ with God.

And he vvill haue mercy.] This knitting togerher of the text ought to be diligently noted. For it shewes that men can neuer bee brought to repentance, but by setting before them the assurance of the remission of sins. Whosoeuer preacheth the doctrine of repentance then, without mentioning Gods mercie, and the free reconciliation, he loseth his labour. For we see how our Popish Doctors thinke they haue wel discharged their duties, when they haue long insisted vpon the former point: and yet in the meane while, they doe but babble and lie in preaching this doctrine. Yea, though they should teach the true way to repentance, yet would it bee to small purpose, seeing they omit the foundation

Remission of sinnes must not be separated from the doctrine of repentace.

tion of free remiſſion of ſinnes which only appeaſeth conſciences. Truly the guiltie ſinner will alwaies flee the preſence of God (as we haue ſaid in another place) as long as he ſhall be haled before his iudgement ſeate to yeeld an accoũt, neither will he euer be humbled to obey, nor feare, till his conſcience be at reſt. Now becauſe it is a difficult matter to quiet terrified conſciences, *Iſaiah* drawes an argument from the nature of God, ſaying, that he will be mercifull, and *abundant in pardoning*. The holy Ghoſt inſiſts long vpõ this point of doctrine, becauſe wee alwaies doubt whether God will pardon vs or no. For howſoeuer we haue ſome opinion of his mercie, yet dare we not perſwade our ſelues ſo aſſuredly that it belongs vnto vs as wee ought. You ſee it is not without cauſe that the Prophet addes this member, becauſe he thereby labors to diſpoſſeſſe our minds of that trembling which is incident vnto vs, as oft as we ſtand in doubt of his infinite mercie towards vs.

Gods nature deſcribed.

Why the holy Ghoſt inſiſts ſo lõg vpon this doctrine.

Verſ. 8. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your waies my waies, ſaith the Lord.*

9. *For as the heauens are higher then the earth, ſo are my waies higher then your waies, and my thoughts aboue your thoughts.*

Gods affection diſtinguiſhed from ours.

FOr my thoughts.] This place is diuerſlie expounded. Some thinke that mens conuerſation is here condemned in generall, to the end they ſhould not pleaſe themſelues therein, nor flatter themſelues in their vices, becauſe there is no acceſſe vnto God, vnleſſe we be emptied of this vaine opinion of our own righteouſnes. For none will ſeeke after the Phyſition, but ſuch as feele themſelues vehementlie ſick, and that deſire both the remedie and their health. And therfore they compare this place with that in Luk. 16. 15. That which is highly eſteemed before men, is an abomination in the ſight of God. But I think the Prophet hath another meaning. Thoſe therefore who thinke that Gods affection is heere diſtinguiſhed from humane affections, expound it beſt (as I thinke.) For men are wont to meaſure God by their owne ell (as they ſay) and becauſe themſelues are irreconciliable, and can not be pacified but with much adoe: they in like maner thinke that God can neuer be appeaſed, after they haue once offended him. But the Lord ſhewes that he reſembles them nothing at all. As if he ſhould ſay, I am not a mortall man that I ſhould be ſo ſeuere, and an enemie to you for euer: no, *my thoughts* are farre vnlike yours, for though it be impoſſible for you to be pacified, and that it be an hard matter to bring you to be reconciled with thoſe which haue offended you, yet it is not ſo with me, I will not ſhew my ſelfe ſo inhumane towards you. To this agrees very well that place of *Dauid*, Pſal. 103. where deſcribing Gods *mercie*, hee ſaith, *that it is higher then the heauens are aboue the earth*: and though the application be to another purpoſe there, yet the ſenſe is all one with this. In a word, there is none ſo gracious, or ſo inclined to mercie as the Lord is, and therefore we muſt impute it to our owne diffidence, if we obtaine not *pardon* of him.

We muſt impute it to our owne vnbeliefe, if we obtaine not pardon at Gods hand.

Now there is nothing which troubles our conſciences more, then when we thinke God reſembles vs, for this makes vs afraid to draw neere vnto him: nay, we rather flee from him as our enemie, and can neuer be in any reſt. So thoſe who meaſure God according to that which they conceiue of him, doe indeed conceiue a flat Idoll directlie contrarie to the nature of God, neither can they do him a greater diſhonor then this. Are not men who are corrupt, and ſtuffed full with inordinate luſts aſhamed to compare the moſt pure nature of God with theirs? and to impriſon him that is infinite within ſo narrow bounds, wherein they feele themſelues miſerablie enthralled? For in what more noyſome dungeon can any of vs be incloſed, then within our owne infidelitie? I take it that this is the Prophets true and naturall meaning; and yet I denie not but he had ſome reſpect to mens maners, namely ſuch as he hath deſcribed them in the former verſe.

To be ſhort, his meaning is, that men muſt forget themſelues when they meane to turne to God, becauſe there is no impediment ſo dangerous as when we thinke him to be irreconciliable. Let vs remoue this falſe imagination then out of our minds.

Beſides, by this place it appeares how farre they are out of the way, which abuſe Gods mercie to take the greater libertie to ſinne. For ſee how the Prophet argues; *Repent; forſake your vvicked vvaies, becauſe Gods mercie is infinite*. When men doubt or deſpaire whether they ſhall obtaine pardon or no, this makes them more wicked and ſtubborne; but the feeling of mercie drawes and conuerts them. It followes then that ſuch as neither forſake their leaud life, nor change their minds, haue no part in this *mercie*.

Verſ. 7. *Verſ. 8.*

Verſ. 10. *Surely as the raine commeth downe and the ſnow from heauen, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may giue ſeede to the ſower, and bread vnto him that eateth.*

To the commendation of Gods mercifull nature, he addes a promiſe that our faith might be the more ſurely ſtaied.

HAuing ſpoken of the tender affection and incredible loue which God beares vs, he again placeth promiſes in the middle, that ſo being grounded vpon them, we might be aſſured to paſſe ſafe and ſound through all dangers. For it would ſerue to little purpoſe that one ſhould deſcribe vnto vs the nature of God, or informe vs of his ſecret counſell, if therewithall wee were not brought to the word, wherein the ſame is manifeſted: but God ſpeakes plainely and familiarly vnto vs, ſo as we haue no neede to enquire further. We muſt therefore come to the word, which plainely opens his will vnto vs, if ſo be we will containe all our ſenſes within the bounds of it, for otherwiſe we ſhall alwaies remaine

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in ſuſpence, and doubt what ſhall become of vs, though the Lord ſhould tell vs an hundred times that he reſembles men nothing at all. And yet men (if they would confeſſe the truth) do deſire to be certaine of their ſaluation, and to know what ſhould befall them afterward. We are therefore to obſerue this order well which the Prophet heere keepes. And thus *Moſes* brought the people to the knowledge of the word, ſaying, Aske not who ſhall aſcend vp into heauen, or who ſhall deſcend into the deepe, for the word is neere thee in thy mouth and in thine heart, Deut. 30.12. and this is the word of faith (ſaith *Paul*) Rom. 10.10. which we preach.

Now the Prophet borrowes a ſimilitude here from a thing ordinarie amongſt vs, and it is exceeding fit for his purpoſe: for if wee ſee ſo great efficacie in the *raine* which waters and fattens the earth, much more will the Lord manifeſt his power in his word: for the raine vaniſheth, and is ſubiect to corruption, but the word is immortall, immutable, and incorruptible, and cannot conſume away as the raine doth.

But that we may the better vnderſtand the Prophets words, wee are to ſearch out his drift. Men doubt whether God will accompliſh that which hee hath promiſed in his word; for wee thinke his word hangs in the ayre without any effect: but by the *very order of nature* hee ſhewes, how deteſtable this opinion is. For it is too abſurd a thing to attribute *life to the word, then to an inſenſible creature:* and therefore hee teacheth, that *the vvord is neuer vvithout his effect*. Some vnderſtand it, as if the preaching of the Goſpell were neuer in vaine, but that it alwaies brings forth ſome fruit. Which I grant to be atruth, for the Lord workes by his Spirit, & giues increaſe, 1. Cor. 3.7. that the labour of his Miniſters may not be in vaine. But the Prophet meant another matter, namely, that God caſts not the ſeede of his word vpon the ground, without effect, neither ſcatters hee his promiſes in the ayre, but we ſhall gather the fruit thereof, if ſo be wee reſiſt him not by our owne incredulitie. Now hee mentions two effects of the raine, which makes the earth fruitfull by falling vpon it: First, that men may thereby haue
1 plentie of *food* to ſuſtaine them: ſecondly,
2 *ſeed to ſow*: the benefit whereof, is to be reaped the yeere following. If then Gods power bee ſo great in things tranſitorie, how much more effectuall may wee thinke his word is?

Verſ. 11. *So ſhall my word bee, that goeth out of my mouth: it ſhall not returne vnto me void, but it ſhall accompliſh that which I will, and it ſhall proſper in the thing whereto I ſent it.*

God ſpeakes to vs by men.

THe *vvord goes* ſo out of *Gods mouth*, that it alſo goes forth of the mouthes of men: for God *ſpeakes not* from heauen, but vſeth men as his inſtruments to declare his will by their miniſtrie. But the authoritie of the promiſes is better confirmed vnto vs, when wee heare that they proceede out of the *ſacred* mouth of God. Although then that hee vſe witneſſes on earth, yet hee teſtifies, that whatſoeuer they ſhall promiſe in his name, ſhall bee ratified and confirmed afterwards, before him. And that he might the better ingraue in mens mindes, the power and efficacie of preaching, he aduertiſeth vs that hee ſcattereth not this precious ſeede at randon, but hath ordained it *to a certaine end*; in regard whereof, no man is to doubt of the effect. For there is nothing whereunto men are more inclined, then to iudge of God according to their owne fantaſies, that ſo they may reiect his word. It was needfull therefore that this doctrine ſhould bee often repeated and beaten into our heads, that wee might know how God will ſurely performe that which he hath once ſaid. As oft then as wee heare of Gods promiſes, let vs conſider what his meaning is in them: as when hee promiſeth free remiſſion of ſinnes, let vs aſſure our ſelues of reconciliation through Chriſt. But as the word of God is powerfull to ſaue the faithfull, ſo hath it alſo his efficacie to condemne the wicked: which Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe affirmes, Iohn 12.48. The word which I haue ſpoken, that ſhall iudge in the laſt day.

We muſt haue an eye to Gods intention in his promiſes.
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Verſ. 12. *Therefore ſhall yee goe out with ioy, and bee led forth with peace: the mountaines and the hilles ſhall breake forth before you into ioy, and all the trees of the field ſhall clappe* their *hands.*

NOw the Prophet concludes the argument of this Chapter: for that which he hath ſpoken touching Gods mercy, tended to aſſure the Iews, that God would deliuer them. Now he applies his diſcourſe touching Gods infinite goodneſſe to his purpoſe, and ſhews, that his *thoughts* are nothing like to the thoughts of men. Take a paterne heere then of a right order of teaching, namely, when we apply generall doctrines, to the preſent vſe.

The concluſion in this and the verſe following.

A right form of teaching.

Laſtly, *Iſaiah* ſpeakes of the peoples reſtitution, which depended vpon the free mercy of God.

By *mountaines* and *hilles*, he ſignifies, that all ſtumbling blocks which ſhould lie in the way, ſhould notwithſtanding ceaſe to aid thoſe that ſhould returne vnto Ieruſalem. Theſe are ſimilitudes then whereby hee ſhewes that all creatures are at Gods becke, and are ready to imploy themſelues to ſet forward his worke: yea and *reioice* to doe it.

He alludes to the deliuerance out of Egypt, according to the cuſtome of the Prophets: for ſo it is written in Pſal. 114. The *mountaines leaped like Rammes, and the hils as lambes:* What ailed thee O ſea, that thou fleddeſt backe? O Iordan, why waſt thou turned backe? For in regard that the reſtauration of the church is as it were a renuing of the whole world, it is ſaid, that heauen and earth are changed, as if they had quite altered their ordinarie courſe,

All creatures at Gods becke.

courſe. All this depended vpon the former prophecies, by which they had a promiſe touching their returne.

Verſ. 13. *For thornes, there ſhall grow firre trees: for nettles, ſhall grow the mirrhe tree; and it ſhall bee to the Lord for a name*, and *for an euerlaſting ſigne that ſhall not bee taken away.*

AGaine hee extolles Gods power, which ſhould appeare in the peoples deliuerance: for he teacheth that there ſhall be ſuch a change, that the way ſhall bee made verie eaſie for their returne. Some expound this allegorically; and by *thornes*, vnderſtand that ſuch as indeuour to hurt and hinder others, ſhould now become *firre trees*: that is to ſay, bearing fruit, and bringing profite to their neighbours: but this expoſition is too curious. I denie not but theſe things indeed appertaine to Chriſts kingdome, and therefore ought to be ſpiritually vnderſtood. For the Prophet beginnes at the returne from Babylon, and comprehends the whole eſtate of the Church, vntil the manifeſtation of Chriſt to the world. But it doth not therefore follow that this allegorie is any thing to the purpoſe, becauſe *Iſaiah* ſpeakes of the peoples returne into Iudea. For, that they might the better paſſe, the Lord promiſeth to remoue all impediments out of the way, and would furniſh them with all things neceſſarie, that ſo they might bee free from all annoiances.

And ſo, when Chriſt promiſeth the benefit of our redemption, he therewithall takes away whatſoeuer thing might hurt or hinder the ſame: nay, he turnes it wholly the contrarie way, that out of euery euil we might draw ſome good: for all things turne to the beſt (as *Paul* ſaith) to them that loue God: Rom. 8. 27. And thus God vſeth the moſt *hurtfull* and dangerous *euils, as remedies to purge the faithfull*, that they may not giue ouer themſelues to the loue of the world, but may bee made the more liuely, and ready to performe the will of their Maſter.

All things fall out for the beſt to them that loue God.

When he addes that this ſhall be *for a name to the Lord*, it is to ſhew the end of the Churches reſtitution; namely, that Gods *name* might bee the more praiſed among men, and that the memory thereof might flouriſh, and bee conſerued. And therefore hee addes, *for a ſigne*: that is to ſay, for a teſtimonie, or for a perpetuall memoriall. Although the Church floate then, and bee diuerſly toſſed among theſe waues and tempeſts, yet ſeeing the Lord is purpoſed that the *memorie of his name* ſhall laſt *for euer*, hee will both defend and maintaine her.

THE LVI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Thus ſaith the Lord; Keepe iudgement and iuſtice: for my ſaluation is at hand to come, and my righteouſneſſe to be reuealed.*

In the former verſes God hath manifeſted the ſignes of his fauour towards vs: now he ſhewes what duties wee owe to him.

THIS is a notable place. For the Prophet ſhewes what God requires of vs, as ſoone as he manifeſts the ſignes of his fauour, or promiſeth to bee recõciled vnto vs, to the end our peace may be aſſured. The thing he requires of vs, is ſuch a conuerſion as changeth both our *iudgements* and *affections*: ſo as hauing forſaken the world, wee forthwith aſpire vnto heauen: and therewithall hee requires the fruits of repentance.

Vnder the words *iudgement* and *iuſtice*, hee comprehends all the duties of charity, which conſiſts not onely in abſtaining from euill, but in doing good to our neighbours, according to our abilities. And this is the ſumme of the ſecond table; in the obſeruation whereof, we giue teſtimonie of our pietie, if there bee any at all in vs. The Prophets alwaies bring vs thither: for by this meanes it will quickly appeare what we are within: and the true integritie of the heart is thus diſcerned, from thoſe outward ceremonies wherein hypocrites pleaſe themſelues; as wee haue ſhewed heeretofore. Now he renders a reaſon, and forthwith ſhewes the beginning from whence all muſt frame themſelues to newneſſe of life; namely, that in as much as Gods *iuſtice is at hand* to bee reuealed to vs, we in like manner ought to preſent him *with ours*.

our iuſtice towards men.

The ſumme of the ſecond Table.

God often tries our loue to him, by

The Lord calles himſelfe *iuſt*, and ſaith that iuſtice is *his*; not that hee holds it ſhut vp in himſelfe; but becauſe he ſheds it abroad vpon men. He alſo calles that *his ſaluation*, by which he deliuers men from deſtruction.

Beſides, howſoeuer theſe words be directed to the Iewes, that with a ſincere affection of heart, and with an vnfeined deſire of godlines, they might ſhew themſelues thankfull to their redeemer; yet it alſo belongs to vs all in generall: for the whole world is loſt in it ſelfe, vnleſſe it recouer *ſaluation* in God. Let vs alſo note this exhortation; for thereby we are taught to be ſo much the more moued to the true feare of God, as we are neere vnto him: and therefore Saint *Paul* admoniſheth the faithfull, to caſt off the workes of darkneſſe, and to put on the armour of light; becauſe our ſaluation is neerer vs then wee be aware of: Rom. 13. 12.

Verſ. 2. *Bleſſed is the man that doth this,*

this, and the sonne of man which layeth hold on it: he that keepeth the Sabbath,
* Or, violates it not. *and * polluteth it not, and keepeth his hand from doing any euill.*

To the duties of the second Table vers 1. he now adds those of the first.

IN calling them *blessed*, who hauing imbraced this doctrine, doe submit themselues vnto God, walking in vprightnes, he closely insinuates, that there are many deafe, or vnteachable. But to the end their peruersitie or sluggishnes might not discourage the faithfull, he recommends his exhortation to them by the fruite which comes thereof. That the faithfull then should not recoile back, but casting off all impediments, they might readily prepare themselues to walke vprightly, he cries out that such only are *blessed*, to whom grace is giuen to be thus wise-hearted.

Obiect. In the former verse we haue said that the duties of the second Table were comprised vnder the words of *Iustice* and *Iudgement*. But heere he mentions the *Sabbath*, which appertaines to the first Table.

Ans. I answere (as I haue touched before) that such as liue innocentlie and iustlie with their neighbours, doe giue good testimonie of their sincerities towards God. It is no wonder then if after the Prophet hauing spoken of the second Table, he now mentions the first, because they must be ioined both together. In a word, *Isaiah* meant to say, that he shall be an *happie man* who submits himselfe vnto God in the obseruation of the whole law, for to such an one the *righteousnes* and *saluation* of God belongs, vers. 1.

The duties of both Tables must goe together.

But because men wander and erre in their imaginations, and seeke diuers meanes how to draw neere vnto God, the Prophet shewes that there is but one way, namely, when we studie how to order and rule our liues according to the Decalogue. Besides, heere is an excellent place, for it teacheth vs, that nothing is pleasing vnto God, but the obseruation of his commandements.

Quest. If it be asked whether men can obtaine *righteousnes* and *saluation* by works;

Ans. the answere is easie: for the Lord offers vs not saluation as being preuented by our merits (nay he rather preuents vs) but he offers himselfe freely to vs, and only requires that wee draw neere vnto him. Seeing then that of his owne good will he calles vs to himselfe, and offers his righteousnes freely, we are to take heed, that we depriue not our selues of so great a benefit.

Now because the *Sabbath* (as it appeares by *Moses* and *Ezechiel*, Exod. 31. 13. 17. Ezech. 20. 13.) was the principall signe of Gods seruice, therefore by the figure Synecdoche it containes in it selfe all the exercises of pietie, a part being taken for the whole. We must vnderstād the Sabbath then, with all his circumstances. For God rests not himselfe contented with the outward ceremonie, neither delights he in our idlenes, but he requires that we freely renounce our selues, that with hart and hand we may yeeld him absolute obedience.

That keepeth his hand &c. The Prophet also addes another Synecdoche in the end of the verse, to note out charitie. The summe is, That God is not serued aright, vnlesse true pietie and innocencie of life goe together: as also vnder these two parts he hath distinguished the maner of well liuing. In a word, here is an exposition of that true righteousnes which is contained in the law of the Lord, that in it we may rest, for in vaine shall any man seeke a way of perfection out of it. This then ouerthrowes all deuised worships, and all superstitions.

Vers. 3. *And let not the sonne of the strāger which is ioined to the Lord speake and say, The Lord hath surely separate me from his people: neither let the Eunuch say, behold, I am a drie tree.*

A preuention of an obiection.

THe Prophet shewes that this grace of God shall be such, that those who were farre off from him before, and against whom the gate was shut, should now obtaine a new estate, or should be placed againe in their right. And thus he meets with their complaints, that they should not say they were reiected, vnworthie, aliants, or shut out for any infamous note; because the Lord would take away all lets and impediments. Now this may 1 be as well referred to the Iewes, whose temporarie reiection had made the like to *strangers*, as to the prophane nations: and for mine owne part, I referre it both to the one and to the other, that so it may agree with the prophesie of *Hosea*, *I will call them my people which were not my people*. Hose. 1. 10. 2

Moreouer when he saith, that they shall be *ioined to the Lord*, it is to admonish them that this consolation only appertained to such as followed the voice of Gods call. For there were many *Eunuches* to whom the Lord shewed no mercie, and many *strangers*, which were not ioined to the Lord. This promise therefore is restrained to those, who being called, should obey. Vnder *strangers* and *Eunuches*, he notes out all such as seemed vnworthie to be reputed among the number of Gods people, who once had chosen them for his peculiar inheritance, and afterwards banished them out of his land. Other nations were shut out of his kingdome, as it appeares in euery place of the holy Scripture. Saint *Paul* saith in the Epistle to the Ephesians, Chap. 2. 12. 13. that the Gentiles had nothing to do in the *Common wealth of Israel*, but were *strangers* from the couenants of promise, without hope, *and without God* in the world; but now in Christ Iesus (saith he) you which were once *farre off*, are *made neere* by the blood of Christ.

Thus then the Gentiles might in the beginning doubt whether this benefit of adoption belonged vnto them or no, seeing it was properly appropriated to the Iewes. And therefore wee see how the Apostles auoided this thing; though the Lord had commanded them to preach the Gospel thorowout all the world: Mark. 16. 15. For they thought the doctrine of the Gospell should haue been prophaned, if they should indifferently publish it as well to the Gentiles, as to the Iewes. And the same scruple might also trouble the minds euen of the elect people, in regard their banishment out of the holy land, was a 2

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ſigne vnto them of their reiection. The Prophet therefore wils them to remoue all ſuch doubts as theſe out of their heads.

Vnder the word *Eunuch*, by the figure Synecdoche, hee comprehends all thoſe that bare any note of infamie vpon them, which might be an occaſion to ſeparate them from Gods people. For it ſeemed that ſ Eunuches, and ſuch as had no children, were reiected of God, and excluded out of the promiſe: wherein he had ſaid to *Abraham*, that *his poſteritie* ſhould be as the ſtarres in the heauens, and as the ſand of the ſea: Gen. 15.5. and 22.17. In a word, he withdrawes all men from the conſideration of themſelues, that they may wholly fix their mindes vpon the calling of God, that thus they might imitate the faith of *Abraham*, who conſidered not his body *now dead*, neither the *deadneſſe* of *Sarahs* wombe, ſo as to enter into any diſpute with himſelfe through his owne incredulitie touching the power of God: but aboue hope, beleeued vnder hope: Rom. 4.18, 19, 20. The Prophet then ſpeakes to the *vile* and *contemptible*, leſt they ſhould be diſcouraged, becauſe, as Saint *Peter* ſaith, *God is no accepter of perſons; but in euery nation, he that feareth God, and vvorketh righteouſneſſe, is accepted of him.* Act. 10.34. 35.

Verſ. 4. *For thus ſaith the Lord vnto the Eunnches that keepe my Sabbaths, and chuſe the thing that pleaſeth me, and take hold of my couenant.*

A confirmation.

NOw followes the confirmation. For the faithfull ſeruants of God which kept the Sabbath, and cleaued to the righteouſneſſe of the Law, ſhould haue place in the Church, although they were Eunuches, or had any other impediment. And thus it ſeemes the Prophet aboliſheth all the externall markes and viſible ceremonies, wherein the Iewes onely gloried. For the dignitie of the new Church is not outward, but ſpirituall: and albeit the faithfull haue no appearance of glorie before the eies of worldlings; nay, they are rather deſpiſed and wronged by them, yet are they of precious eſteeme in the ſight and preſence of God.

The dignitie of the new Church is not externall, but ſpiritual.

When he ioines *obedience* to the obſeruation of the Sabbath: thence we may eaſilie gather, that in ſpeaking of the day of reſt, hee had not ſo much reſpect to the bare ceremonie, as to a perfection of holineſſe. Where againe he impoſeth bands vpon the faithfull, that they ſhould not ſtart the leaſt ſtep from the duties of the whole Law: for it is not permitted them to *chuſe any thing* that likes them, but that which God hath reuealed to be *pleaſing* and acceptable to *him*. Hypocriſie and inconſiderate zeale therefore are here condemned, in that God oppoſeth his commandements to mens inuentions, and inioines them to *take* ſure *hold of his couenant*.

Hypocriſie and inconſiderate zeale condemned.

Verſ. 5. *Euen vnto them will I giue in mine houſe, and within my wallet, a place, and a name better then of the ſonnes and of the daughters: I will giue them an euerlaſting name that ſhall not be put out.*

HEere wee may euidently ſee, that the doore is ſet open for all perſons to enter into Gods kingdome (how vnworthy ſoeuer they be.) The Prophet alludes to *Ieruſalem*, and to the *Temple*, wherein the Lord had put the memoriall of his name. Now none but the Iewes had any place there: for they would haue thought the Temple prophaned, if any Gentiles had come within it. And this, as you know, was the cauſe that ſo great a multitude aroſe againſt Saint *Paul*, who had brought ſome vncircumciſed ones into it: Act. 21. 28. But heere the Lord receiues all thoſe without exception, whom before he had reiected: and hath aboliſhed that difference, by bringing vs, who were ſtrangers, into the *Temple*; that is, into the Church. For it is not now ſhut vp within the bounds of Iudea, as once it was; but it extends it ſelfe farre and neere, thorowout the whole world: as in Marke 16.15.

The word *Iad*, is taken heere, as in many other texts, for *place*. It may alſo be taken for power or authoritie, in regard they are aduanced to ſuch dignitie, as to be held for the children of God. Where hee adds, *a better name*; it may be demanded whether the Lord compares the Iewes which were then in the Church, with the faithfull which afterwards he will call into their roome: or the eſtate of the people to come, with that it was then. For it is certaine that the *name* of the Gentiles is more honourable now, then the name of Iewes, who for their infidelitie were cut off: and we haue ſucceeded them, who being wilde Oliues, were grafted into the naturall ſtocke: as S. *Paul* ſpeakes, Rom. 11.24. We may expound it then, that the Eunuches and *ſtrangers* ſhall haue a better name then the *children*, and thoſe of the houſhold; who were vnto God as his heritage. But I had rather take it in another ſenſe, namely, that the dignitie of the faithfull ſhall be greater vnder Chriſt, then it was vnder the law. The Patriarks had an excellent name, in reſpect that they called vpon God as their Father, and were knit vnto him by (a perpetuall) couenant: but at Chriſts comming, Gods grace was more abundantly ſhed abroad, and therefore we at this day haue obtained a *better*, and much more excellent name then they.

He calles it an *euerlaſting name*, becauſe *it is vvritten in the heauens*, where it ſhall not wither, but ſhall floriſh for euer. The wicked wil haue their names to be remembred in this world, and vſe all the meanes they can that their renowne may continue perpetually: but it is periſhable, and therefore laſts not long. But this is another kind of name; for wee are ſo made heires of the heauenly kingdome, that wee are accounted for Gods children in the preſence of his Angels. The word *Mibhanim*, may alſo be interpreted, for the name which a man gets by meanes of his children: for men make their names after a ſort

perpetuall by their of-spring. Now the Prophet promiseth that this name shall be much more excellent. But I had rather follow the first exposition.

Vers. 6. *Also the strangers that cleaue vnto the Lord, to serue him, and loue the name of the Lord, and to bee his seruants: euery one that keepeth the Sabbath, and polluteth it not, and imbraceth my couenant.*

A repetition. *Vers.* 5.

HEe repeates that he said before, namely, that God will so open the gates of his Temple to all without exception, that there shall be no more distinction betweene Iew and Gentile: but such as the Lord shall call by his word, Act. 2.39. which is the band of our adoption, shall be ioined vnto him. And therefore these are those espousals, *in compassion*, and *faithfulnesse*, whereof *Hosea* speakes, Chap. 2.19,20. Now he not onely allots them an outward court to worship the Lord in, as the people in old time did, Luk. 1.10. but he attributes vnto them a more honourable order, to wit, that God will auow them for Priests and Leuites, which were prophane before.

But the end of their vocation which immediatly followes, is to be noted, namely, that the Prophet saith, they shall be *Ministers* of the Lord, on condition that they *loue the name* of the Lord. And thus al hypocrites are heere reiected, because the expresse tenor of our vocation runnes thus; that we *serue* the Lord with a free and ready affection of the heart: for wee cannot serue him, vnlesse wee yeeld him a franke and voluntary obedience. That therefore, which is said of almes-giuing, ought to be applied to all the parts of our life; namely, God loues a cheerfull giuer: 2. Cor. 9.7. that thus vnto our Lord and Master, wee may render such a seruice as proceedes from loue.

Hypocrites reiected.

In adding, *vvhosoeuer shall keepe:* hee againe mentions the Sabbath; vnder which (as wee haue said before) the whole worship of God is comprehended. But the people neglected that which they should principally haue obserued vpon this day: for in contenting themselues with the outward ceremonie, they omitted the truth; that is to say, amendement of life. The Lord on the other side meant they should so rest, that yet in the meane while they should keepe their *hands*, vers. 2. and their *soules* pure from all vncleannes and iniquitie.

Vnder the particle, *and shall imbrace:* he expresseth the zeale and constancie of such as subiect themselues vnto God, and *cleaue* fast vnto his word. If therefore wee be ioined to the Lord by *couenant*, wee must keepe it stedfastly, and be fast glued as it were to the pure doctrine, that nothing whatsoeuer may turne vs backe, or diuide vs from him.

Vers. 7. *Them will I bring also to mine holy mountaine, and make them ioyfull in mine house of praier: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted vpon mine Altar; for mine house shall be called an house of praier for all people.*

The difference betweene the circumcised and vncircumcised taken away.

BY these phrases of speech hee expresseth that which he said before, to wit, that the strangers which were shut out of GODS Church, are called now vnto it: so as the difference betweene the circumcised and the vncircumcised, shall bee abolished for euer. For these words cannot bee referred to the proselytes; that is, the strangers conuerted to the Iewish religion, who were taken into the body of Gods people by circumcision: for then the Prophet had spoken of no new or vnwonted thing. But hee testifies that Gods grace shall bee spread ouer the whole world; which could not be done, but the Gentiles must needes bee vnited with the Iewes, to make one body with thē: which came to passe, whē the difference touching vncircumcision and circumcisiō was taken away. There is nothing now therefore that can hinder thē Gentiles from seruing of God, seeing they are called into the *Temple:* that is to say, into the societie of the faithfull. Yea, as a little before we noted, the priesthood was translated from the Tribe of Leui; not onely to the whole body of the Iewes, but euen to very strangers also. It is well enough knowne, in how great detestation the Iewes haue this sentence. For albeit they reade these words of the Prophet, yet they hold it for a thing extreamly prodigious, that God should call the Gentiles to the participation of this so excellent a benefit, which was peculiarly alotted vnto them. And yet that which the Prophet saith is so manifest, that none can without grosse impudencie, call the truth thereof into question. *Vers.* 6.

He extols this grace by the fruit that should flow from it; for the true and solid felicitie stands in our being vnited with God as his children. I grant that the wicked ouerflow in iollitie; but all their ioy shall be turned into wailing and gnashing of teeth, because it is accursed of God. In the meane while, he filles the hearts of the faithfull with vnspeakeable *ioy*, as well in shewing himselfe pacified towards them, as in causing them to feele his fauour and good will, by giuing an happy successe to their affaires. Yet the chiefe and principall ioy consists in the peace of conscience; which Saint *Paul* attributes to the kingdome of God: Rom. 14.17. which wee then inioy, when wee are reconciled vnto God by Iesus Christ: Rom. 5.1.

He also promiseth to *accept* of their *sacrifices:* for we are all called of God, to the end we should offer vp our bodies, and all that wee haue, as sacrifices vnto him. By the word *sacrifices*, he meanes Gods spirituall worshippe, such as the Gospell describes vnto vs: for the Prophet spake according to the customes of his owne time, wherein the worship of God was wrapped with diuers ceremonies. But now, in stead of sacrifices, wee haue *praises*, thanksgiuings,

thankſgiuings, *good workes*, &c. And laſtly, *wee offer vp our bodies and ſoules*: Rom. 12.1. When he ſaith their ſacrifices are *acceptable*: let vs not thinke the ſame proceeds from their merit or excellencie, but from the free bountie of God: for he might iuſtly reiect them, if he onely looked vpon them as they are in themſelues. And yet by this goade are wee quickned vp with a prompt deſire to ſerue God, ſeeing he aſſures vs that our works (which are nothing) are yet no leſſe pleaſing in his ſight, then if they were pure and ſpotleſſe ſacrifices.

See Exod. 28.36.37.38.

He addes, *vpon mine altar*: for the ſacrifices were not allowed of God, vnleſſe they tooke their holines from the *altar* vpon which they were offered. And thus, whatſoeuer we offer, ſhall be vncleane, vnleſſe it bee ſanctified by Chriſt, who is our *altar*. See Chap 60 7.

Chriſt our Altar.

For mine houſe ſhall be called, &c.] The Temple was onelie deſtinated to the Iewes, by whom the Lord would eſpecially bee called vpon. And therefore when *Paul* would ſhew that the Iewes were aboue the Gentiles in dignitie, he ſaith, that to them belonged *the ſeruice of God*: Rom. 9.4. Thus then the Temple was built amongſt them by a ſpeciall priuiledge, ſeeing no other nation in the world was permitted to haue the like. But now that difference is taken away, and euery perſon, of what place or Countrie ſoeuer, may enter into the Temple: that is to ſay, into Gods houſe, becauſe all *nations* are called to worſhip God. Here then we ſee the manifeſt difference betweene the Law and the Goſpell: for vnder the Law, there was but one people which might ſerue God purelie; for which cauſe the Temple was particularly built: but now *all* may freely enter into Gods Temple, there purely to worſhip him: that is to ſay, euery where.

The difference betweene the Law and the Goſpell.

But wee muſt note the phraſes of ſpeech which are vſual and familiar among the Prophets: for they vſe ſuch figures as fitted their owne times (as we haue alreadie ſhewed:) for by the *Temple* and *ſacrifices* they meane Gods pure worſhip and ſeruice. The Prophet here therfore ſets forth or deſcribes the ſpirituall Kingdome of Chriſt, vnder which it is lawfull to call vpon God, and to lift vp pure hands in euery place, 1. Tim. 2.8. And neither in this place nor at Ieruſalem, ſaith Chriſt, ſhall men worſhip the Father any more: but the true worſhippers ſhall worſhip the Father in ſpirit and truth, verſ. 23. With our eies therefore do we behold the accompliſhment of this propheſie, namelie, that *Gods houſe* is made the houſe of prayer *to all nations*, that ſo in all languages he may be called vpon, *Abba Father*. The Iewes therfore can no longer boaſt that they onely are Gods peculiars. Thus you ſee then how neceſſarie it was that the Prophets ſhould ſute their manners of ſpeech to the times and cuſtomes then in vſe, that ſo all might vnderſtand them: for the time of the full and open reuelation of things was not yet come, but Gods ſeruice was clothed with diuers figures.

Mal. 1.11.

And yet no queſtion but this Temple thus conſecrated for the ſeruice of God, was truly and really his houſe: for he had told by *Moſes*, that he would be preſent in *euery place* where he ſhould put the remembrance of his name, Exod. 20.24. And *Salomon* in dedicating the Temple ſaid, When they ſhall come *and pray in this houſe*, then wilt thou heare in heauen thy dwelling place, 1. King. 8.33. which is the cauſe why Chriſt reprocheth the Iewes for making his Fathers houſe a denne of theeues, Math. 21.13. and thereunto addes this our text to that In Ieſe. 7.11. Now Chriſt called the Temple the houſe of prayer, as hauing reſpect to thoſe times in which the Goſpell was not yet publiſhed. For albeit he was come, yet he was not then knowne, neither were the ceremonies of the law aboliſhed. But when the vaile of the Temple was rent in twaine, Mat. 27 51. and remiſſion of ſinnes preached in his name, Luk. 24.46.47. Act. 13.38. then theſe high praiſes touching the Temple and other ceremonies tooke their end, for then God began to be called vpon of all nations.

And yet herewithall let vs marke that we are called into the Church vpon condition that we call vpon the name of God. For thoſe do but glorie in vain who hold a place therein, and yet make little or none account of *prayer*, nor of true inuocation. In what place ſoeuer we be then, let vs beware we deſpiſe not this exerciſe of faith, ſeeing it ſufficientlie appeares by the words of our Prophet, that prayer is the greateſt and the moſt excellent ſeruice that God requires of vs: as alſo it is ſaid in Pſal. 50.15. that the *holines of the Temple* conſiſted in the *prayers* which then had their force there.

We are called into the Church vpon condition to call vpon God.

Verſ. 8. *The Lord ſaith which gathereth the ſcattered of Iſrael, yet will I gather * to them thoſe that are to be gathered to them.*

*Or, vpon him.

HE againe confirmes that which he ſaid before touching the reeſtabliſhing of the people, for he hath heretofore wonderfullie extolled that grace of God wherby he ſhould deliuer his choſen: but the eſtate of the Church was ſuch, that theſe promiſes ſeemed ridiculous. Theſe are no needles repetitions therefore, but were of neceſſitie to be added for the ſuſtentation of the weake, that that which otherwiſe was incredible, might be aſſuredly confirmed vnto them.

A confirmation of the former doctrine.

Who gathers &c.] *Iſaiah* giues God this title in regard of the circumſtance of the matter in hand, becauſe it is his office to *gather in* the Church when *it is ſcattered* abroad, which is confirmed in the ſame ſenſe out of the words of the 147. Pſal. verſ. 2. The Lord builds vp Ieruſalem, and *gathers together the diſperſed of Iſrael*. For this cauſe then he promiſeth to aſſemble them againe, yea, and to ioine diuers nations vnto them, that ſo the Church might grow and multiplie into a great number. As oft then as we doubt of the reſtauration of the Church by being aſtoniſhed at the ſight of ſo many ſtormes & tempeſts wherewith it is toſſed, let vs lay hold vpon this buckler,

and couer our ſelues therewith, namely, *that it is the Lords office to gather together the diſperſed of Iſrael*; yea, though they were diuided and ſcattered to the vtmoſt part vnder heauen, yet, that euen thence will the Lord eaſilie gather vs, and reſtore vs to our perfect eſtate: Deut.30.4.

Yet will I gather vpon him.] I willinglie retaine the proprietie of the Prophets words: *Gnal*, that is, to, or vpon: for (as I thinke) he hath an eie vnto that which he ſaid in the former verſe, namely, that the Temple ſhould be ſet open to all people: and here ſignifies, that God ſhal adde to the Iewes which ſhould be gathered a great number of others, which is now indeed accompliſhed. For he not only gathered together thoſe which were diſperſed in Babylon, but alſo gathers together other ſcattered ſheepe, which often, and almoſt euery day came to paſſe, Iohn 10.16. ſo as he neuer ceaſed gathering till he had added a great heape to thoſe which were firſt gathered.

Verſ. 9. *All ye beaſts of the field, come to deuoure, euen all ye beaſts of the foreſt.*

Hauing comforted the faithfull, he now turnes himſelfe to the hypocrites.

IT ſeemes this propheſie agrees not with the former, becauſe whatſoeuer the Prophet hath hitherunto ſpoken was ful of ſweet conſolation, and now he denounceth terrible threatnings, and an horrible deſtruction. Truly one would take theſe things as contradictorie one to another. But hauing comforted the faithful, we muſt not thinke it ſtrange if he now aduertiſe them notwithſtanding touching the calamitie which ſhould enſue,
1 to the end that whē they ſhould ſee all things in an vprore and confuſion, yet they ſhould
2 not faint nor be diſcouraged: as alſo that their neceſſities might therewithall ſtir them vp to runne to the free grace of God with the
3 greater zeale and diligence. There was yet another reaſon. For the hypocrites abuſe Gods promiſes, and glorie thereof falſly: they are readie to conceiue a vaine hope, proudly inſulting in thoſe matters which do nothing at all belong vnto them. Now you ſee the cauſe then why the Prophet meant to diſappoint them of all matter of reioicing. And thus this propheſie hath a two-fold vſe: Firſt, to preſerue the faithfull from deſperation at the ſight of ſo many calamities which ſhould in a maner ouerwhelme them: and that euen

This Chapter hath a two-fold vſe.

whileſt all things were quiet, by faith foreſeeing the euils to come, yet they ſhould content themſelues with this only remedie. Secondly, that the hypocrites might be aſtoniſhed with feare and trembling, that they ſhould not inſult in their ouerweenings, nor bleſſe themſelues, vnder pretence of theſe promiſes.

God therefore calles not men, but cruell *beaſts* to deuoure the people. He commands the faithfull then not to be troubled, nor to ſuffer themſelues to be tranſported in their
1 minds by diſtruſt whē theſe wild *beaſts* ſhould
2 be ſent. And yet therewithall he meant to awaken them that he might draw them to repentance: and to exhort them patientlie to wait for Gods mercie, that ſo the promiſes might not loſe their authoritie.

By the *beaſts of the field*, he meanes all ſorts of beaſts, and ſo comprehends not only the Chaldeans, and Aſſyrians, but alſo *Antiochus*, the Romanes, and other nations, who afflicted this people with diuers warres. But he eſpeciallie reſpects that diſcomfiture of ỹ people by the Chaldeans, who afterwards led them captiues into miſerable thraldome. Antiochus.

Verſ. 10. *Their watchmen are all blind: they haue no knowledge: they are all dumb dogges: they can not barke: they lie and ſleepe, and delight in ſleeping.*

NOw he addes the cauſe why the people were deſtinated to this deſtruction, namely, in regard they were gouerned by wicked *Princes* and *Paſtors*. Not that the fault reſted whollie in them, and that the people were innocent; but becauſe their ſinne was the beginning of this miſchiefe. For if we follow *blind* guides, that ſhall not excuſe vs; but we rather worthily beare the puniſhment of our owne iniquities, in regard the Lord takes away good Gouernors frō ſuch as he meanes to chaſtiſe for their vnthankfulnes. The cauſe of the peoples deſtruction.

By the word *vvatchmen*, he not only vnderſtands the *Prophets* which had the gift or charge of teaching, but the *Iudges*, Gouernors, & Kings, whoſe dutie it is to adminiſter all things with equitie and vprightnes. And thus he comprehends two ſorts of gouernors, namely, both Ciuill, and Eccleſiaſticall, whom the Lord had eſtabliſhed as the two eies in the bodie for the well ordering of ỹ Church. If they be wicked or faithleſſe, there can not a more dangerous plague happen to the Common-wealth. 1 2 Magiſtracie and Miniſtrie, as the two eies in mans body, to gouerne the Church by.

In the firſt place then the Prophet reprocheth them for their *ignorance*. For as the principall vertue of a good *Paſtor* is to know what belongs to his charge, that he may be able to diſcerne and iudge what is profitable or hurtfull for his flock, and then to watch ouer them carefullie, and to ſtand as it were vpon his *vvatch-tower*, that by all meanes he may procure the ſaluation of his ſheepe: ſo is there nothing in the world that doth worſe beſeeme him then ignorance & *blindnes*. No man then ſhall be fit for this office, vnleſſe he be acquainted with the right maner of gouerning the people. Hence it appeares what account is to be made of the Idols of our time, who proudly vaunt with intollerable inſolencie of the title of Paſtors, though in the meane while they be vnlearned, and groſly ignorant. 1. Ignorance. Nothing more vnſeemely then ignorance in a Miniſter. Idoll Miniſters.

Secondly, in calling them *dumb dogges*, he taxeth them of *idlenes*, and careleſnes. For ſeeing it is required of a good Paſtor that he be diligent & induſtrious: in calling them ſlow-bellies, he ſhewes there was nought in them worthie the title of Paſtors. When wee then are depriued of good Paſtors, and that either ſots, or cruell wolues ſucceed them, let vs ſee and acknowledge Gods wrath therein; and let vs aſſure our ſelues that deſtruction is not farre 2. Idlenes. Deſtruction not farre off whē learned and painefull Paſtors are remoued, and ignorant idle-bellies placed in their roomes.

farre off. For from thence, the Prophet gathers his threatnings, and denounceth deſolation to the people, when their *Paſtors are dumbe*: Prou. 29.18. It followes then, that Paſtors are ordained of God to performe the office of *dogges*: that is to ſay, *to watch*, to ſcare away theeues and robbers, and not to ſuffer them to enter into the ſheepfold. If *dogges* then ſtand ſo carefully vpon their watch, and in ſuch wiſe regard their Maſters profit, as to be alwaies watching for his ſafetie, and will neuer ceaſe barking at thoſe, who it may be are able to kill them: ought not the ſleepie and idle Paſtors bluſh to bee ouermatched by a brute beaſt?

Verſ. 11. *And theſe greedie dogges can neuer haue enough: and theſe ſheepheards cannot vnderſtand; for they all looke to their owne way, euerie one for his aduantage*, and *for his owne purpoſe.*

3. Couetouſneſſe.

THe third vice he reproues in theſe wicked Paſtors, is their *inſatiable couetouſneſſe*. Though they be idle in gouerning, ſaith he, yet they are valiant and hardie enough in ſupping vp the broth. Some extend theſe words of the Prophet further, namely, that ſuch rule with crueltie: and this vice is expreſſly reproued by Ezechiel, 34.4. For falſe Prophets are ordinarily fierce, and behaue themſelues vnciuilly and barbarouſly ouer the poore people. But hee that ſhall aduiſe himſelfe well touching theſe words, hee ſhall ſee that the Prophet taxeth their vnmeaſurable auarice, which hee alſo in the next words paints out at large.

Euery one looketh to his owne way.] That is to ſay, they are diligent in their affaires. *Euery one ſeekes his aduantage.* In a word, his meaning is, that there was none, but preferred himſelfe firſt: as if euery one had bin borne for himſelfe onely.

The word *Mikkaſehu*, is diuerſly expounded; for ſome tranſlate; To his end: that is to ſay, to his affaires: but this agrees not with the Prophets meaning. Others, After the limits of his couetouſneſſe. But the moſt naturall ſenſe (as I thinke) is *right*: which phraſe of ſpeech, is alſo common among vs. Euery one then being giuen vnto couetouſnes, they drew and appropriated all things vnto themſelues, ſeeking their owne commoditie, without regarding the good of others.

He which is giuen to inordinate luſts, can neuer ſerue God.

Hence wee gather, that he which is giuen to inordinate luſts, can neuer ſerue God: *and whoſoeuer he be that buſies his braines to heape vp riches, will neuer apply his mind to build vp the Church of the Lord.* I know not a more dangerous blindneſſe then couetouſneſſe. A true Paſtor therefore ought aboue all other vices to flee that, if he will ſerue God faithfully. Doe wee ſee then that the Prophet complained thus of the wicked Paſtors of his time? Let vs not bee troubled if the like befall vs now: neither let vs thinke it any new thing, if

Vſe.

wee ſee ſo few to imploy themſelues in good earneſt, in the worke of the Lord.

Verſ. 12. *Come, I will bring wine, and wee will fill our ſelues with ſtrong drinke: and to morrow ſhall be as this day*, and *much more abundant.*

HAuing reproued the *couetouſneſſe* and *idleneſſe* of the Paſtors: now hee ſets forth their *malice* and deſperate obſtinacie: for hee brings them in ſpeaking, and deſcribes their wicked talke: whereby we may diſcerne, they could not be reduced into the right way, neither by any admonitions nor threatnings; but audaciouſly contemned whatſoeuer was ſaid vnto thē. In Chap. 22.13. & 28.15. the Prophet hath recited the flouts of ſcorners, who inuited one another to play the epicures and drunkards, whileſt by the ſeruants of God they were exhorted to faſt in ſackcloth and aſhes. Let vs eate and drinke, ſay they, for to morrow we ſhall die: as if they ſhould haue ſaid; What meane theſe Prophets to importune vs ſo much? Wee ſhall looke but with leane cheekes, if wee follow their counſell. Theſe and the like blaſphemies they were not afraid to vtter: as we haue ſeene in Chap. 22. and 28. And *Iſaiah* repeates the ſame complaint heere, to wit, that the Paſtors hardened their hearts, and obſtinately contemned the iudgements of God. 4. Deſperate obſtinacie.

Now hee reproues them not for drinking *wine* and *ſtrong drinke*, which in it ſelfe is no vnlawfull thing: but he taxeth their braineſickneſſe and brutiſhneſſe, which makes men proudly and preſumptuouſly to deſpiſe the word of the Lord. The abuſe of wine is condemned in other places. But the Propher in this place inueighs againſt this frantike malapartneſſe, whereby they loftily combined themſelues againſt God, and trampled vnder feete all threatnings, admonitions, reprehenſions; and in a word, all religion. And yet no doubt but hee taxeth this horrible and hatefull vice, in that they ouercharged themſelues with wine and meates, when they had no neede; that neither ſhame, feare, nor reuerence of God or man, might diſquiet their meriments. For it is the cuſtome of the wicked, to glut themſelues with all the belly-cheere they can deuiſe; that ſo they may with the greater boldneſſe and intemperancie, plunge themſelues in their filthineſſe. But is it not an horrible and fearefull example to ſee ſuch a contempt of God; not in ſtrangers, not among the common people; but in the heads and gouernours, who by their godly conuerſation, (in this holy and ſacred order, which was the figure of Chriſt) ſhould haue bin guides vnto others? For the Kings and Prieſts bare in them his image, and were types of him. Wee may eaſily iudge how inſupportable this pride is, whereby men thus furiouſly oppoſe themſelues againſt Gods word. For when we come once to reiect this ſoueraigne and laſt medicine, our caſe is deſperate; we are paſt cure; becauſe we will not

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ſuffer the Lord to bring vs againe into the right way. For this cauſe, in Chap. 22. 14. the Lord *vowes, that this iniquitie ſhall neuer be pardoned*.

Thus then the Prophet notes out an extreame impietie: and let vs obſerue his words diligently; *To morrow ſhall be as this day*: that is to ſay; Haue we bin merry to day? wee will be yet more merry to morrow: let vs not pine our ſelues away before the time.

He amplifies their fault, becauſe in deriding Gods patience and long ſuffering, they promiſed to themſelues impunitie: as if God ſlept, or ſate idle in heauen, as oft as hee deferres his iudgements. Men at this day indeuor to benumme and bewitch their owne conſciences with ſuch diabolicall prouerbs as theſe, mentioned in this text, that they may the more freely wallow themſelues in all ſorts of voluptuouſneſſe, and take libertie to commit wicked and execrable impieties. That we then may eſcape this horrible iudgement of God, let euery one ſearch and try his owne waies, and a far off let vs eſpie the wrath of God; leſt being ouertaken at vnawares, wee be ſuddenly ouerwhelmed therewith.

Diuelliſh prouerbs.

THE LVII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *The righteous periſheth, and no man conſidereth in heart: and merciſull men are taken away; and no man vnderſtandeth that the righteous is taken away from the euill to come.*

The Prophet continues on his argument ſtill.

Iſaiah proſecutes his argument ſtill. For hauing ſhewed how ſecurely hypocrits repoſe themſelues in their pleaſures, and with what impudencie they deſpiſe Gods word; he further complaines, that they conſider not the workes of the Lord: for we are placed in this world, as vpon a ſpacious Theatre, to behold the acts of our God. Neither is there any of his works, how meane ſoeuer they appeare in our eies, that we ſhould lightly eſteeme; but ought rather diligently and attentiuely to obſerue and conſider them. Now among other teſtimonies of his prouidence, the Lord ſets before vs the death of the *faithfull*, and of approued men whom hee *takes out of this world*, when he is purpoſed ſeuerely to chaſtiſe and correct his people. But no man laies it to heart, neither imagines that ſuch matters ſhould be forerunners of imminent deſtruction, namely, that the good are gathered to God, and laid vp in ſafetie, that they may not be wrapped vp with others, in ſo many common miſeries. The ſumme is, that the wicked greatly deceiue themſelues, in thinking that the prolonging of their liues, ſhould bee the onely happineſſe that can befall them: and that for this cauſe they ſhould take themſelues to be in better caſe then the faithfull, who die ſooner then they. For as they are glued to the world, ſo vnder this pretence, doe they harden their owne hearts, that (as they ſuppoſe) God fauours them exceedingly, in ſuffering them to bee ſafe and ſound, whileſt others die.

If by *men of mercy* you vnderſtand the charitable and pitifull, then this epithete muſt be diligently noted; for thereby the Prophet ſhewes what the true *righteouſneſſe* of Gods children is, whereas hypocrites place their righteouſneſſe in things of no value. Now there is no vertue more pleaſing vnto God, then liberalitie, whereby wee manifeſt our righteouſneſſe, and diſcouer vnto all an heart void of guile. But *merciſull men* may as well be taken in the paſſiue ſignification, namely, for ſuch to whom the Lord ſhewes mercie: for this maner of ſpeech is common enough among the Hebrewes. Neither is it from the purpoſe to ſay, that the grace of God ſhould be priuily oppoſed to the peruerſe and ſiniſter iudgements of men, who are wont to condemne ſuch as die in the flower of their youth. And yet ſeeing the Prophet in many places adornes the children of God with this title, of being *merciſull* and liberall, I ſee no inconuenience, if (as I haue ſaid) we make it a true definition of righteouſneſſe.

By this it appeares that then the Lord gathered a great number of good men out of the world vnto himſelf, whoſe death prognoſticated ſome horrible calamitie; & yet that the Iewes regarded not ſuch forewarnings. Nay, which is worſt of all, they tooke occaſion thereby to ouerflow with the greater freedome in all licentiouſneſſe, thinking all ſhould goe well with them, when they ſuruiued the beſt men.

Now this doctrine is very fitting for all ages & times. For, for the moſt part, it comes to paſſe that God takes the good out of this world, when hee is purpoſed ſharply to puniſh the ſinnes of the wicked. Why ſo? Surely as hee hath a tender care ouer thoſe that be his, ſo he puls them often times as brands out of the fire, hauing compaſſion on them, to the end that ſuch as ſhall ſuruiue them, may therein perceiue a token of Gods wrath. And yet this is not a perpetuall law, ſeeing the elect are often wrapped vp in the temporall iudgements with the wicked. Notwithſtanding the taking of them away firſt, is a thing ſo ordinary, that it ſeldome falles out otherwiſe: whereof in our time we haue a famous example in the death of *Martin Luther*, who was taken out of this world a little before Germany was pitifully waſted with that furious warre, which many yeeres before he had foretold, whileſt hee thundered againſt the

Martin Luthers death.

the contempt of the Goſpell: againſt the villanies and foule enormities which then ouerflowed in euery place. Often he entreated the Lord to take him out of this life before he ſhould ſee thoſe horrible iudgements which he had threatned: the apprehenſion whereof made him to quake for feare: and this requeſt he obtained of the Lord. Soone after his death a ſudden and vnexpected war began to inuade, and miſerablie to afflict Germanie: euen then when they ſuſpected nothing leſſe. And examples hereof alſo we haue dailie. And doubtleſſe, if men did well conſider of them, they would not flatter themſelues ſo much in their iniquities as they doe. But I haue thought it good to recite this in particular, not onely becauſe it hath happened within theſe few yeeres: but alſo that it might be the more apparant, in regard it fell out according to that which ſo excellent a Preacher of the Goſpell, and a Prophet of God had foretold. We therefore ought diligently to obſerue the worke of the Lord as well in ſ liues, as in the death of the iuſt: but moſt of all *in their death*. Whereby the Lord calles them to the enioying of a better life: that ſo they may bee deliuered from thoſe miſeries, into which the wicked muſt at length be plunged.

Verſ. 2. *Peace ſhall come: they ſhall reſt in their beds,* euerie one *that walketh before him.*

The ſtate of the faithfull after their death.

THe Prophet here deſcribes what the ſtate of the faithful is after death. For the wicked who thinke there is no life after this, do iudge that good men are periſhed, becauſe they can apprehend nothing in death but ruine and *perdition*. *Iſaiah* therefore ſaith, that ſuch a *peace ſhall come*, as is more deſireable then a thouſand liues that are repleniſhed with troubles. As if hee compared the good to craſed ſouldiers, who are permitted quietly to take their eaſe.

Simile.

He addes the ſimilitude of *ſleepe*, to ſhew, that they ſhall bee ſet free, and deliuered from all diſquietneſſe and care, as if they ſafely and ſweetly ſlept in their *beds*. Whereas he addes, *euery one that walkes*: I referre not *whoſoeuer* to the word *peace*, as ſome expound it. Namelie, that peace ſhall goe before the faithfull, as if it led them the way. But I think he therein notes out the faithfull. As if hee ſhould ſay, Whoſoeuer walkes before God, he ſhall haue peace. And therefore when the righteous doe die, they (after the enduring of many troubles) are called to peace and reſt, as hauing finiſhed their courſe.

Now they reſt in their *beds*, in regard they doe not yet inioy full and perfect glorie and bleſſednes: but wait for the laſt day which ſhall be the time of their reſurrection, wherein all things ſhall be fully reſtored. And mee thinkes *Iſaiah* meant to ſay ſo. But, may ſome

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ſay, Doe not the iuſt inioy peace in this preſent life? For the fruite of faith is that wee poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience, Luk. 21.19. Rom.5.1. I anſwere, that albeit faith begets

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peace in our hearts, yet notwithſtanding wee are toſſed to an fro with many waues, and are neuer ſo ſecure and quiet in this life, as when the Lord drawes vs home to himſelfe. The death of the iuſt then you ſee brings them to a ſweete reſt and peace, becauſe the ſame is precious in Gods ſight: Pſalm. 116.15. But the death of the wicked is ful of horror. From this place alſo we may gather, that our ſoules are immortall: for were they without any ſenſe, as ſome braineleſſe ones haue dreamed, then could they not bee ſaid to enioy any *peace*. They are in *peace* and *reſt* then, becauſe they liue in Chriſt.

Verſ. 3. *But you witches children, come hither, the ſeed of the adulterer, and of the whore.*

The curſed life and death of the wicked, oppoſed to the bleſſed life and end of the godly.

HAuing ſpoken of the happie and peaceable death of the faithfull; he inueighs with exceeding vehemencie againſt the wicked, who for all this, ceaſed not to leade a leaud and laſciuious life without taking the *death of the righteous to heart*. For as he hath affirmed that the faithfull are in peace: ſo contrariwiſe he denounceth an vnreconciliable warre againſt the other. Nay, which more is, he hath ſhewed that death to Gods ſeruants is an hiding place which defends them from the whirlewinds, haile, and other tempeſts: that afterwards the obſtinate contemners may bee laid open to all ſorts of calamities. For we muſt note here the oppoſition betweene the faithfull which walke *before God*: and the wicked who ceaſe not obſtinately to reſiſt him. The former after death, ſhall haue peace: the latter ſhall bee vexed whileſt they liue, and after death ſhall feele horrible torments.

He *ſummons* them before Gods iudgement ſeate: becauſe they thought to eſcape by their ſophiſtications. But he ſhewes that they ſhall gaine nothing thereby, becauſe they ſhal be drawne before the ſame whether they will or no. For, as they had made their hearts ouer hard, ſo was it needfull that they ſhould be pricked with the ſharper launcers: doubleſſe the Prophet could not vſe too much ſeueritie, as well to awaken their drowſineſſe, as to beate downe their pride. Who knowes not with how great ouerweening the Iewes inſult in regard of their race? The Prophets therefore are vſually wont to cruſh this their arrogancie and hie mindednes, by affirming that they were none of *Abrahams* children, in reſpect they behaued themſelues as baſtards, and ſuch as were degenerate.

This is the cauſe why our Prophet termes them, the *ſeed of the adulterer, and of the whore*. With which alſo *Ezechiel* reproueth them in Chap.16.3. ſaying, Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. And the like phraſes of ſpeech are vſed in many other places: Hoſea.1.2. Thus then hee brings their intollerable pride downe to the ground, and in deſpite of their teeth drawes them forth into the light, that they ſhould not thinke they could eſcape the tribunall ſeate of God.

Verſ. 4. *On whom haue yee ieſted? vpon whom haue ye gaped and thruſt out your tongues? Are not yee rebellious children,* and *a falſe ſeede.*

Hypocrites vnmasked in this, and the verses following.

THe Prophet ſhewes that the Iewes haue no occaſion at all to glorie ſo much vnder pretence of their linage or ſtocke, ſeeing they derided the Prophets of God. Now they thought it was but with men, with whom they had to deale when they reiected the word. And ſo at this day wee ſee how impudently the wicked deſpiſe the doctrine of their ſaluation, and ſcorne the Miniſters of it; and yet in the meane while, couer themſelues vnder a vaine ſhew of religion. This is the reaſon then wherefore the Prophet preſſeth them ſo neere, and reprooues them ſo ſharply. As if he ſhould ſay, When you *thruſt out your tongues* on this manner againſt God, and ſcorne his word, doe ye thinke you haue to deale with a mortal man? For theſe words, *on whom*, ſignifies that they ſought out euaſions and pretences to cloake their impietie withall. For the vngodly will not acknowledge that they rebell againſt God: no, they thinke foule ſcorne any man ſhould ſo iudge of them: but yet they muſt bee brought out into the light, and conuinced of their wickedneſſe. And ſeeing there is a God, they muſt be told that they make open warre vpon him, in reſiſting or in reiecting his word, and in eſteeming no better thereof, then of a fable.

To *open the mouth*, and to *thruſt out the tongue*, is heere taken in one ſignification: vnleſſe that vnder theſe two phraſes the Prophet meant the better to diſcouer their impudencie, namely, in that they thought it not enough only to *rebell the Lord*, but they muſt alſo *deride him*. For the inward contempt of the heart cauſed them to vtter forth ſuch manifeſt ſcoffes and blaſphemies, ſo as they were not touched at all with any feare of dishonoring themſelues.

Laſtly he concludes, that they are *rebellious children, a lying ſeed*, and therefore hath iuſt cauſe to eſteeme them the *ſonnes of an whore*, for ſuch a contempt could not be found *in the children of Abraham*. By this we learne how the wicked ought to be handled, and with what ſeueritie they are to be reproued, that they may haue no cauſe left them whereby to flatter themſelues: and, the more they deſpiſe whatſoeuer is propounded vnto them in the name of God, the more ought we to diſcouer and to manifeſt in all mens ſight their impieties ſo full of ſacriledge.

Verſ. 5. *Inflamed with Idols vnder euery greene tree? and ſacrificing the children in the valleyes vnder the tops of the rocks.*

OThers tranſlate, Who take pleaſure in conſolation. But our Prophet takes a ſimilitude vſed in many places of the Scriptures, and very fitting to the circumſtance of this place. For the Lord is wont to compare *luſt*, wherewith poore and miſerable Idolaters are furiouſly tranſported and inflamed, to the loue of brothels, for they keepe no meaſure at all, neither will they ſuffer any to reſtraine them from their follie. Now Idolatrie in Gods ſight is a moſt hatefull kind of whoredome.

As touching the Hebrue word *Elim*, ſome tranſlate it *Gods*, others *okes*; we may take it in whether ſenſe we will, for there will be no great difference: and all the expoſitors agree that the Prophet condemnes Idolatrie. I contend not then about the words, though it be very likely that one thing is repeated twice, according to the cuſtome of the Hebrues: and yet it may be vnder an ambiguous word he alludes to their gods.

Sacrificing children.] Heere he preſſeth the Iewes neerer, and ſhewes that they are none of *Abrahams* true children. Why ſo? Becauſe they polluted themſelues with all maner of ſuperſtitions: and in regard they pleaſed themſelues in ſuch forgeries, therefore he diſcouers their villanies. As if he ſhould ſay, You pretend religion, but I proteſt that you play the whoremongers with Idols. For thus muſt wee manifeſt and point out (as it were with the finger) the impietie which ſubtle and politique heads indeuor to varniſh ouer with ſundrie delightfull colours. The Prophet therefore diſchargeth his dutie moſt faithfullie, in adiuring them thus before Gods tribunall, and in prouing to their faces that they were guiltie, though they meant to play the cauillers to the full.

Now he ſhewes that they were rebellious, and had reuolted from Gods law through deteſtable Idolatries. Then he comes to ſome particulars, and mentions an horrible, nay, a prodigious and execrable kinde of ſeruice, namely, *Sacrificing of children*. Whence it is euident, how greatly the ſpirit of error preuailes ouer men after they haue once turned away from God. For Satan ſo poſſeſſeth their vnderſtandings, that he makes them become ſtarke bedlems. For we muſt needs conclude that ſuch are frantique and out of their wits *who ſpare not their owne children*, but will cut their throates, and thinke they haue then performed an acceptable ſacrifice. And yet theſe cruell murtherers wanted not their pretences wherewith to couer their execrable villanies, to wit, *the example of Abraham, who ſpared not his only ſonne*. For the ancient Hebrues are of opinion that theſe cuſtomes proceeded frō an inconſiderate zeale: as if they ſhould haue ſaid, Seeing wee are deſcended from *Abraham*, we ought no more to ſpare our children then he did. But this good Patriarke did it in obedience to God, Gen. 22.2, 12, 16. and theſe on the contrarie had no commandement, but did it on their owne heads.

Abrahams example was extraordinarie, in which the Lord meant to prooue and to manifeſt to all the faith of his ſeruant. Againe, *Iſack* was not offred, in reſpect that the Lord ſatisfied himſelfe with *Abrahams* prompt and readie willingnes: but theſe ſacrificed their children,

1 2

How greatly the ſpirit of error preuailes in ſuch as are reuolted frō God.

Abrahams example in offring vp his ſonne inconſiderately and peruerſly followed of the Iewes.

children; and therefore this imitation was peruerſe and damnable, ſeeing they trode nothing at all in the ſteppes of their father. This muſt be well obſerued: for the moſt of our ſuperſtitious obſeruāces haue ſprung frō this fountaine of incōſiderate zeale, becauſe men haue greedily ſnatched at any occaſion, and without iudgement haue followed whatſoeuer their fathers haue done.

Whence ſuperſtitions haue ſprung

Verſ. 6. *Thy portion is in the ſmooth ſtones of the riuer: they, they are thy lot: euen to them haſt thou powred a drinke-offering: thou haſt offered a ſacrifice. Should I delight in theſe?*

HEe proſecutes the ſame argument, and ſundry waies taxeth the ſuperſtitions which raigned in Iudea; for there was no place exempt from idolatry: there was neither *rockes, riuers, vallies, nor any corner* free, wherein they had not left ſome memoriall of their ſuperſtitions. They had their woods and mountaines, where they ſacrificed according to the cuſtomes of the heathen.

Whether we reade it *poliſhed ſtones* here, or Parts of the riuer, the ſenſe will be alwaies one. For the Prophets meaning is that the Iewes choſe a ſeruice of God after their owne fantaſie, and turned themſelues away from that rule which he had preſcribed them in his law. Alſo, that by meanes hereof all the ſacrifices by them deuiſed were wicked and abominable, in regard God only ought to be heard, when there is any queſtion touching his religion and worſhip. If you will turne it *poliſhed ſtones*, then *Iſaiah* taxeth them for the contempt of the law, wherein God had forbidden them to *cut or poliſh* any ſtones with hammers for the framing of his Altar. Exod. 20. 25. Deut. 27. 5. 6. becauſe he would haue them ſacrifice no where elſe but vpon one only Altar. But in reſpect that it was the faſhion of the Heathen to erect Temples neere vnto fountaines and riuers, the other ſenſe agrees well alſo.

Theſe words *they, they*, haue great weight: and it is to be vnderſtood as if the Lord gaue the Iewes leaue to cleaue to their inuentions, ſeeing they had forſaken him, and rather turned after Idols, and forged inuentions. As alſo the Lord by *Ezechiel* ſaith to the people, *Goe, and ſacrifice euery one of you to his Idoll, ſeeing you will not obey me*: Ezech. 20. 39. And as I thinke this expoſition agrees beſt. As if he ſhould ſay; I euen leaue you to your owne inuentions; and it contents me that you are wholly addicted thereunto. And yet no doubt but the Prophet alludes to that place of *Moſes*, by whoſe mouth God had promiſed to be the *lot and portion* of his people, that they might content themſelues with him alone. According to which alſo *Dauid* ſaith, The Lord is my *portion* and my inheritance: Pſal. 16. 5. For as much as the Iewes then were reuolted from God, and followed Idols, the Lord had iuſt cauſe to ſay they might cleaue vnto them, thereby ſhewing that they ſhould haue no more to do with him.

To them haſt thou powred drinke-offrings.] He continues to put them ſtill in mind of their ſuperſtitions, and proues that they had renounced and forſaken God, becauſe they had attributed vnto them whatſoeuer he would ſhould be wholly reſerued as his proper right vnto himſelfe. But the Iewes might haue replied to euery one of the Prophets words, and haue ſaid; that in all theſe things they had none other purpoſe thē to *ſerue God*. And yet you ſee the Prophet feares not to charge them with idolatry, for all their vaine and idle pretences: for Gods wrath is prouoked by ſuperſtitions; and the longer they be continued and maintained, the more hotter doth it wax. Hence let vs learne what ſobrietie we ought to keepe in erecting Gods worſhippe, that we may depend vpon his onely will and word. For hee that ſhall ſwarue but the leaſt iot from that, ſhall not onely loſe his time, but ſhall alſo inkindle Gods diſpleaſure againſt him, whoſe Maieſtie, as much as in him is, hee labours to violate and diminiſh.

Should I delight?] We may alſo turne it; *Shall I repent?* And this is the moſt receiued interpretation, becauſe hee meanes to ſhew the cauſe wherefore he chaſtiſeth the people. As if he ſhould ſay; When I ſhall reuenge theſe enormities, can I repent? Notwithſtanding the expoſition which I haue followed, ſeemes to ſute beſt: Should I *take delight* or comfort in theſe ſacrifices which you offer mee? For idolaters are wont to pleaſe and flatter themſelues in their inuentions; and therefore preſume that God alſo reioiceth and takes delight and comfort in all things, vpon which they dote with burning luſt. Such an *interrogation* is not ſuperfluous then, when men thinke that God reſembles them, and that he likes and approoues of all that they thinke well of: but he on the contrary ſhewes, that nothing *pleaſeth* him, nor is approued of him, but that which accords with his word.

Interrogation.

Verſ. 7. *Thou haſt made thy bed vpon euery high mountaine: thou wenteſt vp thither, euen thither wenteſt thou to offer a ſacrifice.*

HEe repeates the ſame ſimilitude againe which we haue touched before. For ſuperſtitious ſort commit whordome with their Idols, in regard that hauing forſaken the puritie of the word, they breake that holy *mariage knot* which God had contracted with them, and ſell themſelues ouer vnto Satan. But *Iſaiah* meant heere to expreſſe ſomewhat more: for in telling them that they had *made their bed* in an high place, it is as much as if he had ſaid; They were become ſhameleſſe, for they cared not *who ſaw* their villanie, no more then an impudent harlot ſhunnes the preſence of men, but is careleſſe of her reputation: ſo theſe committed whordome in the ſight of the Sunne, and being paſt ſhame, aſcended vp to *euery high and imminent place*, to doe it in.

A repetition of the former ſimilitude, verſ. 4.

Hee compares Chapels and Altars to *beds*, vpon

vpon which this curſed filthineſſe is committed, and men which ſacrifice there to bold and brazen faced ſtrumpets.

In the end of the verſe he ſhewes without any figure, what this harlotry is which he condemnes, namely, that they *ſacrificed to Idols*. I grant they thought in ſo doing to ſerue God; but hee reiects whatſoeuer it is that men forge, according to their owne luſts, and deteſts ſuch a laſciuious courſe.

Verſ. 8. *Behind the doores alſo and poſtes, haſt thou ſet vp thy remembrance: for thou haſt diſcouered thy ſelfe to* another *then mee, and wenteſt* vp, and *diddeſt enlarge thy bed, and make a couenant betweene thee and them, and louedſt their bed in euery place where thou ſaweſt it.*

An amplification of the fault.

HE amplifies the crime whereof hee ſpake before, that the people ſhould not flatter themſelues in their inuentions. Now it is verie likely that *Iſaiah* alludes to *Moſes* words, wherein the Lord commanded that they ſhould alwaies haue the Law *before them*: that they ſhould fixe it vpon the *doore poſtes* of the houſe, and write it in roles, to wrap it about their armes, and about the fringes of their garments, that they might be continually admoniſhed of their duties: Deut. 6.9 and 11.20. Numb. 15.38.39.40. But contrariwiſe, the Iews ceaſed not to pollute the *doores* and the *poſtes* of their houſes with *markes and ſignes of idolatry*; and left no corner nor nooke free from ſuch defilings. Thus *God and his Law* were reiected in all places, and in ſtead thereof, they had ſet vp prouocations and inticements vnto whoredome.

Thou haſt inlarged thy bed.] Yet once more he repeates that which he had ſaid before, and comes to this clauſe againe, to wit, that the Iewes committed groſſe adulterie with their Idols; and yet thought they ſerued Gods: but this came to paſſe, becauſe they neglected to follow the rules of the word. For it is all one, as if a woman hauing forſaken her husband, ſhould goe and proſtitute her ſelfe to the ſtewes, and make her ſelfe common indifferently to all commers: as if the *bed* were now become an open field, which might containe a great troope of men.

Simile.

For this cauſe he ſaith, that ſhe diſcouered herſelfe *vvithout him*: becauſe hauing ſhaken off the ſhamefaſtneſſe of mariage, ſhe ſuffered others to abuſe her. For God holds the place of *an husband*, to which ſhee ought to haue been ſubiect: but ſhee ſought out new companions, and brake the faith of marriage. He amplifies this crime, in regard the Iewes did voluntarilie preſent themſelues before the idols: as if a diſloyall wife ſhould runne after another man, to haue his companie.

Moreouer, vnder another figure, he taxeth their inordinate luſt, in reſpect that one onelie *glance of the eie* ſerued the turne, to carry them ſuddenly and dotingly away into euerie place. Therewithall alſo he conuinceth men of raſhnes: who thinke themſelues very ſharp witted in things belonging to Gods ſeruice; and make choice of their places where themſelues liſt. But this is a diuelliſh wit; for the Lord will haue *our eies* fixed in ſuch wiſe vpon him and his word, that they reſt cloſed and ſhut vp againſt all other things.

Verſ. 9. *Thou wenteſt to the Kings with oile, and diddeſt increaſe thine ointments, and ſend thy meſſengers farre off, and diddeſt humble thy ſelfe vnto hell.*

It is iuſt that ſuch as will not reſt contented with God, ſhould wander vp and downe reſtleſſie without reliefe.

HEre the Prophet reprooues another vice almoſt like the former: for impietie begets many errors, and forceth light heads that are void of Gods feare into very ſore and perplexed moleſtations. And is it not good reaſon that ſuch as will not reſt in God ſhould bee reſtleſſe, or rather toſſed vp and downe with whirlewinds? He reprocheth the Iewes then that they *vexed themſelues ſo much, and ſo long a* time in hunting after the helpe of ſtrangers, namelie, when they endeuoured to oppoſe the aide of the Egyptians againſt the Aſſyrians: and then being defrauded of their hopes, they began to trot to the Chaldeans. For when men haue forſaken the feare of the Almightie, then they ſeeke helpe in others, and not onelie wearie themſelues, but are a great coſt and trauell to atchieue the ſame. And whileſt the Lord giues *quiet ſleepe* to his beloued ones, that they may quietly finiſh that they haue to doe, the wicked vexe themſelues for nothing. *They riſe early, and goe late to bed, and eate the bread of carefulneſſe*: as it is in Pſalm. 127. 2. And yet in the meane while they cannot enrich themſelues the value of a naile: becauſe they do nothing vnder Gods authoritie or gouernment. Now the Lord puniſheth them thus, to the end they may wander vp and downe, as men at their wits end, being euer in doubt and perplexitie, without euer enioying the benefit of a quiet and contented mind.

See 2. Sam. 18.5.6.7.

Verſ. 10. *Thou wearieſt thy ſelfe in thy manifold iournies, yet ſaidſt thou not, There is no hope: thou haſt found life by thine hand, therefore thou waſt not grieued.*

Men labour in vaine when they follow not God.

HIs meaning is, that men labour in vaine when they follow not God. For they vex themſelues without profit, as wee haue ſaid before: becauſe whatſoeuer it be that is taken in hand contrarie to the will of God, can neuer haue good ſucceſſe. And here hee doth wittily *deride the peruerſe endeuors of ſuch, as in taking much paines, had rather vvaſte and conſume the ſtrength of bodie and mind, then vvith quietneſſe to goe vvhither the Lord called them.*

It is labour loſt.] That is to ſay; Albeit thou ſeeſt thy *iournies* ſerue thee to no purpoſe, yet doeſt thou obſtinately go on in purſuing thy enterpriſes. And yet very Idiots are wont to repent, when their counſels proſper not well.

Such

Who they be that deserue to be called peruerse and obstinate.

Such then must be called peruerse and desperate, who hauing experience of Gods cursing and crossing their affaires, are not moued sometimes to enter into their own harts, and to say, *What doest thou?* *Ieremiah* in his 18. chap. and 12. verse toucheth this obstinacie; but in other words: for he shewes that the Iewes were growne so stubborne, that they desperately said, *It is done*: that is to say, We will walke after our owne imaginations: we haue concluded it shall be so, and we purpose neither to alter nor change our determinations. But *Isaiah* in this place reprooues that senselesnesse wherewith they were so besotted, that they could not bee brought to acknowledge their owne follie, nor repent so, as to turne into the right way againe.

Thou hast found life.] Some take *life* here for foode. As if the Prophet had said; This thy labour hath been as acceptable to thee, as if thou hadst gotten thy *liuing*, in labouring with thine hands. Others take *life of the hands* for delite or great voluptuousnesse: and these two expositions come to one reckoning. But there is yet a little more difficultie, namely, whether he speakes here in good earnest, or by way of scorne. For if there be no figure vsed here, then the sense will be thus: Thou wert not sorrow, because fortune seemed for a time to fauour thee. Whilest the affaires of vnbeleeuers succeed well, thē they flatter themselues more and more in their infidelitie. As the common prouerb is, *Prosperitie blinds men.* But this falles out *then especiallie, when hauing forsaken God, they follow their owne waies and deliberations.* For then they despise the Lord. It may also be read by way of scorne, as if he should say, Whence is it, I pray thee, that thou breakest not off thy course, nor repentest? why doest thou not acknowledge thy follie? Is it because thou hast *life in thine hands, and because all things fall out according to thy desire?* This reading pleaseth me best: though I reiect not the other. Truelie it appeares sufficientlie by the histories that this people had small cause to glorie in their good successes. For the league which they first made with the *Egyptians*, next with the *Assyrians*, and lastly with the *Babylonians* was pernicious and deadly vnto them. So as they felt by experience how vnaduised they were to call such companions into their rescue. The Prophet then had good reason to obiect against them that they had *found life by their hand.* He sets out the sottishnesse of the Iewes therefore, in regard they wittinglie plunged themselues into ruine, and obstinately pursued their owne perdition; whereas at least they ought (euen by the example of fooles) to haue become wise after they had tasted the whip.

Vers. 11. *And whom didst thou reuerence or feare, seeing thou hast lied vnto mee, and hast not remembred mee, nether set thy minde thereon? Is it not* because *I held my peace, and that of a long time? Therefore thou fearest not me.*

There can be no true feare of God, but where hee is worshipped purelie.

HE inueighs here more sharpely against the Iewes, in that they were destitute *of all feare of God*: howsoeuer they bragged of their holinesse, and pretended a vaine title of religion. For hypocrites not onelie flatter themselues in their superstitions, but the common people take them for pettie gods: and for this cause they insolentlie aduance themselues both against God and men, and set forth themselues with an impudent malepertnesse. But our Prophet pronounceth that there can be *no true feare of God*, where he is not purely worshipped, nor according to the precise rules of his holy word. For let men esteeme the best they can of all their goodlie superstitious deuotions; yet all is but meere follie and impietie. Thus then hee protests that they haue no *feare of God, nor no religion at all in them*, though they gloried neuer so much of their painted sheathe. Nay, which was worse; by their ceremonies they made it manifest as by infallible testimonies, that they had no *reuerence* nor *awe* of God in them. For the Lord testifies by *Moses*, that he would proue whether they loued him from the heart, in suffering false Prophets to bring in superstitions and idolatries: Deut. 13. 3. All such then as runne after such trumperie doe euidently shew that their hearts are void of Gods true feare: for if they considered, that one day they must yeeld an account thereof before his iudgement seate, they would not so presumptuously treade his commandements vnder their feete.

Where he complaines, that they had *forgotten him*; it is to shew that they had not sinned against him through ignorance, but of an obstinate maliciousnesse. For hauing a certaine rule of a godlie life set downe before them, they wittingly reuolted from God, and brake their faith which they had promised him. We are heedefully to obserue how terrible this thunderclap is which is shot from heauen, as it were against all hypocrites, who scorne all threatnings, and couer themselues vnder vaine pretences: when hee thus testifies, that they haue *no sparke of the feare of God* in them: that they haue *forgotten him*: and are *full of lies*. 1 2 3

It is not because, &c.] I haue thought it fit to insert the particle of rendring the cause here, which must be supplied, to the end the Prophets meaning may be the more manifest. For those that supplie it not, vex themselues much to draw out an exposition. But we know how vsuall this manner of speech is among the Hebrewes. The Prophet blames the Iewes for thus abusing the patience and *long suffering* of God: which notwithstanding should haue mollified their hearts: Rom. 2. 4. But such is mans malice, that he thereby imboldens himselfe in sinning: and thinkes he hath good leaue to do whatsoeuer him listeth as long as hee is suffered to escape vnpunished: Psalm 50. 21. And therefore I expound this member thus: Thou *fearest not* me, because I haue *held my peace*: whereas on the contrarie,

contrarie, my lenitie should haue broken thine hard heart. Hence we gather, that the Iewes had no cause to complaine that God dealt too seuerely with them, seeing that though hee patiently forbare them a *long time*, yet they became the worse; and that by meanes of this impunitie. The Lord was vrged therefore of necessitie to take another course with them: and to punish their iniquities with the greater rigor.

Vers. 12. *I will declare thy righteousnesse and thy workes; and they shall not profit thee.*

Though God suffer long, (yet his patience being abused) he will be auenged at length.

THe Prophet shewes that God will suffer no more so long as he hath done in times past, but that heereafter he shall be constrained to take another course with them. Hee mentions their *righteousnesse*, by way of derision: for vnder this word, hee vnderstands all the impieties and errors wherewith they were stained and defiled. As if he should say; *I will haue your righteousnesse to be seene of all.* For whilest God holds his peace, those that are most vniust, & filled with all corruptions, seeme to be pettie Saints: but when God gets vp into his iudgement seate, then men are forced to come out of their dennes, and their villanies are manifested to euery one: Psal. 50. 21. The Prophet therefore meant to say, that the world esteemes horrible impieties to be vertues, as long as God is silent: but this shall vanish at the last, when hee shall sit to iudge of them. For after men shal haue flattered themselues much, and for a long time together, yet in the end they shall feele him to be their iudge.

And they shall not profit thee] This appertaines to the effect; by which men are wont to iudge of things for the most part. For they care not whether the matter bee iust or vniust, but imagin, *that whatsoeuer is profitable, ought to be approued of*: and therefore denounceth, that all the *vvorkes* from whence they expected any *benefit* should turne to their detriment and ruine.

Vers. 13. *When thou crieft, let them that thou hast gathered together, deliuer thee: but the winde shall take them all away; vanitie shall pull them away: but hee that trusteth in mee, shall inherit the land, and shall possesse mine holy mountaine.*

The former verse amplified.

HEe shewes now more at large, that which hee touched but briefly in the former verse, namely, that when the matter shal come to the vp-shot, they shall be confounded: for the clause, *let them deliuer thee*, signifies as much as if he had said; *they shall not be able to doe it.* In this verse then hee alludes to that which he said before, in vers. 9. to wit, Thou wentest to Kings with thy presents. And for this cause hee calles all the meanes whereby the Iewes thought to secure themselues, *gathered*: for in resting thereupon, they prostituted themselues to all kindes of villanies, as if they had had been liable to no punishment at all, in regard they were fortified with ramparts on euery side. But the Lord shewes how vaine all their preparations are, that are thus gathered together without him.

The *cry* here signifies that calamitie wherewith they should be afflicted. For being setled vpon leagues and succours of their confederates, they thought themselues in such safetie, as if before they had neuer been annoied by such associates. But hee protests, that all the aid which they haue *gathered together*, shall serue them to *no vse*: for the hopes which we conceiue in the things of this world, and in the helpe of man, ioined with the forsaking of God, is accursed and abominable: Ier. 17. 7.

Hee reproched the Iewes in Chap. 8. 6. for not contenting themselues with the still waters of *Sih*, but searched out swelling and roring riuers, which would ouerwhelme them in the end: which indeed came so to passe. For the *Assyrians*, *Egyptians*, and in the end the *Chaldeans*, not onely were vnprofitable to the Iewes, with whom they were confederate, but at last were also their destruction.

Afterwards there followes an opposition, wherein he recalles them to *trust in God*; which was the onely remedie that ought to bee opposed to all calamities: as on the contrary, all our miseries flow from our owne infidelitie and distrust. And whereas hee promiseth an *heritage* to those that hope in the Lord, it is as if hee should haue said; What is it that you seeke, but that you may liue in safetie, and that your inheritance may remaine whollie vnto you? And I am sure my selfe can giue it you. For (tell me) who brought you into this land? Who gaue you possession in it? And yet you trot downe into Egypt, and seeke aid from men which cannot helpe you, and you set mine assistance at nought. The word *heritage* out of all doubt is meant of Iudea, wherin the Iewes desired to remaine securely. For afterwards, he mentions the *mountaine of his holinesse*, whereupon the Temple was built. Thus then the Iewes sought to turne God out of his office as it were, seeing they rather ranne for succour to the Egyptians and Assyrians, then to him.

All our miseries flow from our owne infidelitie.

Hence let vs gather a generall doctrine, namely, that all our affaires shall succeede well, if we trust in God: but if wee reiect that, wee are not to wonder if wee be tossed from post to pillar, and carried with the violence of diuers tempests, whither we would not. By the *holy mountaine*, to which the Iewes were to be brought againe, hee meanes, that neither life, nor none of the commodities thereof, are to be desired, but vpon condition that we may therewithall inioy the true worship of God: for the end of mans life is, that God may haue a people to call vpon his name purely. Let our eies then be alwaies fixed vpon the honour and seruice of our God, if wee either desire deliuerance from troubles, or to inioy life with the commodities thereof.

Doctrine.

The end of mans life.

Vers.

Verſ. 14. *And he ſhall ſay, Caſt vp, caſt vp: prepare the Way: take vp the ſtumbling-blocks out of the way of my people.*

See verſ 13.

BEcauſe this promiſe (to wit, that thoſe who truſted in the Lord ſhould poſſeſſe the land) might ſeeme ridiculous, ſeeing ſoone after they ſhould be baniſhed out of their countrie: therefore this ſecond promiſe is added for the little remnants ſake which yet remained. In which he promiſeth that they ſhall be brought home againe into the land of Canaan, though for a time they were caſt out and driuen into a farre countrie. He meetes with a doubt which might ariſe, that ſo the faithfull might not be diſcouraged during this long and tedious exile, nor eſteeme Gods promiſes to be vaine.

A preuention.

Some expound, That the Lord would ſend true and faithfull Prophets which ſhould remoue and purge out thoſe offences of the Church, wherewith it was corrupted by falſe prophets, and wicked gouernors. For they, as he ſhewed in Chap. 56. 10. 11. were the cauſe of the ruine of it, and therefore they iudge that heere is a better and more deſirable eſtate promiſed. But this expoſition ſutes very ill, and therefore I had rather follow the firſt, namely, that albeit the Iewes for a time were to be depriued of this land, yet the Lord would eſtabliſh them therein againe, who will to that end command the *rough vvaies to be made ſmooth*, for their returne. This place therefore agrees with that which we haue ſeene in Chap. 40. 1. 2. 3. 4. where the Lord commanded that the people ſhould be *comforted: that their returne ſhould be proclaimed: and that the vvaies ſhould be cleanſed.* For being yet in Babylon as in a ſepulcher, and the diſtance of place very great, and the paſſage tedious, they were hardly drawne to hope that they ſhould euer returne againe into their countrie.

1 2 3

Iſaiah therefore was not lightly to paſſe ouer this matter, that ſo he might take from them all feare of being hindred in their iourney, either in regard of the mountaines or the ſea. He ſpeakes to *Cyrus* and *Darius* then, into whoſe minds God would inſpire a will to giue the Iewes both paſſage, and all neceſſaries fit for the ſame. As if he ſhould ſay, The Lord will ſend the Iewes ſuch ſeruants of his as they little thinke of now, by whoſe miniſtrie he will prepare the way, and bring back his people. The maner of ſpeech whereby he commands, hath greater vehemencie in it, then if he had ſpoken in the third perſon.

Cyrus. Darius.

In that he bids them *to take away the ſtumbling blocks*: he ſignifies, that they ought not to be diſmayed for the lets and impediments that lay in their way, for the Lord would eaſily remoue them in his good time. *Out of the vvay of my people.* The hope of the returne is included in this, namely, that after God had brought back his people, he would againe place them in the land of Canaan. And therfore howſoeuer for ought they could ſee, there was no way nor paſſage left for them, yet would be prouide one, and would breake all barres and obſtacles. Why ſo? Becauſe they had the Lords promiſe here for their returne: and in deed it was he that brought them home in ſafetie.

Verſ. 15. *For thus ſaith he that is high and excellent, he that inhabiteth the eternitie, whoſe name is the holy one, I dwell in the high and holy place: with him alſo that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit to reuiue the ſpirit of the humble, and to giue life to them that are of a contrite heart.*

A confirmation of the former ſentence.

HE confirmes the former ſentence touching the reſtoring of the people after their captiuitie. But this verſe may be two waies expounded; either, that the Prophet preuents a doubt which might fall into their minds of the faithfull, and ſo he mentions things oppoſite; or, that he drawes an argument from Gods nature, to confirme the hearts of the weake. That this may be the better vnderſtood and opened: firſt of all we know that our minds are often diſtracted by ſuch thoughts as theſe, to wit, That God in deed is *in heauen*, but in the meane while there is *a great diſtance betweene him and vs*: and that he little regards vs; or elſe lets things goe at ſix and ſeuen in the world: or that hee cares little or nothing for our matters. Now to correct this imagination, the Prophet grants it is true that God *dwels on high*, but yet doth not therfore ceaſe to behold and to gouerne this world by his prouidence: for he is careful of mens ſaluations, and *dwels alſo vvith the afflicted*, and with thoſe that are of a contrite and broken heart. For though the Lord be high, yet he beholdeth the lowly, as it is in Pſal. 113. 3. 4. and 148. 6. and in other places.

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The other ſenſe is, that God reſembles vs nothing at all. For we tremble in aduerſitie, becauſe we meaſure him according to our owne capacitie: and thus we mutter, *How can the Lord help vs, ſeeing vve are ouerwhelmed with troubles?* Moreouer, the afflicted are for the moſt part deſpiſed and neglected. And thus we thinke that God is careleſſe of vs, becauſe we conceiue of him according to the reach of our carnall reaſon. But it is our parts to iudge farre otherwiſe of him, and therfore the Prophet ſaith, that *he dwel. in the heauens*, to ſignifie, that *he is not ſubiect to humane affections*: for he is alwaies like himſelfe, and neuer changeth his counſell. As he therefore hath once promiſed to reſtore the people to their former libertie, ſo will he aſſuredlie performe it.

This expoſition I approue of, and yet rather accept of the firſt, which is more ample and copious, and alſo agrees with other teſtimonies of the holy Scriptures, where theſe two things are often conioined, namely, That God dwels in heauen, and yet hath reſpect to things below: but eſpeciallie of his children, as I ſaid erewhile.

Dwelling in eternitie.] But we grouell on the earth, we are vnſtable, and neuer continue ſtayed nor ſetled in that which we haue once

Obiect.

Anſ. imbraced: and therefore hee ſeparates God from men; for in him there is not ſo much as a ſhadow of turning: Iames 1.17. Contrariwiſe, wee are not ſo affectioned, as to haue a perpetuall care ouer ſuch as neede our helpe.

I dwell in the high and holy place.] *The holy place* is often taken for the *Temple*; but heere it is taken for *heauen* it ſelfe. We ſee wherefore the Lord calles himſelfe *holy*, and *dwelling in an high and holy place*, euen that hee might cauſe vs *to know vvhat difference there is betvveene him and vs, and betweene his nature and ours.* Beſides, we may hence collect a ſpeciall conſolation, namely, that the Lord will *aſſiſt the poore, yea, and dwell in the middeſt of them*, if ſo be they acknowledge their miſeries. For the wicked ſhall be preſſed with diuers calamities; but in the meane while they ceaſe not to remaine haughtie and vntamed. Let ſuch neuer looke to haue *God dwell vvith them*: for thoſe that will expect any comfort from him, muſt be rightly humbled, and brought low in their owne ſight. But he ſtoopes euen to the dead, that by inſpiring new life into them, he may create them anew. Afterwards, he makes expreſſe mention of the *humble ſpirit*, and *contrite heart*, to let vs vnderſtand, that theſe promiſes appertaine to none that are rebellious and ſtiffe-necked in their afflictions, but to ſuch as hauing at laſt ſubdued all loftineſſe of ſpirit, ſhall ſhew themſelues humble and meeke.

Why God calles himſelfe the holy one, dwelling on high.

A conſolation.

With whom God will dwell.

Verſ. 16. *For I will not contend for euer, neither will I be alwaies wroth: for the ſpirit ſhould faile before me, and I haue made the breath.*

He proſecutes the ſame matter ſtill.

HE proſecutes the ſame doctrine. For this was an hard matter to perſwade them of, in regard that in this tedious baniſhment, they felt God as it were their enemie. It was no eaſie matter then for them to conceiue ſuch a taſte of this grace, as might cauſe them to take heart vnto them, and to bee of good cheere. The Prophet therefore meetes with this doubt, and ſhewes that the euils which they were to indure, ſhould laſt but for a time, and that God *vvould not alwaies be vvroth*. No doubt but hee hath iuſt cauſe giuen him to be angry: but hee rather parts with his right, and pardons that which he might iuſtly exact. And thus he ioines *vvith Gods vvrath, that moderation vvhereby hee comforts the faithfull, leſt the ſpirit ſhould faile*. For albeit he reaſons from the nature of God, yet this promiſe is particularly directed to the Church. Let vs for euer then keepe this point in our remembrance in our extreameſt anguiſhes; that ſo we may not thinke that God will ſtand to *contend* or to plead the caſe with vs.

In wrath God ſtill remembers mercie.

When he ſaith that God is *vvroth*: it is by way of yeelding ſo much vnto vs, in reſpect of the weakneſſe of our fleſh: for in aduerſitie we can conceiue no otherwiſe of God, but as of an angry Iudge: and no queſtion it is profitable for vs to bee touched with this feeling, which ought to bring vs to repentance. This phraſe of ſpeech then muſt wholly bee referred to our weakeneſſe, and not vnto God.

For the Spirit ſhall be clothed againe.] Heere he renders a reaſon wherefore the Lord will not contend for euer: but this place is diuerſly expounded. Among other expoſitions, this ſeemes to agree beſt; that the *Spirit is clothed* with the body, as with a garment. In which regard, the body alſo is called the Tabernacle or dwelling place of the Spirit. If we receiue this expoſition, there will be a double ſenſe: for ſome referre this place to the laſt reſurrection, and ſay, that the ſoule ſhall bee clothed: that is to ſay, after it ſhall depart from the body, ſhee ſhall returne the ſecond time into it, as into her houſe. And thus it ſhould be an argument from the greater to the leſſe, thus; I will raiſe the dead bodies: wherefore then ſhould not I put you into a better eſtate, though you ſeeme as good as dead? The other ſenſe which ſome others follow, will be better, and leſſe conſtrained: for this interpretation touching the laſt reſurrection, ſeemes far remote from the ſcope of the text.

I haue compaſſed the Spirit in vvith the body.] As if hee ſhould ſay; It is I that haue created men; you muſt thinke that I will haue a care of them then. But I ſhould thinke that the Prophet mounts higher: for he teacheth that the Lord handles vs thus mildly and graciouſly, becauſe hee knowes and is well acquainted with our frailtie and infirmities. This doctrine is confirmed vnto vs by many other places of the Scriptures; but amongſt the reſt, out of Pſal.103.13,14,15. Euen as a father pitieth his owne children, ſo is the Lord compaſſionate ouer ſuch as feare him. He knowes whereof we be made, he remembers we are but duſt. Man is like to graſſe, he floriſheth as a flower of the field. In Pſal.78. 38,39. it is ſaid in the ſame ſenſe; But he *being merciefull, forgaue their iniquities, and deſtroyed them not. He often called backe his anger, and ſuffered not his vvhole diſpleaſure to ariſe: for he remembred they vvere but fleſh, and a vvinde that paſſeth avvay, and returneth not againe*. And me thinkes the Prophet meant thus much in this place, as if the Lord ſhould haue ſaid; Should I doe trying my force againſt a little *vvinde*, or breath; or againſt a *leafe*, or *graſſe*, which vaniſheth in a moment, and withers away as ſoone as it hath felt the heate of the Sunne?

Some expound the verbe *Iaatoph*, *Shall faile*: and this agrees well enough to this place; for our Spirit muſt needes faile, as ſoone as the Lord doth begin to manifeſt his power againſt vs: Pſal.104.29. But not to ſtand vpon the ſignification of the words, we ſee, I hope, what the Prophets meaning is: for he ſhewes that God *ſpares vs*, and vſeth great lenitie towards vs, in correcting our vices, becauſe he reſpects our infirmity, and meanes to ſupport and relieue it.

Verſ. 17. *For his wicked couetouſneſſe, I am angry with him, and haue ſmitten*

ſmitten him: I hid me and was angry, yet he went away, and turned after the way of his owne heart.

A complaint. HEre he complaines of the deſperate obſtinacie of the people, and ſhewes that the Lord had exceeding iuſt cauſe to puniſh them thus: ſo as they could not complaine of his ouer great ſeueritie.

For his luſts.] Others turne it, For his auarice. And in this ſenſe if you vnderſtand it of auarice, it is by a figure called Synecdoche, taken as a part for the whole. For couetouſneſſe is the roote from whence other vices ſpring. But we may take it generally for all luſts. For the Lord was wroth againſt ſo many wickednesſes, wherewith the Iewes were ſtained: and puniſhed them ſeuerely for them. But he ſpeakes expreſly of luſt, to ſhew that they were chaſtiſed, not ſo much for their manifeſt and open ſinnes, as for that they *were guiltie before God.* For this ſufficeth to all mens condemnation, that God is the Iudge of thoughts. So as he will not onely puniſh notorious iniquities, but alſo the ſecret inordinate and wicked luſts and affections of the heart. Beſides, hee aduertiſeth them that they are iuſtly *ſmitten:* that by feeling their guiltineſſe, they might humblie ſue for pardon.

I haue ſmitten him, and hid my ſelfe.] The meaning of theſe words is, that his grace ſtood a farre off and *was hidden* from them for a time. But he ſpeakes according to our opinions. For we apprehend God as an enemie and angrie with vs, when he puniſheth our offences, as we haue ſaid before. And doubtleſſe it is needefull we ſhould thus conceiue of him and apprehend him, that thereby we may be brought to acknowledge our ſinnes: which we will neuer do in good earneſt, neither will we be effectuallie touched with the horror of them, vnleſſe we conſider and be aſſuredly perſwaded in our minds and conſciences that we haue thereby prouoked the wrath of God againſt vs. Now as it is expedient that we be brought to repentance by this meanes, yet let vs beware that we be not ouerwhelmed with ſorrow, in imagining either that God is irreconciliable, or that he will haue no more to doe with vs. Thus then the Prophet mitigates theſe exceſſiue feares, and forbids vs to meaſure God according to our owne ell. For albeit he chaſten vs, yet ceaſeth he not to beare a gracious loue and fatherly affection towards them whom he hath adopted.

Beware of being ouerwhelmed by deſperate ſorrow.

But he vvent his vvay.] This is the rebellion which the Prophet taxeth and reproues, namely, that the people amended not by their ſtripes, but obſtinately perſeuered in their wickednes: and therefore he ſhewes they were growne paſt cure, in regard the violent remedies which God vſed could not bring them back into the right way.

Verſ. 18. *I haue ſeene his waies and will heale him: I will leade him alſo and reſtore comfort vnto him, and to thoſe that lament him.*

THe Lord here on the contrarie magnifies his mercie, in regard that he is fauorable to this ſo obſtinate and rebellious a people, and in preuenting them of his meere bountie and compaſſion. As if he ſhould ſay, I haue indeuored to bring them to repentance by my rods and chaſtiſements, euen whileſt they purſued their luſts: but they haue ſhewed themſelues obſtinate and incorrigible, ſo as I haue ſpent all my labour in vaine. I might therefore (if I would) iuſtly deſtroy them, yet had I rather *heale* and ſaue them. But this can not be effected vnleſſe I manifeſt my great and infinite mercie. Well, I will therefore withdraw my corrections. You ſee then that our Prophet by degrees amplifies and ſets forth Gods mercie, whom he brings in as a careful Phyſition, bethinking himſelf of the apteſt and fitteſt medicines to cure this peoples maladies. But they are incurable, vnleſſe the Lord preuent vs for his owne mercie and truths ſake. Let his rods be neuer ſo ſharp and biting, yet can they not draw vs to repentance, vnleſſe the Lord worke it in vs by his holy Spirit. Alas! without it wee are in danger to grow the more obſtinate and hard hearted. In this people therefore we may behold the image of mans corrupted nature, therein the better to take knowledge of our owne obſtinacie and rebellion againſt God; as alſo what remedies are the meeteſt to heale our ſpirituall ſicknesſes: ſo as being ſick, nay halfe dead, yet wee may recouer health, and be brought into the right way, and therein remaine.

Our maladies incurable, if the Lord ſhould not preuent vs by his grace.

Reade Exod. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. and 12. Chapters.

Our Prophet ſhewes herewithall, that perſeuerance in a good courſe is the only worke of God, whereupon followes a great conſolation, which yet wee can not haue, nor faith neither, if repentance be wanting: for ſuch as are not at oddes with themſelues in regard of their ſinnes, can neuer conceiue ought but Gods wrath, terrors, and deſpaire. Wee are carefullie to obſerue the order then which *Iſaiah* keepes heere; for he doth not raſhly adde a *conſolation* to the healing, becauſe ſuch as recouer their health, do therewithall recouer ioy of heart, whereof they were before depriued.

Perſeuerance the only worke of God.

When he addes, *and to thoſe that lament him;* he ſeemes eſpeciallie to note out the faithfull who were few in number, as it appeares by the Prophets complaints, who make ſharp and bitter inuectiues againſt the drouzines wherewith this people was whollie poſſeſſed. He ſpeakes to thoſe then who being guiltie of common offences, were conſtrained to weepe in regard of the griefe which preſſed them neere: and *lamented* not only the calamities of the people, but alſo in pitifull ſort mourned vnder the ſenſe of Gods wrath, whileſt others plunged themſelues in their voluptuouſnes.

Verſ. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips to be peace: peace to them that are farre*

of, and to them that are neere, saith the Lord; for I will heale him.

An explication of the former sentence.

THis is the explication of the former sentence, namely, by what meanes the Lord would *comfort* this people, to wit, by promising and offering them *peace*: for by the *fruit of the lips*, he signifies, that they shall heare such good newes of *peace*, as shall reuiue and reioice their hearts. And, as I take it, he speakes of the publishing of that *peace*, which was committed first to the Prophets, then to the Apostles, and other Ministers of the Gospell: as Saint *Paul* teacheth, 2.Cor.5.20. Wee are Ambassadors for Christ (saith he) and doe beseech men to be reconciled vnto God.

The repetition of the word *peace*, serues not onely for the greater confirmation, but it also signifies a continuall progresse of it. As if he should say; You heare nothing now but terrible threatnings: the doctrine of grace and saluation is as good as buried: for you are vncapeable of it; your obstinacie is such, that you must bee thundered against with terrors and menaces: but one day I will restore vnto you the doctrine of peace, and I will open the lippes of my Prophets, which shall publish the same in your eares.

To those that are farre off.] This was added in regard the people, who were carried away captiue, thought that these things appertained not vnto thē, because they were *farre off*, but such as were left in the Country, might happily inioy this *fruit*; for their exile was vnto them as a kind of reiection. But the Prophet protests, that euen they shal taste of this grace, though they *be farre remote*. Lastly, the effect is added, namely, that God would *heale* the people: that is to say, would keepe them safe and sound. Hence we gather that which I touched but erewhile, to wit, that whatsoeuer appertaines to the true and perfect felicitie of the Church, is the free gift of God.

It seemes Saint *Paul* had an eye to this place, in Eph. 2.17. where he saith, that Christ hath brought *peace* to those which were *neere*, and to those a farre off. Now hee speakes of Iewes and Gentiles: for the Iewes were *neere*, because God had made a couenant with them; and the Gentiles were *farre off*, in regard they had no part in this couenant. But

Obiect. it seemes our Prophet speakes onely of the Iewes? I answere, that the Apostle retaines

Ans. the Prophets true meaning, if all be well considered: for the Iewes are said to be farre off heere, because they seemed to be banished out from the house of the Lord: and in this respect their condition was like to that of the Gentiles. Seeing then that during the time of their banishment, there was no difference betweene them and the Gentiles, Saint *Paul* had iust cause to put them both in one ranke, and therefore makes them paires: and thus applied that to the Gentiles which our Prophet had said touching the Iewes: as in like maner he applies the place of Hosea, Chap.1. 10. to the Gentiles: Rom.9.26.

Vers. 20. *But the wicked are like the raging sea, that cannot rest, whose waters cast vp mire and dirt.*

A denunciation against the wicked.

HAuing spoken of that *peace* which the faithfull should inioy, he on the contrarie denounceth against the wicked continuall warre and perpetuall troubles, and garboiles of conscience, wherewith they should be vexed. And the rather, that the faithfull for their parts might the better prize this excellent benefit of peace: as also, that the wicked might know, that this peace is so promised to Gods children, that their condition shall no whit be bettered by it. But in regard these doe often vainly and falsly pretend the name of God, and glory in it as a cloke to couer their wickednesse withall; therefore the Prophet shewes, that they shall haue no cause to reioice heerein, or to attribute any thing to themselues in regard of this promise; because they can haue no part in this peace. It should bee little to their good then, though God shewed mercy to his people, receiued them into fauour; or that hee gaue men authoritie to publish peace vnto them.

This similitude of the *sea*, is elegant and verie fit to expresse the disquietnes of the wicked. For the *sea* troubles it selfe, and is tossed with hideous tempests, though the windes be calme: the *waues* iustle one against another with great violence, and breake with a verie terrible noise: and so the wicked are vexed with a secret worme, which cleaueth fast to their consciences; for they are in continuall terrors, by reason of the gnawing and stings thereof, which is a torment that surmounts all the rest, and the most cruell hangman that is to be found in the whole world. The furies of hell harrie and pursue the wicked, not with burning Torches, as the Poets faine; but through anguishes of cōscience, and ꝯ tormēt of their wilfull rebellion: for euery one of thē is affrighted, and extremely tortured by his owne iniquitie: their wicked cogitations amaze them, and cause them to *rage*, and the guilt and scruples of their consciences astonish them. He hath very aptly then compared the wicked to the *raging sea*. He that would escape and auoid these tempests and horrible boiling of spirit: let him beware how hee reiects this *peace* which the Lord offers him. There is no meane betweene these two: for vnlesse wee abandon all our lusts, to entertaine this peace, we must of necessitie be continually tormented and vexed after an horrible maner.

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Vers. 21. *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.*

A confirmation of the former denunciation.

THe Prophet confirmes the former sentence, namely, that the wicked shall gaine nothing in seeking this peace; for they shall haue alarums rung in their eares on euerie side; and in regard that God makes warre vpon them, therefore they shall but lose their labour to hope for *peace*. I grant the *wicked* would with all their hearts inioy peace, yea they much desire it. For what seeke they elsе

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in this world, but to be ſecured, and to rocke their conſciences aſleepe, that they may take their fill of pleaſures, and giue themſelues ouer without checke, vnto all laſciviouſneſſe.

What course the wicked take to attaine peace.

They indeuor to baniſh frō them al thoughts of Gods iudgements, and would faine become ſenſleſſe: and theſe they take to be the true meanes whereby to obtaine peace: but they ſhall neuer this way inioy it; for till they be reconciled vnto God in Chriſt, their conſciences will euer be galling them, and they ſhall not ceaſe to be moleſted with the accuſations thereof. And thus hee brings in God the onely author of peace, who by this terrible ſentence, takes from the Iewes their peace, and calles him *his God*: oppoſing it againſt their vaine glory, who falſly couered themſelues vnder ſuch titles. For they could not be ſaid to haue any knowledge of God, whileſt they reiected both his Prophet and doctrine: and therefore *Iſaiah* is bold by *Gods* expreſſe *commandement*, to proclaime open warre againſt them.

THE LVIII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Cry aloud, ſpare not: lift vp thy voice like a trumpet, and ſhew my people their tranſgreſſions, and to the houſe of Iacob their ſinnes.*

This Chapter depends vpon the former.

THis preſent Chapter was ill diuided, in regard this is knit vnto the former: ſo as if we will vnderſtand the Prophets meaning, wee muſt reade this as if there were no breakingoff. *Iſaiah* hath teſtified that the people ſhould be ſo chaſtiſed, that yet ſome hope of peace remained for them. Now hee confirmes this doctrine, and teacheth that the Lord hath charged him *to cry* out of the throte, or as wee commonly ſay in our ſpeech, with open throte. To what end? Forſooth, *to ſhew the people their ſinnes*. Neither ſpeakes hee onely of the *liſting vp of the voice*, but of that vehemencie and ſeueritie of ſpeech (whereof hypocrites ſtand eſpecially in need) as if God thundered vpon them from heauen. For they flatter themſelues in their vices, if they be not rounly dealt withall, and bee forced to come into the light: nay, no good is to bee done vpon them, vnleſſe they bee laid vpon with maine blowes.

A plaine goſier.

Where he addes, *ſpare not*: it is a forme of ſpeech much vſed among the Hebrewes; *I ſpeake, and will not hold my peace*: as we alſo commonly ſay; Cry without ceaſing. We haue told you that the Prophet ſpeakes not heere ſimply of the *ſound* of the *voice*, but ſignifies a ſharpe & biting kind of reprehenſion, wherewith hypocrites muſt be galled to the quicke: as for example, if the Prophets ſhould onely propound the Law of the Lord, and ſhew wherein the rule of a well ordered life conſiſts, ſhould fall into the praiſe of Gods worſhippe, and without any vehemencie reproue iniquities; what would hypocrites haue been the better for ſuch a cold manner of preaching? For their conſciences are ſo drowſie, that they cannot be awakened, but with *loud and ſhrill cries*. A cold maner of preaching then would doe them no good, vnleſſe they were ſharply preſſed and thundered vpon with terrible threats.

Crie ſans eſpargner.

Saint *Paul* (imitating the Prophets) hauing proued all mankind guiltie and worthy of death, he riſeth vp with great vehemencie, againſt ſuch as had ſome appearance of holineſſe, and yet abuſed Gods patience. Behold, ſaith he, thou art called a Iew, and reſteſt in the Law, and glorieſt in God, thou knoweſt his will, and approueſt the things that are excellent, being inſtructed in the Law. Thou takeſt vpon thee to be a leader of the blind, a light to ſuch as are in darkneſſe, an inſtructer of the ignorant, and an inſtructer of them that lacke diſcretion, hauing a forme of knowledge & of ỹ truth in the Law. But thou which teacheſt others, teacheſt thou not thy ſelfe? thou that preacheſt another ſhould not ſteale, yet doeſt thou ſteale? &c. Rom. 2. Againſt ſuch, in concluſion, hee denounceth iudgement, and the horrible vengeance of God; becauſe they abuſed Gods goodneſſe, and gloried in his name in vaine. Likewiſe in this place the Prophet taxeth the Iewes in particular, who gloried in the name of the Lord, and in the meane while roſe vp in armes againſt him.

This is the courſe then that muſt be taken with hypocrites, who content themſelues with an outward maſke of holineſſe, if wee meane to diſcharge our duties profitably, and as we ought. And euen as the Lord hath exerciſed his Prophets in this combat, ſo muſt wee alſo at this day be in like maner exerciſed; that we may not feare the faces of hypocrites, nor content our ſelues to haue reproued them lightly, in two or three words, *but to cry aloud* with might and maine againſt them.

Obiect.

But, may ſome ſay, If the Lord command ſuch to be reproued for their ſinnes, to whom he promiſeth peace, then no doubt but his meaning was to leaue them ſome hope of ſaluation: and yet it is out of queſtion, that this ſpeech is directed to the reprobates, againſt whom before he proclaimed open war. I anſwere, the faithfull were then few in number: for a ſmall remnant only imbraced this peace which was offered them. When *Iſaiah* then giues hope of a peace neere hand, he had reſpect to that *little flocke*: when he proclaimed warre, that was to terrifie *the multitude*, who

were reuolted from God, and contemned all admonitions. For the ſtate of the people was ſuch that nothing was ſound nor pure among them, as we haue ſeene in chap. 1. 21.

He mentions the *houſe of Iacob*, in regard the moſt of the people were corrupted. Now this diſtinction in the Prophets Sermons is diligently to be noted of vs, in that they now ſpeake to the whole bodie of the people: and by and by reſtraine their ſpeech to a ſmall number of the faithfull. But it is not without a very ſharpe and biting reproch that hee calles thoſe *his people*, and the children of *Iacob*, which were degenerate from their originall, and had ſhamefully reuolted from the faith of the Patriarks. This therefore is a yeelding of ſo much to them: but with a plaine mocke. As if he ſhould ſay, There are no deſerts at all of theirs which ſhall priuiledge them from hearing their owne.

Verſe. 2. *Yet they ſeeke mee daily, and will know my waies, euen as a nation that did righteouſlie, and had not forſaken the ſtatutes of their God: they aske of me the ordinances of iuſtice: they will draw neere vnto God,* ſaying.

A preuention to an obiection.

HE meant here to take from hypocrites all occaſions of replies, for they had their exceptions readie, We feare, ſerue, loue, and ſeeke God with our whole hearts. Wherefore blameſt thou vs as if we were infidels? For we would thou ſhouldeſt wel know we order our liues according to the *ordinances of the law*. But to meete with this obiection, hee denies that they doe any thing purely or ſincerelie: but that all is *hypocriticall, and from the teeth outward*; and therefore God who chiefflie requires a *perfect heart*, reiects ſuch a fained ſeruice. Gen. 17. 1.

And wee are to obſerue the order which the Prophet here followes. For hauing proclaimed open warre againſt the wicked and hypocrites, he now ſeuerely reprooues them, and ſtripes them quite of their fained pretence, vnder which they ſhadowed theſelues. For thus they were to be handled and to bee ferreted out of their lurking holes: otherwiſe doctrine would profit them but little or nothing. Which order as al the faithful are to obſerue in regard of others; ſo ought euery one to applie this doctrine to his ſeueral vſe, that he may not pleaſe nor flatter himſelfe in his vices, leſt he deceiue his owne heart, or ſuffer himſelfe to be ſeduced by the illuſions of the diuell. Let euery one bring with him a pure and an vpright heart, if he meane to profit in the pure doctrine; and to be acceptable to his God.

How he ought to come to bee fitted that] meanes to profit by the word.

Moreouer, although *Iſaiah* attributes to theſe diſſemblers and diſloyall ſome kind of holineſſe: yet he againe taxeth them with a verie bitter flout, as if hee ſhould ſay, Your impudent boaſting is accompanied with too manifeſt an obſtinacie. And thus it is not only a plaine mocke, but there is a complaint mingled therewith, for preſuming to ſerue God in hypocriſie. Whereas if their ſhewes were rightlie examined, and that the whole courſe of their liues were ſufficiently ſifted, it would be found that their hearts were farre remote from God.

They aske of me.] Thoſe who thinke that hypocrites doe here complaine of God, and riſe vp againſt him as it were to pleade the matter with him, haue not rightly conceiued of the Prophets meaning. I confeſſe we ſhal ſee this hereafter: but before that he plucks off from them that maske of fained holineſſe. Hauing ſaid then that they *ſought God dailie*, as if nothing had bin deerer to them then religion, he proſecutes the ſame ſentence, and ſaith, that *they asked of him ordinances of* iuſtice, to the end they might honour God, and follow an vpright courſe of life; to wit, when they made ſhew to burne with zeale.

And no queſtion but the Prophet here recites the chiefeſt exerciſes of the faithfull, which ſometimes hypocrites in appearance ſeeme to imitate. Now the maine point of true godlineſſe conſiſts in ſeeking to Gods reuealed will, that our conuerſation may bee ſquared according to the rules which hee giues, and to depend vpon his ſacred mouth. But the hypocrites doe counterfeit this in ſuch wiſe, that for the moſt part they ſeeme to practiſe that which appertaines to Gods worſhip in an highet meaſure then the faithfull.

Verſ. 3. *Wherefore haue wee faſted, and thou ſeeſt it not? Wee haue punſhed our ſelues, and thou regardeſt it not. Behold, in the day of your faſt you will ſeeke your will, and require all your debts.*

He ſtill proſecutes the ſame argument in this and in the next verſe.

HEe paſſeth on further in the ſame argument, and ſaith, that beſides this *hypocriſie* which thus blindes thoſe that ſerue God to the halues, *pride* doth ſo ſuperabound in them, that they dare in plaine termes *make oppoſition againſt God himſelfe*: and when hee preſſeth them neere, they burſt forth into *complaints*, as if he offered them great wrong. As if they ſhuld haue ſaid; Haſt thou any reaſon to reiect our ſeruices, faſts, and praiers? Wherefore ſhouldſt thou not accept of them? Canſt thou in equitie ſuffer vs to puniſh our ſelues thus for nothing? Hee hath already granted to the hypocrites ſome ſhew of holineſſe, whereby they deceiued the world: but now he ſhewes that they were beſotted, and ready to burſt with pride inwardly, vnder pretence of their painted workes, with which they thought to ſatisfie God, and in regard thereof, outfaced the Prophets, and flattered themſelues in their wickednеſſes, namely, in their infidelitie, rebellion, and obſtinacie againſt God; diſtruſt, crueltie, deceit, and oppreſſion. Theſe were light matters with them, and they thought they might eaſilie purge themſelues of them, by *faſtings* and ſuch bodily exerciſes: for theſe were their goodly merits in which they imagined the whole worſhip

ſhip of God conſiſted, and by which they hoped to be abſolued from all their ſinnes. And thus they ſtrained at a gnat, and made no bones to ſwallow a Camell: Mat. 23. 24.

But if the Iewes had onely been ſuch, and that the world were now growne better, then ſhould we be inforced to ſeeke our examples heereof farre hence: but ſeeing we haue experience euery day of the like dealing, we need not ſpend much time in the expoſition of this text.

Beſides, this complaint may as well be referred to the word as to the power of God. For the Lord iudgeth hypocrites both waies. 1 2 First, he reprooues them by his word: and ſecondlie, he puniſheth their wicked obſtinacie. This may then be referred as well to his corrections, as to the former reprehenſion. But yet I had rather referre it to the word: and I thinke that the hypocrites who vaunted of their *faſts*, are here rebuked for oppoſing theſe exerciſes againſt the Prophets admonitions. As if forſooth they had been the true ſeruants of God, and that they were wrongfully reproued.

Neither am I of their mind who thinke that the people complaine of God for vſing them ſo ſeuerely in this their baniſhment. But I rather thinke they complaine of the Prophets of God, who as they thought, rebuked them too ſharpelie. For the Iewes would needs be held for zealous and deuout men, and could not endure that any ſhould condemne them of impietie or iniquitie. And for this cauſe the Prophet diſcouers their affections; & tels them that they ſtroue againſt God: that ſo they might know they had not to doe with a mortall man.

In the ſecond part of the verſe (in the perſon of God) he refutes the vertues which the hypocrites proclaimed with ſound of trumpet. The reaſon is, becauſe they neuer made any reckoning, touching ŷ *putting off of* their froward and carnall affections, nor began not at the deniall of themſelues. For hee condemnes them eſpecially for being giuen to their luſts: and then mentions certaine particular vices. Whence wee may gather, that they were touched with no care of repentance.

Verſ. 4. *Behold, yee faſt to ſtrife and debate, and to ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſſe: yee ſhall not faſt as* yee doe *to day, to make your voice to be heard aboue.*

The reaſon Why God regarded not the Iewes faſts.

THis verſe muſt be ioyned to the former. For in regard the Lord brought in the hypocrites complaining of ŷ Prophets vehemencie and ſharpeneſſe in the firſt member: now in this ſecond he yeelds a reaſon wherefore the Lord regarded not their faſts and other workes: namelie, becauſe none of theſe things proceeded from a pure affection of the heart. Now he ſhewes what their hearts were by the fruites: for he brings them to the commandements of the ſecond table, whereby it is eaſie to diſcerne what wee are within.

The puritie of the heart manifeſts it ſelfe in an vpright conuerſing with our neighbours, and in abſteining from all fraud and violence. Theſe are ŷ liuely repreſentations of a pure affection: without which God reiects, yea abhorres all externall ſeruices. For where deceit, extortions and robberies haue the full ſcope, it is moſt certaine that there the feare of God hath no place at all. He reprocheth the hypocrites then that vnder colour of their *faſtings*, they took the greater libertie to oppreſſe their brethren, and to follow their luſts the more freely. Wee haue experience of this euery day: for manie faſt, not onely to obtaine pardon for their fraudes, and thefts, and libertie to play the theeues the more freely; but alſo that during the time of their faſts, they may haue the better leiſure to caſt ouer their reckonings, to reade their bils and obligations, to count what gaines are come in by their vſurie, and Vſurie. to deuiſe waies how to intangle the goods of their debters within their nets. And therefore for the moſt our hypocrites put off this buſineſſe vntill Lent, and to the ſet faſting Lent. daies; and ſuch as are the moſt notorious hypocrites, will heare manie Maſſes euery daie, that vnder pretext of religion, they may plot their coſenages and treacheries with more freedome, that ſo no man may come to interrupt them. Laſt of all, the Prophet reiects their faſts, notwithſtanding the high account which they made of them; becauſe by meanes hereof, Gods wrath was the more prouoked.

And by and by after he alſo reiects their *prayers*: whence it appeares (as we haue more largely ſhewed vpon the firſt Chapter) that God approues no ſeruices at all, vnleſſe they proceed from the ſincere affection of the heart. Truly there is no ſacrifice more excellent then *prayer*, and yet we ſee notwithſtanding that the impuritie of the heart pollutes and defiles all our prayers. Moreouer, in regard that faſts are vſuallie ioined with prayer, the Prophet takes it for granted, for indeed, it is a dependance of prayer. He forbids ſuch kind of men then to make ſolemne prayers with faſts, becauſe they ſhall gaine nothing thereby, vnleſſe peraduenture that the Lord will puniſh them the more ſeuerely for it. And hence we gather (as we haue ſaid before) that ŷ Lord reiects all externall works, if the true feare of his Maieſtie goes not before.

God approues no ſeruice, but that which proceedes from the ſincere affection of the heart.

Faſting, a dependance of Prayer.

The faſt which was in vſe among the Iewes is not here in it ſelfe condemned, as if it had bin a ſuperſtitious ceremonie, but the abuſe of it, & vaine confidence in it. Which we are well to obſerue: for we muſt goe another way to worke with the Papiſts, if we ſhould ſtand to reproue their faſts, which are meerely ſuperſtitious, in regard they are tied to certain daies and times, as if the reſt of the yeere it were lawfull to cram their bellies. They alſo hold fleſh to be vncleane, and in the meane while ſtuffe themſelues vp to the throates with iunckets, & delicate meates. In a word, if ſo be they eate and drinke their fils only once in the day when they keepe their faſt,

The Iewes faſt not condemned in it ſelfe.

Faſt of Papiſts meerely ſuperſtitious.

they thinke then they haue done a worke of supererogation. Seeing then that there is nothing in all that which they doe that may be approued of, wee may simplie condemne them. But *Isaiahs* dispute was in another kind: for the fast which the Iewes obserued was laudable in it selfe, because God had instituted it, Leuit 23.27. and 16.29.30. But the false opinion only was condemned. As for the Papists, wee must condemne not only *their false opinion, but the institution of their fasts also*, in regard it is wicked. The Papists ioine together with the Iewes in this, namely, that they thinke God beholding to them for it, and in that they thinke to merit by it. But a fast alone is no seruice of God, neither is it required in it selfe as other works commanded in the law: but it is an outward action, as an handmaid vnto prayer; and is profitable either to tame the flesh, or to testifie our humiliation. As when we feele our selues guiltie, we desire God in the day of our aduersitie that hee would turne his wrath away from vs. But he that would be further instructed touching this point, let him resort to our Institutions, Lib 4. Chap.12. Sect.14.15.16.17. and there he shall find a more ample discourse both concerning the vse and end of it.

Fasting alone is no seruice of God.

Institutions of Caluin.

Vers.5. *Is it such a fast that I haue chosen, that a man should afflict his soule for a day, and to hang downe his head like a bulrush; and to lye downe in sackcloth and ashes? wilt thou call this a fasting, or an acceptable day vnto the Lord?*

A confirmation of the confirmation.

HE confirmes the former sentence, and shewes that God neither approues nor condemnes fasting in it selfe further then when it is applied to the right end. Now his meaning was not vtterly to abolish it, but the wicked abuse of it, to wit, when men put holines in it, and either in despising or neglecting true godlines, they thinke that the bodilie exercise alone sufficeth. For hypocrites are euer wont to make the most they can of their externall ceremonies, and that no lesse, then if they were satisfactions to appease God withall. Now in regard that men according to their headines date of themselues define what Gods seruice is, he therfore brings vs backe expreslie to his own difinition of it, to the end our reason may not giue sentence that a thing is right, vnlesse we be first assured that he approues of it: for howsoeuer men please themselues, and be highly conceited of their owne vnderstandings, and malepertlie vaunt thereof, yet the Lord reiects and abhorres such pride; for he reserues it in his owne power to *make choice* of that which he likes best, neither doth it belong to any other.

To chuse, is as much as to like or allow of: but he protests that this is not acceptable vnto him to see one continue a day without meate, and to goe sorrowfullie with his head *hanging downe*. The Prophet hath vsed a very fit similitude: for as the *bulrush* bowes it selfe easily, notwithstanding it stands bolt vpright, so hypocrites haue skill to bow and hang downe the head, as if they were brought low with faintnes, or to signifie some vaine appearance of humilitie. His meaning was therefore to taxe these superstitious gestures wherein hypocrites are wont to place a kind of holinesse.

Simile.

Sackcloth and ashes were added to fasting then chieflie, when they made solemne profession of their repentance: for they couered themselues with sackcloth, and laid ashes vpon their heads. God approued this as an holie and laudable exercise. And we also see that the Prophets summoning the people to repentance, haue called them to *sackcloth and ashes*, Ioel.1.13. But as we haue formerly said that fasting is not here condemned in it self, no more doth *Isaiah* condemne these externall rites; only he rebukes hypocrites for separating the truth from the signes.

When sackcloth and ashes were chieflie in vse.

If any shall aske, whether sackcloth and ashes agree to our times or no: I answere, that they are things indifferent, which may also be vsed to edification. And yet it is not needful to vse such shadowes now in the light of the Gospel, which hath brought vs greater libertie. Herewithall we are also to note the difference which is betweene the Easterne people who vse many ceremonies: and the Westerne, who are much more sparing therein, so as if wee should imitate them, it would be little better then a may-game, or apish tricks. And yet this hinders not them who are desirous to confesse their faults; to clothe themselues in vile rayment after the manet of the penitents, who craued pardon and mercie.

Quest. Ans.

An acceptable fast.] From hence we obserue that fasts were celebrated whē solemne prayers were made; and that all the Church was assembled together. For fasting is but the handmaid of prayer, as we haue shewed before; and wee also see that Christ addes it thereunto, Matth. 17. 21. It is not instituted then in regard of it selfe, but tends to another end.

Fasting the handmaid of prayer.

Vers. 6. *Is not this the fasting that I haue chosen, to loose the bands of wickednes, to take off the heauie burthens, and to let the oppressed goe free, and that yee breake euery yoke?*

THe Prophet shewes wherein the true offices of pietie which are principally commanded of God consist, namely, *in comforting the poore and oppressed*. But it seemes the Prophet vtterlie aboliseth *fasting*, when in stead thereof hee recites those works which are much more acceptable vnto God. I answere, that *fasting* is then approued, when *charitie* is ioined with it. The Prophet brings vs to this principle, to wit, that our consciences may be pure & sound, & that we exercise our selues in shewing brotherly kindnes one to another. For if this order be duly obserued, then fasting being added thereto, wil be pleasing and acceptable to the Lord. But, may some say, here is not a word vttered touching the

What duties God allowes of in fasting.

Obiect.

Ans. Fasting approoued when charity is ioyned with it.

Anſ. the puritie of the heart. I anſwere, it is vnderſtood by the fruits that proceede from the ſame, or from the workes by which it is eaſie to diſcerne what the heart is. In the next place he numbers vp the duties of the ſecond Table, and ſo vnder this part vnderſtands the obſeruation of the whole Law; as wee haue ſeene in Chap. 56. For it is not enough to be beneficial to our neighbours, if in the meane while we contemne God. But we are to note our Prophets meaning: for in as much as we cannot hold the band of brotherly loue with our neighbours, vnleſſe the loue of God goe before, to examine whether this loue and feare of his Maieſtie bee in vs or no, hee requires theſe Chriſtian duties, as the neereſt ſignes therof, namely, if we liue with our brethren, iuſtly, louingly, and without offering them any hard meaſure. Adde alſo, that an outward appearance will not ſerue the turne: for where the Spirit of God beares not rule, there charitie is cold. And therefore S. *Paul* makes expreſſe mention of *loue* among the fruits of the Spirit: Gal. 5. 22. When the obſeruation of the Law is mentioned then, we vnderſtand not onely the outward actions, but the affections of the heart muſt alſo come into account.

To looſe the bands of vnrighteouſneſſe.] Some expound it; The wicked thoughts, wherewith men are bound and intangled. But it ſeemes *Iſaiah* meant otherwiſe, to wit, that hypocrites are very mercileſſe towards the poore, and lay very heauie *yokes* vpō them. He calles that knots or bands, which wee commonly terme oppreſſions. To which agrees that which is added, *to take off the heauie burthens*, vnder the weight whereof, the poore & needie grone, and are in a maner ouerwhelmed therewith. The Prophet then ſets not downe the definition of a faſt, but ſhewes what the Lord chiefly and principally requires in the
1 firſt place: alſo by what meanes our ſeruice
2 may bee acceptable before him: and how
3 thoſe ought to bee fitted and prepared that meane to faſt.

Verſ. 7. *Is it not to deale thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poore that wander vnto thine houſe? When thou ſeeſt the naked, that thou couer him, and hide not thy ſelfe from thine owne fleſh?*

He ſtill goes on in deſcribing the duties of loue.

HEe goes on in deſcribing the duties of loue, which hee touched in the former verſe. For hauing ſaid in the firſt place, that
1 wee muſt abſtaine from doing any wrong;
2 now he admoniſheth vs to ſhew our ſelues liberall and lowly towards the afflicted, and ſuch as ſtand in neede of our helpe. For there are two parts of equitie and iuſtice. Firſt, that

Two parts of equitie.

1 we offer no man any wrong: ſecondly, that
2 we imploy our riches and goods towards the maintenance of them that are in want and neceſſitie: and theſe two parts muſt be ioined together. For it is not enough to abſtaine from violent courſes, vnleſſe therewithall we ſhew mercy in relieuing our poore brethrens wants. Neither is it ſufficient to ſuccour one, if you rob from ſome to beſtow vpon others: for wee muſt not relieue our neighbours wants by thefts and pillages. And if thou haſt committed any iniuſtice, crueltie, or extortion, thou oughteſt not to make amends by calling in God to thee, as if thou wouldſt make him partner with thee of thy ſpoiles. It is neceſſarie then, you ſee, that theſe two parts be ioined together, if we would haue God to approue and allow of our charitie.

In commanding them to *breake their bread to the hungry*, he meant to take away all excuſes from the couetous and niggardly, who are wont to reply, that their goods are their owne: like *Nabal*, 1. Sam. 25. 11. It is mine owne, ſay they, and therefore I may keepe it to my ſelfe. Why ſhould I make that common, which God hath giuen me for my particular vſe? The Prophet anſwers, that it doth indeed appertaine vnto *thee*, but vpon condition that thou *dealeſt* out part thereof to the *hungry* and *thirſtie*: and not that thou ſhouldeſt eate all thy ſelfe alone. Truly common reaſon teacheth vs, that the *hungry* are defrauded of their right, vnleſſe their wants be ſupplied: yea, ſuch a wofull ſpectacle often moues the moſt barbarous and cruell to compaſſion.

Afterwards hee reckons vp ſome particulars, which are vſually wont to mollifie the ſtonieſt heart, and moue them to ſhew mercie. The reaſon is, that their inhumanitie which are not touched with the ſenſe of the pouertie, and need of their brethren, might be the leſſe excuſable.

Laſtly, hee concludes, *and hide not thy face from thine owne fleſh*: where we are to note this word *fleſh*; for thereby he meanes all men in generall; not one, whereof wee can behold, but therein of neceſſitie wee muſt view *our owne nature*, as in a glaſſe. It is great inhumanitie then to diſdaine and deſpiſe thoſe in whom wee are forced to acknowledge our owne image.

Verſ. 8. *Then ſhall thy light breake forth as the morning, and thine health ſhall grow ſpeedily: thy righteouſneſſe ſhall goe before thee, and the glory of the Lord ſhall imbrace thee.*

THe Prophet ſhewes that God is not ouer rigorous, neiter requires hee of vs more then is neede, though hypocrites complaine cauſleſly neuer ſo much, in accuſing him of too great ſeueritie: for when their workes are condemned, then they gnaſh the teeth, and anſwer, that God can neuer be content; and therefore they know not what they ſhould doe more, nor what way to take. Hee anſwers them againe, that God requires no more but a pure and vpright heart: that is to ſay, a good conſcience. If they haue that, he will ſhew them mercy, and in gathering them together againe, will giue teſtimonie of their holineſſe, and will bleſſe them euery manner of way, whom he hath iuſtly chaſtiſed for their diſloyalties.

A preuention of an obiection.

disloyalties. In a word, that they shall haue no occasion at all to murmure, as if he were too sharpe towards them; because they should taste of his bountie and liberalitie, if in reiecting all hypocrisie, they would dispose themselues to worship him in sinceritie.

We must note the particle *then*. For on the contrarie, it signifies that hypocrites are very farre off from this pure worship of God, though they would be taken for the holiest men in the world. But the Prophet holds them more then conuinced, when by their owne workes he shewes that they neither feare nor reuerence the Lord.

By the word *light*, he meanes a prosperous estate: as on the contrarie; *darkenesse* signifies a life full of miserie and calamities. And this we know is a phrase of speech much vsed in the Scriptures. *Health*, notes out an happie and quiet life, as we shal see anon in another place. For the plagues which were inflicted vpon this people by the hand of God in regard of their sinnes, had almost consumed them: so as they pined away as a sicke man that is brought low by a languishing disease. For there is no sickenesse so sharpe, as to be presséd with the iust vengeance of God, or to be wasted vnder his curse.

Mich.7.8. *Chap 42.16.*

The word *righteousnesse* may be taken two waies: either for a testimonie of vprightnesse: or for an estate well ordered: because God would heale the confusions, and place all things in their first estate. The first sense then will be; after God shall be reconciled with thee, *the testimonie of thy righteousnesse shal appeare* before him and before men; as if an Herauld of armes went before thee. There are other expositors, which had rather take *righteousnesse*, for a well ordered commonwealth, which is a gift of God, and no small token of his fatherly loue. And in other places also we haue seene that it is taken in this sense amongst the Hebrews. But the last member which followes, *the glorie of the Lord*; causeth me rather to follow the first exposition, *Thy righteousnesse shall goe foorth*, that is to say, *All shall know that thou art iust and holie; whereas before thou wast guilty and conuicted.* And thus the *glorie of the Lord* shall be put vpon thee: whereas before thou wert ouerwhelmed with ignominie and reproches. For we are exposed to shame and contempt, when we beare the punishment of our transgressions.

Vers. 9. *Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answere: thou shalt crie, and hee shall say, Here I am: if thou take away from the middest of thee the yoke, the putting foorth of the finger, and wicked speaking.*

The same argument further prosecuted.

Isaiah prosecutes that which he hath alreadie begun to intreate of, namely, that the Iewes should prosper in all things, if they liue in such equitie, and so abstaine from all wrong, that thence men may take notice of their piety and religion. For he pronounceth that which is said by *Hosea*, and is repeated by Christ: That mercie ought to bee preferred before sacrifice: Hos.6.7. Matth.12 7. Hauing spoken then of the duties of charitie, and likewise hauing protested that such as performe them shall be happie; now he ads, *Then thou shalt cal, and the Lord shal heare thee.* For herein consists the chiefest part of our happinesse: namelie, if God vouchsafe to *heare vs*: contrariwise, there cannot befall vs a more wofull condition, then when hee is our enemy.

Wherein our principall happinesse consists.

Now for the exercise of our faith, he attributes that to our *prayers* which he is minded to bestow voluntarily, and of his meere liberalitie. For if he should still supplie vs with his benefits while we slept, as it were; the affection of prayer would grow cold in vs, yea would be vtterly frozen vp; and so his liberality should nourish our sloth & negligence. Albeit then that hee preuent vs by his free grace; yet will he haue our prayers to come betweene: and therfore he addes, *Thou shalt crie, and he shall say, Here I am.* For this promise containes also an exhortation, to the end we should not remaine idle. When hee saith, *Here am I*: this appertaines not to our outward senses; but by the effects he shewes that he is neere vnto vs, and a fauour vs.

And in the end of the verse he repeates againe, that God will be pacified towards the Iewes, if so be they did repent. By the *yoke*, he comprehends all the molestations wherewith the poore were vexed. As if hee should say, If thou ceasest to molest thy brethren, and abstainest from deceit and violence: the Lord will blesse thee euery kind of way.

The *lifting vp of the finger* also, containes vnder it all manner of iniuries. For wee are wont to say, *Lift vp thy finger*, when we meane to deale cruellie with our neighbours, or to offer them any outrage. The *word of vanity*, is the third kind of wrong, by which wee hurt our neighbour in deceiuing them with sweet and sugred words. For all iniquitie is composed either of secret fraud and malice: or of open violence.

Vers. 10. *If thou powre out thy soule to the hungrie, and refresh the troubled soule: then shall thy light spring out of darkenesse, and thy darkenesse* shall be *as the noone day.*

Powre out thy soule.] He continues to recommend vnto them the duties of charitie. For the whole summe of his exhortation is to shew that men worship God in vaine, if they onely offer vnto him some cold and naked ceremonies, seeing Gods true and pure worship consists not in such childish things: but rather commands and chargeth vs to liue in innocencie and vprightnesse with our neighbours: doing them good to our powers, and being readie to helpe them when need is, readilie and cheerefully.

The two parts of this dutie are to be marked, which *Isaiah* also hath expresly distinguished. For in the first place he commends vnto vs the affection of *pitie and compassion*: in the

the next place he exhorts vs to manifeſt the ſame by *the effects*. For it is not ſufficient to doe good to men, vnleſſe it proceede from a franke and willing mind. If I diſtribute all my goods to the poore, ſaith S. *Paul*, and haue not loue; I am nothing: 1.Cor.13.3. Thus then to *powre out the ſoule*, ſignifies nothing elſe but to pitie our brethrens miſeries, & to be as much affected with their wants, as if we our ſelues were afflicted with them: Heb.13.3. As contrariwiſe all ſuch as are ſtrait laced being giuen to their priuate commodities, ſhutting vp their bowels, and are void of affection, 1.Iohn 3.17. are called men of an hard heart.

Whereas others tranſlate, If thou preſenteſt thy ſoule: it agrees not. The ſame promiſe with that in verſe 8. followes, and vnder the ſame ſimilitude or figure. For by *darkneſſe* he vnderſtands a wofull eſtate: and by *light*, an happie and proſperous condition. As if he ſhould ſay, The Lord will cauſe all thy miſeries which now ouerwhelme thee to ceaſe: and a ſudden felicitie ſhall ſucceed the ſame. Hee ſhewes therefore that they had no cauſe to complaine of God when afflictions preſſed them ſo the quicke; becauſe they ſhould foorthwith eſcape, and enioy an happie eſtate, if they ſerued and obeyed God.

Verſ. 11. *And the Lord ſhall guide thee continually, and ſatisfie thy ſoule in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou ſhalt bee like a watred garden and like a ſpring of water, whoſe waters faile not.*

THe *Lord ſhall guide thee.*] Now hee more clearely expreſſeth that which he touched before in briefe, and vnder borowed ſpeeches. Namely, that God will bee their *leader*: ſo as nothing ſhall hinder them from enioying all things in abundance. It is ſaid that God *guides* vs, when we feele by experience that hee goes before vs, as if wee ſaw him with our eies. Next hee addes, that this ſhall not be for a time; becauſe God neuer leaues thoſe that bee his in the mid way; but with an vnchangeable courſe *continues* his benefits *alwaies* vnto them. For this cauſe the Prophet alſo promiſeth fulnes and *ſatietie* in their extreameſt penurie. For God hath abundance of bleſſings alwaies in his hand wherewith to relieue the wants of his children. And ſurely his onelie bleſſing is more worth then the ſweeteſt dewes that can fall in an whole yeere. And yet he doth not promiſe to the faithfull, that they ſhall haue alwaies a goodly and plentifull *increaſe* of fruites, and good ſeaſons to end their haruеſt and vintage well; but that God will nouriſh them, albeit the earth ſhould bring foorth no foode at all. And thus he commands them to depend vpon Gods helpe, and to content themſelues therewith, notwithſtanding that the barrenneſſe of the earth ſhould put them to their ſhifts.

In this ſenſe it is ſaid afterwards, *Hee will make fat thy bones*. He ſaith not ſ they ſhall be full fed and fat; but ſo leane, that their *bones* ſhall pierce the very skinne. Hee calles them *bones* then, who are pinched with penury and famine. In a word, ſuch as in whom there is nothing left but skinne and bones vtterlie ſhrunke vp and withered. And thus he ſignifies that the Iewes ſhould haue to wreſtle againſt famin and leannes, vntill God ſhould be pleaſed to reſtore them.

Heereunto appertaines that which hee addes touching a *watered garden*, and of the *ſpring of waters*. For *Iſaiah* cannot ſatisfie himſelfe in expreſſing the largeneſſe which God would powre out vpon his ſeruants, that ſo men might ſeeke the cauſes of dearth no where but in themſelues. The ſumme is, that this ſountaine of Gods bountifulneſſe ſhall neuer *faile* nor bee drawne dry, if ſo bee wee ſtoppe not vp the ſame by our frowardneſſe.

Verſ. 12. *And they ſhall be of thee, that ſhall build the old waſte places: and thou ſhalt raiſe vp the foundations for many generations; and thou ſhalt be called the repairer of the breach, and the reſtorer of the paths to dwell in.* *Or, reſtore the old deſerts.

BY *deſerts*, the Prophet meanes an horrible waſte which befell the Iewes at that time, when they were led captiues: for the Land became like a deſert, the cities were ruinated, the Temple was razed, the people made bondſlaues, and ſcattered into all quarters. Hee calles them *deſerts*, and *old*, becauſe they could not be ſo ſoone reedified; neither was there any hope left that the people ſhould be reſtored to their firſt eſtate. If any Citie be waſted or laid on heapes, yet as long as the inhabitants remaine there, it may in ſhort time be reſtored: but if the inhabitants which dwelt therein be dead, or haue bin carried away into a farre Country, and ſhall be long abſent, what hope is left that ſuch a Citie ſhould be new built againe? Wil it not ſeeme ſtrange if a long while after the ruine thereof, one ſhould ſay; *The people which ſeemed forlorne, ſhall build and repaire it againe?* Seeing this promiſe then was incredible, the Prophet meant to meete with this doubt. For they might obiect; If the Lord meant to raiſe vs to our former eſtate, why ſuffers he vs to languiſh ſo long a time? He anſwers, that *the length of time* ſhall not let God to raiſe vp the things againe that were fallen to the earth for many yeeres together. Now this muſt not be reſtrained to the building of the Temple begun by *Zerobabel*, and continued by *Nehemias*, Ezra.3.8. but it comprehends the reſtauration of the Church, which was effected ſome ages after. An obiection preuented.

Of thee] ſignifies that out of this people almoſt dead; ſhould come foorth ſuch as ſhould repaire theſe wofull ruines. And thus they ſhould be the Carpenters and Maſons to reedifie Ieruſalem. A little after he ſeemes

to

to attribute to all the people that which he now restraines to some particulars, but the sense notwithstanding remaines alwaies the same. For if it be asked, Who reedified Ierusalem? Truly it was this people. But out of this infinite multitude God culled out an handfull, and cut off all the rest. Some thinke that the Cities should not be big enough to containe so many people, for which cause they should be forced to build those againe which were throwne downe before. But this seemes too farre fetched.

By the *foundations from generation to generation*, whereof he speakes in the second member, some thinke that the Prophet only repeates that which he said before, and so expound *foundations of generations*, because they had a long time bin ouerthrowne, in regard these buildings were forthwith to be reedified and set vp: but many impediments should come betweene that should cause the worke to cease: notwithstanding this may be referred to the time to come thus; Thou shalt reare vp the buildings which shall remaine for a long space, for he seemes to promise vnto the Church such an estate as shal continue a long while: as if he should say, *other buildings stand not long, but this shall indure for many generations.* If any had rather referre it to the time past, I gainsay him not.

And thou shalt be called.] The Prophet here comprehends two points. First, that the people 1 should resemble a ruinous building: Secondly, 2 that they should shortly be built againe. But he attributes to the Iewes that they shall be the *repairers* and *directers* of the *paths*, in regard the Lord shall vse their seruice to that end. Wee haue heere then an excellent promise, namely, that the ruins of the Church shall be gathered againe together, and repaired. Now seeing the Lord will vse our selues in this worke, let nothing hinder vs from imploying our whole seruices this way. And albeit the world resist and scorne vs as witlesse people, yet let vs be of good courage, and ouercome all these impediments. For we must be valiant and bold when we know it is the *Lords worke*, who hath enioined vs thus to doe.

Vers. 13. *If thou turne away thy foote from the Sabbath, from doing thy will on mine holy day, and call the Sabbath * a delite, to consecrate it as glorious to the Lord, and shalt honor him, not doing thine owne wayes, nor speaking * a vaine word.*

* Or, delites.

* Or, thy words.

SOme thinke the Prophet hath respect to the outward obseruation of the Sabbath, because it was not lawfull to *trauaile* on that day. Now howsoeuer I reiect not this, yet I take it that the sense hath a larger extent; for vnder the figure Synecdoche, he signifies the whole course of mans life, it being a thing well knowne to all, that by *walking*, our whole conuersation is vnderstood. He saith then, *If thou ceasest to follow thine owne swinge: if thou shut vp all passage against thy selfe: walke not whither thy fansie leades thee*, &c. For they are said *to turne their feete* from the Sabbath who impose not this law vpon themselues, namely, not to wander whither their vnbridled lusts would carrie them.

Now as before vnder the *fast* he comprehended all ceremonies, and shewed that these disguisings in which they placed their holines, were nothing but vain and vnprofitable things, so in this place he shewes wherein the *true obseruation of the Sabbath consists*, to the end they should not thinke it to be in the outward rest from bodily labor, but in the true renouncing of our selues, that is, in abstaining from all wickednes, violence, voluptuousnes, and euill thoughts.

First, by the word *foote* he meanes their works: for the Iewes durst not trauaile nor dresse any flesh vpon the Sabbath day, and yet they made no scruple at all to vex their poore neighbors, and to scorne the afflicted, notwithstãding, he comes forthwith to speake of the *will*, and *words*, that he might comprehend all the parts of that obedience which is due vnto God.

The word *delights* ought to be referred vnto *God*, and not to men. For there is nothing which pleaseth him better, or is more acceptable vnto him then the obseruation of the Sabbath, and his pure worship. He carefullie repeates that men do much ouershute themselues if they cõtemne the commandements of God, to set vp their vnprofitable workes in the stead thereof, and also admonisheth vs to suffer our selues to be gouerned by his only will.

Moreouer, he mentions some particulars, whereby he shewes that the true obseruation of the Sabbath consists in the renouncing of our selues, and in the conuersion of the whole man: and therefore he layes the *will* for the foundation, that from thence may flow *words*, and *deeds*, for we lightly vtter the 1 *conceptions* of our *vnderstandings*, and by our 2 *words* we manifest our *will*, then followe 3 the actions. Whosoeuer then will indeuor to serue God as he ought, he must first of necessitie whollie renounce his will and carnall reason. Hence we see wherefore the Lord so oft requires the obseruation of the Sabbath in the Scriptures: Exod. 20. 13. Doubtlesse he looked higher then to the externall ceremonie, which is this rest, in which the Iewes placed a worke of great holinesse. No, he rather meant, that hauing put off all the concupiscences of the flesh, and renounced all their inordinate affections, they should testifie their sincere obedience. For in truth, that man can neuer be said to meditate aright of the heauenly life, that is not dead both to the world and to himselfe. Now howsoeuer this ceremonie bee abolished, yet the substance remaines. For Christ is dead and risen againe, to the end we might keepe a perpetuall Sabbath; that we cease from our own workes, to suffer the Spirit of grace to worke powerfully in vs.

For a more particular explication and application of this 13. verse, see Widley vpõ the Sabbath, Lib. 2. Chap. 4. Sect. 2.

Vers. 14. *Then shalt thou delight in the Lord, and I will cause thee to mount vpon*

vpon the high places of the earth, and feede thee with the heritage of Iaakob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.

Then ſhalt thou delight. It ſeemes he alludes to the word delights, in the former verſe. For the word *Tithannogh*, which the Prophet vſeth, comes of the word *Onegh*, which hee vſed in verſ. 12. in ſaying, that the Lord tooke great delights in the true obſeruation of the Sabbath. In a word, his meaning is, that the people receiued no delight from God, becauſe they prouoked him to anger, & would not obey his will. For if wee ſquare our liues according to the rules of Gods Law, wee ſhall be his delights, and hee ſhall be our ioy and contentment. He teſtifies then that the Iewes are the cauſe themſelues that God takes no more *pleaſure* in them: alſo that their owne liues are ſo *comfortleſſe*. By this then hee priuily reproacheth the Iewes, namely, that through their owne folly, they haue drawne downe ſo many calamities vpon them.

Afterwards he addes, that they ſhall *mount vpon the high places of the earth*: thereby promiſing vnto them their returne, and a ſafe abode in their Country: for we know that Iudeah was ſituated *on high*, aboue the regions round about: and that Babylon was ſeated lower, ſo as the people was hid there, as within a caue. And yet hee ſhewes more plainly, what he meant by this word *to mount*: for hee promiſeth to them the poſſeſſion of that *heritage* which was promiſed and giuen to the Fathers, which they alſo ſhould then inioy, after that for a time they had been depriued of it.

He addes, *for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it*; that they might know for certaine, that all theſe things ſhould take effect. But this muſt not only be vnderſtood touching theſe promiſes; but muſt alſo be referred to the former part of this Chapter. For therein hee hath ſharply cenſured the hypocrites, who thought to haue made their party good againſt God; ſhewing alſo that they were (notwithſtanding their plea) iuſtly puniſhed for their iniquities: yea, that it was in vaine for them to quarrell with God, by oppoſing their vaine and vnprofitable workes to his iuſtice. And therefore hee brings them backe to the true obſeruation *of the Sabbath day*, and ſhewes that all ſhall goe well with them, if they worſhip the Lord purely: and in the end concludes, that in all theſe things they had not to doe *vvith a mortall man, but vvith the eternall God, vvho is the Iudge that teſtifies theſe things.*

THE LIX. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Behold, the Lords hand is not ſhortened, that it cannot ſaue: neither is his eare heauie, that it cannot heare.*

2. *But your iniquities haue ſeparated betweene you and your God, and your ſinnes haue hid his face from you, that he will not heare.*

The Prophet maintaines Gods equall dealing, againſt the ſlanders of the wicked.

THis Sermon is in a manner like to the former. For after hee hath vnmasked the hypocrites, who falſly vaunted théſelues, and ſhewed that their puniſhmét is iuſt; now hee anſweres to the reſt of their obiections. The cuſtome of ſuch kind of perſons is to accuſe God either of impotencie, or of ouer great ſeueritie: and therefore he ſhewes, that neither *power* nor *will* is wanting in God, to ſaue thoſe that be his: but that it is their owne *peruerſitie* that hinders him from cauſing them to feele his liberalitie: and conſequently, that they did wickedly to complaine of him, in vttering ſuch ſlanders againſt him, ſeeing that themſelues *rather deſerued to be accuſed.*

The word *Behold*, hath great weight in it: for it is as much as if the Prophet in ſpeaking of a thing preſent, ſhould haue pointed it out with his finger for the greater certentie, that ſo he might at once cut off all the cauils and replies of hypocrites. Now we muſt ſupply oppoſitions in the words *ſhortned* and *heauie*: as if he ſhould ſay; *The hand of the Lord vvas once ſtrong enough to ſaue his children: and once his eares vvere open to heare their praiers:* and now hee is no changeling, as if his *hand* were maimed, or as if his *eares* were heauie, that he ſhould not be quicke enough of hearing. The ſum is, that men are not to charge God with mutabilitie, as if he had altered his nature; but that the whole blame reſted in themſelues, in regard that by their ſinnes they had as it were ſhut vp the paſſage againſt his bountie, and would not admit of his ſuccour. So that if *themſelues* had not laid impediments in the way, hee would haue cauſed them to haue felt his *power* and *mercy*, as well as their fathers in times paſt had done. And thus he drawes his argument from the perpetuall and equall conſtancie of God, whoſe grace they reiected by their ſins, and would none of his helpe.

Hence we gather that it is our ſinnes only that depriues vs of Gods fauour, and ſets him and vs at oddes. For that which the Prophet ſaid of his time, agrees to all ages: for hee maintaines Gods cauſe againſt the ſlanders of the wicked. God therefore is alwaies like himſelfe, and is neuer wearie of well doing; his power is not leſſened: but it is wee our ſelues that ſhut vp the gate againſt his grace. Doctrine.

But ſome will obiect, that God cannot bee preuented Obiect.

Obiect. Anſ.

preuented by mens deſerts: and therefore it muſt needes be that hee doe good to the vnworthy. I confeſſe this is true: but yet I ſay that mens peruerſitie ſometimes ouerflowes ſo farre, that it ſtops vp all paſſage againſt Gods benefits; no leſſe then if of ſet purpoſe we meant to driue him farre away from vs. And albeit hee neuer heares any, but with pardon; it being alſo our duties alwaies to bring with vs into his preſence requeſts touching the forgiueneſſe of our ſinnes; yet hee neuer heares the prayers of the wicked. We are not to wonder then if the Prophet accuſeth the people for hauing reiected Gods benefits by their wickednes, and for making him vnappeaſeable by their obſtinacie. To be ſhort, for making a *diuorce*, by which they repulſed and turned backe the ordinary courſe of Gods graces.

Verſ. 3. *For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquitie: your lippes haue ſpoken lies, and your tongue hath murmured iniquitie.*

He deſcends from the generall to particulars.

NOw he brings their workes to light, to ſtop their contendings: and that they ſhould not call into queſtion what theſe ſins were, which had made this diuiſion. He takes away from thé all excuſe then, in diſcouering vnto them theſe particular vices; as if their wicked life had been blazed in an open theater. Now he ſpeakes in the ſecond perſon, in regard that he maintaines and proſecutes the cauſe of God, whoſe aduocate he is: and therefore *he ſeparates himſelfe* out of the wickeds ſocietie, to whom now he will not ioyne himſelfe, although hee were not vtterly exempt from ſinne. But hee feared and honoured God notwithſtanding: and therfore had his conſcience cleare. For he which ſhal be tainted with the ſame offences, cannot freelie condemne others: neither ſhall he be fit to debate the matter, becauſe he bereaues himſelfe of his authoritie by his ſcandalous and wicked life. For we ought not to be culpable of the vices which wee reproue in others, vnleſſe we meane to make the doctrine which we teach, a matter of ſcorne and deriſion; and our ſelues to bee taken for bold and impudent fellowes. But on the other ſide, when we ſerue our God in a pure and good conſcience, then hath the doctrine which we deliuer maieſtie and power in it, and leaues the aduerſarie the more without excuſe.

He is vnfit to controle others that is guiltie himſelfe of the ſame crimes.

1 2

Now it is not to be held as a matter ſuperfluous, that he laies forth the vngracious life of this people thus, *by peece meale*. For men are wont to ſeeke out many ſtarting holes; neither can they be brought into any good order, vnleſſe they bee firſt brought to acknowledge their offences.

In mentioning of *blood*; his meaning is not that they committed *open murthers*; but thereby he notes out the inhumanitie, rapines, violence and outrages which the hypocriticall ſort exerciſed ouer the poore, and ſuch as were not able to reſiſt. We muſt not thinke he had to deale with notorious murtherers or theeues; but with the King and States-men; who were honoured and reſpected, in regard of their great places. Theſe are they whom he calles *men of blood*; in that they cruellie vexed poore innocents: and in that by force and violence they wrung vnto themſelues other mens goods.

For this cauſe in the next place, hee puts *iniquitie* inſtead of blood. And howſoeuer hee ſeemes to extend his ſpeech further off; yet it is but a repetition or redoubling of the words; which the Hebrewes often vſe for amplifications ſake. For he expreſſeth more by the *fingers* then by the *hands*. As if hee ſhould haue ſaid, There is not the leaſt part of your bodies which is not ſtained with extortion.

Next, hee toucheth another kind of wickedneſſe: to wit, when one of them circumuented another by ſubtilties, periuries, and treacheries. For *iniquitie* by which we wrong our neighbours, is fortified with *crueltie* or lies and deceit, as with the court gard. Now the Prophet in this place inſiſts vpon matters belonging to the *ſecond table*, and by the ſinnes which they had committed againſt the commandements therein contained, hee ſhewes that they were wicked perſons, and vtterly void of the true feare of God. For that barbaritie and diſloyaltie which violates humane ſocietie, meerely proceeds from the contempt of God. See here the reaſon then, why from the *hands*; that is to ſay, from extortions and outrages, hee deſcends to *lying*, wicked practiſes, periuries, and other diuelliſh ſubtilties, whereby wee circumuent our neighbours.

Iniquitie fortified by crueltie.

Violating of humane ſocietie proceeds from the contempt of God.

Verſ. 4. *No man* calleth for iuſtice: no man contendeth for truth: they truſt in vanitie, and ſpeake vaine things: they conceiue miſchiefe, and bring foorth iniquitie.*

* Or, crieth.

THe Prophet meant to ſay, that there was *no regard of equitie* or vprightnes among thé: *That no man oppoſed himſelfe againſt the iniuries*, which the great ones practiſed againſt the weake. And, *that all licentiouſneſſe grew and increaſed, becauſe all looked through their fingers thereat, and no man did ſet his heart to maintaine iuſtice*. Now it is not enough that we only abſtaine from violence our ſelues, vnleſſe as much as poſſiblie we can, we therewithall endeuour to hinder men from doing the ſame to others. Truely, who euer he bee that permits that which he may hinder; the ſame may be ſaid in a ſort to command it. For ſilence is a kind of conſent. And to this appartaines the ſecond member.

It is not enough that we abſtaine from offering violence, vnleſſe we hinder it in others.

Some take the verb *Niſhpat* in the paſſiue ſignification, and thinke the Prophets meaning is, That none is iudged iuſtly. For the whole State is ful of corruptions, and yet no man oppoſeth himſelfe againſt them. But the actiue ſignification agrees better, in reſpect of the anſwering of theſe two points one to another, *No man calles for iuſtice: No man contends*

contends for truth. For whereas ſome tranſlate, No man iudgeth himſelfe in truth: it is a little too nice. Beſides, in as much as this verb, *To crie*, is taken, to contend; the ſcope of the text ſeemes here to runne better, No man ſets himſelfe to maintaine the right, with a loud voice freely to maintaine and defend iuſtice. In a word, to contend againſt the wicked. Vnleſſe we had rather refer this *crying for iuſtice*, to the miſerable, who were vniuſtly oppreſſed. As if he ſhould ſay, Theſe poore wretches held their peace, becauſe they gained nothing by their cries. But this ſenſe would be ſomewhat too harſh. Well, if ſuch as are careleſſe in defending of mans right; and ſuch as relieue not the afflicted are thus rigorouſlie condemned by the Lord: what ſhall become of vs, if our zeale in maintaining the glorie of God, prouokes vs not to crie without ceaſing againſt iniquities? if we winke at the ſcoffes wherewith the wicked deride the doctrine of ſaluation, and prophane the name of our God: or if wee ſet light by the plots wherewith they goe about to ouerthrow the Church, ſhall not our *ſilence* deſerue to be condemned of diſloyaltie and high treaſon? (I trow yes.) To be ſhort, *Iſaiahs* meaning is, that all good order falles to ruine by our fault, if we reſiſt not the wicked as much as in vs lies. Secondly, that there is an extreme confuſion, when no man ſtirres his foote to vphold iuſtice.

Note.

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When he ſaith, that *they truſt in vaine things*; it is to ſignifie that they heaped vp multitudes of peruerſe counſels, by meanes whereof they became vtterly obſtinate. Will you ſee the height of iniquitie then? Surely wee may then be ſaid to be come vnto it, when in ſeeking out ſweete allurements heere and there, we accuſtome our ſelues with a ſetled malice to contemne God; for by ſuch meanes Satan inueigles the reprobates, till hee hath wholly bewitched them. So as hauing firſt of all ſhaken off all feare of God, they come by degrees to reiect all wholſome admonitions, and at laſt, with an inſupportable pride and ſawcineſſe to deride and ſcorne them. Becauſe arrogancie then tranſports vs, when wee oppoſe our vaine hopes againſt Gods iudgement; it is not without cauſe that our Prophet brands this *truſt* vnder which ſcorners hide themſelues, with a note of deſpaire. For a man may ſee well enough that the maladie is growne incurable, when the wicked make no bones to flatter themſelues in all mens ſight; and when being built as it were vpon their owne frowardneſſe, they thinke they haue licence to doe whatſoeuer they liſt.

3

The height of iniquitie.

Hee addes, that one might diſcerne a farre off, what their thoughts and maners were in their *ſpeech*, according to the common prouerbe; The tongue is the meſſenger of the heart. And yet this particle may be expounded two waies; either that they vttered nothing that was good, but that their tongues were framed to deceiue without ceaſing: or that their wickednеſſe brake forth into manifeſt ſwaggering. And this ſecond expoſition pleaſeth me better then the firſt.

Prouerbe.

They ſhall conceiue miſchiefe, and bring forth iniquitie.] Theſe ſimilitudes are elegant. For by them he compares the wicked to women, who nouriſh their fruit in their wombe, and afterward bring it forth. Likewiſe, hee ſaith that the wicked are like great bellied women, whileſt they are plotting their treacheries in their breaſts, euen till the full time approch, in which they muſt be deliuered; namely, as ſoone as they haue found fit opportunities. Now hee ſaith, that they conceiue hurtfull counſels, to the end they may afterward oppreſſe the innocent without cauſe. As if hee ſhould ſay; They plot their miſchiefes long afore hand, and are alwaies readie to execute ſome outrage: for they ceaſe not heere and there to ſearch out cloſe conueiances to trouble ſuch as onely deſire to bee at peace.

Simile.

Verſ. 5. *They hatch Cockatrice egges, and weaue the ſpiders webbe: he that eateth of their egges, dieth, and that which is troden vpon, breaketh forth into a Serpent.*

THe Prophet paſſeth on further, comparing the Iewes not onely to *women*, but alſo to *venomous beaſts*; the better to ſignifie, that whatſoeuer proceeded from them, was dangerous and deadly. Firſt then hee ſaith that they *hatched Cockatrice egges*. As a Viper then cannot but hatch a venomous egge; ſo were they ſo defiled and ſtuffed with iniquitie, that they brought forth nothing but poiſon.

A compariſon taken from venomous beaſts.

Simile.

By the *Spiders vvebbe*, he meanes that they were ſo fruitleſſe and emptie of goodneſſe, that by the onely appearance of goodneſſe, they beguiled euery one. And thus he paints out the wicked with two colours as it were: Firſt, that all their works manifeſted the corruption of their nature. Secondly, that they were profitable for nothing, neither were they readie to ſhew themſelues louing, amiable, charitable, and faithfull to thoſe with whom they conuerſed. I am not ignorant that this place is otherwiſe expounded by ſome, namely, that whileſt the wicked are weauing the webbe of other mens deſtruction, they ouerthrow themſelues; and thinking themſelues very wiſe, doe notwithſtanding plot their deuices in vaine. And thus are caught in their own nets, and fall into the pit which they digged for others: Pſal. 7. & 9. But mee thinks the Prophet meant to expreſſe that which I haue touched, to wit, that the wicked *alwaies, euery vvhere, and in all things, are miſchieuous, and neuer profitable to any.* Whoſoeuer ſhall haue to doe with them, ſhall taſte their venome, and that they ſting to death. Hereunto belongs that which hee ſaith, namely, that *deadly poiſon is in their egges*, and that if one doe but *tread vpon them, a Serpent by and by iſſueth forth.*

Verſ. 6. *Their webbes ſhall be no garment, neither ſhall they couer themſelues with*

with their labours: for their workes are workes of iniquitie; and the worke of crueltie is in their hands.

A repetition and confirmation of the former similitude.

HEe both repeates and confirmes one and the same thing, namely, that they euermore are hurtfull to mankind, whatsoeuer they enterprize or execute: because of set purpose they haue all duties of charitie in abomination. Heere then is a signe of a nature wonderfully corrupted, namely, to be so wholly giuen vp to commit euill, that no hope is left of reaping any fruit from their life, who desire to be vtterly void and stripped of all iustice. Others expound; that they striue to get riches, and to be aduanced to honors: but all to no purpose. Yet I had rather plainly expound it thus; that *none of them should cover himselfe with his workes, because his webbe is altogether composed of rotten and vnserviceable stuffe.*

Now hee repeates one and the same thing in diuers phrases of speech, to shew that their *workes* should be vtterly fruitlesse. Wee are borne to doe our neighbours good, according to our power, and to be doing of somewhat that may serue for the common good. These are wild beasts then, and not worthy the names of men; seeing they are so industrious to hurt, and so prouident, as to do nothing that is of any worth. Last of all, without any figure, hee addes, that they are giuen and as it were, dedicated vnto iniquitie.

Vers. 7. *Their feete runne to euill, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoghts are wicked thoughts: desolation and destruction is in their pathes.*

HE here diuers waies describes vnto vs an image of an hatefull impietie. Namely, when men are so farre past grace, and destitute of all feare of God, that they rush into all kind of wickednesse, as the horse into the battell: and ouerflow in cruelties, roberies, and outrages. *They runne* (saith he) because they are strong and ouerbold to commit wickednesse. Now hauing spoken before of the *hands* and *tongue*, now he also addes the *feete*, to shew that they are their crafts Masters in all sorts of mischiefe. So as *no member* of their bodies was exempt from acting some iniquitie. For some vse violence, but they can restraine their tongues. Others againe who resemble a certaine rauenous bird called an Harpie, content themselues with the first pray they meete withall. The Prophet then confesseth that those of his nation were *light of foote*, to spoile and rob.

A bird called an Harpie.

By the word *desolation*, hee signifies that whersoeuer these cormorants came they fared like sauage and wild beasts, who rauin and deuoure all they meete withall, and leaue nothing remaining. So as by their terrible course, they scatter and cause all beasts to flee; which dare not come neere them. *Plinie* takes vp the like similitude touching *Domitian*, who tyranized like a cruell beast. And the same may we see to be in all these blood thirstie ones, whom all the world flees as from furious and vntamed wild beasts. And thus *their waies become desolate, and solitarie*, when they will suffer none to haue any fellowship with them.

Plinie. Domitian.

Vers. 8. *The way of peace they know not, and there is none equitie in their goings: they haue made them crooked paths: whosoeuer goeth therein, shall not know peace.*

SOme take this word *peace*, too nicely, for peace of conscience, in respect that the wicked are euermore vexed. But the Prophet so brings them to Gods iudgement, that yet in the meane while by transgressing the second table, he shewes that there was neither faith nor charitie in them. In a word, that they were void of affection. The way of peace (saith he) they know not. Why so? Because their wooluish minds had bereaued them of this *Iustice* and *equitie*; which two vertues vphold humane societie, and cause men to dwell quietly and friendlie one with another. For iustice and integritie nourisheth *peace*. But if euery one with furie rusheth violently vpon his neighbour, in offering them open wrong: there, open warre is proclaimed. For wee can by no meanes maintaine peace in the midst of vs, vnlesse euerie one in particular squares al his doings by the rules of equitie.

Iustice and integritie nourisshe peace.

He expresseth this more fully by the word *iudgement*. As if he should say, whersoeuer they came, they were a terror to all; because they had cast off all vprightnesse. The last member may be taken two waies, either that *whosoeuer walkes in them, shall also be farre off from peace*: Or, *He which falles into the hands of the wicked shall feele their cruelty and murtherous minds*. Both expositions may agree well, and (as I thinke) we need not much contend about it. And therefore after the Prophet hath spoken generally before, and shewed, that the fault was not in God, that the Iewes prospered no better in their enterprises; now he descends to the particulars, wherein he more fully declares how they had reuolted from God, and so made themselues vnworthie of his fauour.

Peace cannot be maintained without equity.

Obiect.

But here ariseth a difficultie, in regard that Saint *Paul* alleageth this place in the Epistle to the Rom. 3. 17. to condemne all flesh as vicious, corrupt, and vtterlie void of any thing that is good. But contrariwise it seemes the Prophet applies it in particular to the men of his time. But the answere is easie. For when he directs his speech to the Iewes, who were reputed as pettie Saints in respect of others, of necessitie the Gentiles must all come within this rancke. If any obiect, that the Gentiles in liuing iustly were a law vnto themselues, and that their vncircumcision is counted to them for vncircumcision.

Ans.

Obiect.

Rom. 2.

Anſ. Rom.2.26. I anſwer, that the Prophet brings God in complaining of all ſuch as were not regenerated by his holy ſpirit. And thus none can be exempt, if he be conſidered of in his owne nature. And yet the Prophet exempts himſelfe out of this number, in regard he was regenerated and gouerned by the Spirit of God. S. *Paul* therefore hath alleaged this ſentence to very good purpoſe when he minded to ſhew what men are, being forſaken of God, and are led by the light of their owne nature. I grant that the perueriſitie of men breakes not alwaies foorth into open ſinnes. Well, our Prophets meaning is to reproue the corruptions of thoſe times wherein iniquities were growne to ſuch an height, that one might well diſcerne as in a glaſſe how (lothſome a ſinke and) bottomleſſe gulph of all abominations mans nature is. In the meane while there is no doubt but this Sermon ſtung the Iewes to the very quick, in regard they were puffed vp with a vaine conceit of their race forſooth; but in as much as the ſpirit of God ſpared not them, the reſt of the nations who were no leſſe corrupted by nature, had no reaſon at all to wallow themſelues in their pleaſures.

Verſ.9. *Therefore is iudgement farre from vs; neither doth iuſtice come neere vnto vs: we wait for light, but loe, it is darknes: for brightnes,* but *we walke in darknes.*

Why is the liuing man ſorrowfull? man ſuffers for his ſinne. *Lam.*3.39. HAuing ſhewed how much the eſtate of this people was peruerted and corrupted, he therewithall teacheth that they are iuſtly corrected thus ſeuerely, to the end they ſhould take vp no complaints, as if they were more hardly dealt withall then there was cauſe. He hath by peecemeale then deciphered out their open and knowne corruptions, that they might acknowledge how many waies they were guiltie before God: and now he puts them in minde that it was no wonder if God caried a ſtrait hand ouer ſuch obſtinate ſpirits, in handling them according to their deſerts. Now he ſaith, that *iudgement was farre off*, in reſpect that they were the only miſerable people in the world, and had not God their protector, as at other times. He takes iudgement & iuſtice for Gods particular care and ſafegard ouer vs, namely, when he expreſſeth ſo much by the effects. By *Iuſtice*, he meanes Gods protection, by *Iudgement*, the vengeance which he executes vpon ſuch as offer any violence againſt vs. But here he affirmes, that God hath no more care ouer his people, and that he hath withheld his aid and ſuccor from them, becauſe they were vnworthie thereof. We are alſo to note this particle *therefore*, for thence it followes, that they were not to murmure againſt God, as if he kept no meaſure in his corrections, ſeeing they had ſo often abuſed his Maieſtie.

Hereunto appertains that which he addes, namely, that a perpetuall *darknes* enuironed them, who *waited for light*. This metaphor ſhewes, that they were almoſt conſumed in their miſeries, and were then fruſtrated of their hopes, whileſt they promiſed vnto themſelues ſome releaſe. By *light*, is meant a proſperous eſtate, as on the contrarie, by *darknes*, a ſtate vnhappie, as is well enough knowne in diuers places before. His meaning is then, that it was in vaine for them to expect better fortunes, becauſe he would haue this people learne to impute theſe calamities to their owne deſerts, and not to imagin either that they came by chance, or that the Lord handled them too ſharply, for his whole ſcope and drift is to bring them to the doctrine of repentance.

Verſ. 10. *Wee grope for the wall like the blinde, and wee grope as one without eies: wee ſtumble at the noone day as in the twilight: we are in ſolitarie places, as dead men.*

One and the ſame thing expreſſed, vnder diuers maners of ſpeech. BY varietie of phraſes he expreſſeth one and the ſame thing. For in regard many complaints would be heard to paſſe from this people, he would omit nothing that might ſerue to lay forth their wofull calamities. It may be he vtters theſe things, as if he conſented with them, that they were ſo indeed; as if he meant to ſay, Our matters are brought into wonderfull ſtraits: but wee are aboue all things to conſider the cauſe thereof, ſeeing wee haue deſerued to be handled with much more ſeueritie. And yet the ſenſe will not ſute amiſſe if we ſay, That the drouzie are here awaked, to bethinke them of their miſeries: for, howſoeuer they were but too forward in making their *complaints*, yet Satan benumned their ſenſes, leſt the ſignes of Gods wrath ſhould ſolicite them to repentance.

Now he alludes to that ſimilitude which he mentioned in the former verſe, where he ſaid, that the people were in *darknes* and obſcuritie, without any hope of getting out. Here he ſignifies that they were deſtitute of counſell, and ſo preſſed with anguith, that no refuge nor remedie at all appeared vnto thē. When ſome light affliction befalles vs we looke this way and that way, and haue hope of ſome iſſue: but in great extremities we are able to diſcerne nothing, in regard of deſpaire which hath ſurprized vs: for this cauſe the Prophet ſaith, that being intangled in a maze of perplexities, they *groped*.

We ſtumble.] This phraſe of ſpeech tends to the ſame end, and hath alſo greater weight in it, namely, that if they ſet but one foote forward, ſo many impediments preſented themſelues on all ſides, that they could finde no more releaſe, then if the day had bin conuerted into the night. By *ſolitarie places*, I vnderſtand deepe gulphes, or deſert and barren lands. For in this place I allow S. *Ieroms* reading, who deriues theſe words *ſolitarie places*, from the verb *Aſham*, which ſignifies as much as to be horriblie deſtroyed and deſolated. S. Ierome.

The Rabbins who will needs draw it from *Shamen*, which ſignifies, to be fat, argue chil- Rabbins.

diſhly, as I thinke, neither do they alleage any thing that makes to the purpoſe. For by ſolitarie places they thinke men are vnderſtood, becauſe *Shemmen* ſignifies anointment, and thus iudge, that the Gentiles are noted out in theſe words. But the Prophets true meaning is, that the Iewes were brought into ſolitarie places, that being baniſhed from the ſocietie of men, they might reſemble the *dead*, and might bee left without any hope of deliuerance.

Verſ. 11. *We roare all like beares, and mourne like doues; wee looke for* *equitie, *but there is none; for* *health, but it is far from vs.*

*Or, iudgement. *Or, ſaluation.

HEe notes two ſorts of men that cannot beare their miſeries with patience, but they muſt diſcouer them by outward teſtimonies. For ý firſt cry very loud like *beares*; & the other *mourne like doues*. He vſed this latter ſimilitude in Chap. 38. 14. where he deſcribed the ſighings of *Hezekiah*. And this happens at ſuch times as wee would faine repreſſe our ſorrowes, and yet wee cannot ſo reſtraine them, but whether we will or no ſome ſignes thereof will breake forth outwardly. The ſumme is, that one while the weight of their miſeries extorted from them *loud cries*; another while they were ouercome with *groues, and broken ſighings*: but neither their *roarings* nor *mourings*, brought them any releaſe, becauſe their eſtate was not changed for the better.

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For this cauſe he repeates it once againe, that they *waited in vaine* for *iudgement* and *ſaluation*: whereby he meanes that the people were depriued of that ſuccour from God, which aboue all things they wiſhed and longed for. And he hath vſed the word *ſaluation*, the better and the more fully to expreſſe what hee meant before in verſ. 9. by *iuſtice*; and heere, by *iudgement*. Hence let vs gather, that we are miſerable through our own faule, and that wee wither and waſte away in our miſeries, till wee be conuerted to our God. Wee may well *roare* and *mourne*; but without repentance our ſorrowes ſhall receiue no reliefe. Our miſeries then cannot ceaſe, as long as we prouoke the Lord to anger, nor till we indeuor with our whole hearts to be reconciled vnto him.

No ſaluation without conuerſion.

*Or, multiplied.

Verſ. 12. *For our treſpaſſes are* *many *before thee, and our ſinnes teſtifie againſt vs: for our treſpaſſes* are *with vs, and we know our iniquities.*

A confirmation of the former ſentence.

HE confirmes his former ſpeech, namely, that the people did ill in accuſing God of cruelty, and that they did not rather acknowledge that they receiued the iuſt recompence of their ſinnes, the heapes whereof reached vp to the heauens. And in this ſenſe it is that the Prophet ſaith, they were *multiplied*. Alſo this particle *before thee*, hath great weight: for the Prophet deſcends into himſelfe, and acknowledgeth the iuſt iudgement of God, which was hidden from mens eies. His meaning is then to note out a cloſe oppoſition, which is betweene mens iudgement & Gods. Men flatter themſelues, and thinke not of their ſinnes; but God who is the Iudge, leaues not to condemne them for all that, neither cares hee for all the vaine and idle excuſes, wherewith they would faine daube them ouer. And therefore he contents not himſelfe ſimply to condemne this people, but he adds, that they had *multiplied* their iniquities: that is to ſay, *they were guilty before God many waies*. He acknowledgeth then that God is iuſt, and executes the office of a good Iudge, ſeeing among men there is not to bee found *ſo much as a droppe or graine of iuſtice or equitie*. And therefore it is he adds, that it was not needfull to cite *any witneſſes*, nor to bring them from the Court of heauen, becauſe the Iewes were ſufficiently conuinced and condemned by the *teſtimonie* of their owne conſciences. This manner of ſpeech therefore ought to be well obſerued; for it ſhewes that God hath no great neede of proofes, ſeeing our ſinnes hold vs ſufficiently conuicted. We haue no reaſon then to contend with God, as if he puniſhed vs wrongfully, or as if he chaſtiſed vs too ſeuerely: *for our owne iniquities teſtifie plainly enough againſt vs, whoſe euer we are, neither hath God needs to ſeeke out for any other witneſſes.* Verſ. 4.

With vs.] Others tranſlate, Vpon vs: but I had rather keepe the proprietie of the word. Men make many turnings, and tranſforme themſelues into many ſhapes, that they might be taken for iuſt: but all in vaine, becauſe they *beare their iniquities about with them in their boſomes*, from which they cannot flee. As alſo when God condemned *Cain*, he pronounced that his ſinne plaid *the watchman at the doore*. So, hee that deſpiſeth Gods iuſt iudgement, ſhall vex himſelfe in vaine, if he thinks to eſcape by rebellion. Cain.

When hee ſaith, the Iewes *knew their ſinnes*; he meanes not that they were truly touched with them in their hearts, for then repentance would haue followed: but hee ſhewes, that albeit they ſtroue to flee the iudgement of God, yet the teſtimonie of their owne conſcience kept them impriſoned, and confined them in ſuch wiſe, that they loſt their labour to frame or forge excuſes. Now whereas hee ſpeakes in the firſt perſon, putting himſelfe alſo in the ranke, it is a thing very rife in the Scriptures: and yet therewithall he ſhewes, that this euill had ſo ſpread it ſelfe through the whole body, that there was no member ſound nor free. Now howſoeuer hee might for his owne particular, proteſt his vprightneſſe in the preſence of God, yet in reſpect that iniquitie had ouerflowed into all the parts of the body, he confeſſeth himſelfe to be (as it were) one of thoſe rotten members, and to be infected with the common contagion. Neither doth this any way gainſay our former aſſertion, namely, that he hath hitherunto exempted himſelfe from the common reuolt, that he might gall them the more to the quicke. Now to take away all exceptions,

hee

hee *vvrappes himſelfe alſo* vp in the number with them.

Verſ. 13. *In treſpaſſing and lying againſt the Lord, and wee haue departed away from our God, and haue ſpoken of crueltie and rebellion, conceiuing and vttering out of the heart falſe matters.*

In verſe 12. the Iewes are taxed generally, here particularlie.

HEE heere reckons vp ſome particular kinds of ſinnes, that he might with the greater vehemencie prouoke the people to acknowledge their ſinnes. Now truly it is monſtrous that thoſe which were chaſtiſed, and in a maner ſhatteted to peeces by the hand of God, ſhould yet ſtand to ſet vp the creſt, and that their necke ſhould bee of ſuch an yron ſinew, as that they could neither bee bowed nor humbled by the feeling of their miſdoings. For the Lord labours to ſoften our hard hearts by his roddes and ſtripes. But when chaſtiſements profit vs nothing, wee may then be ſaid to bee growne paſt recouerie. *Iſaiah* inſiſts long vpon this point, namely, to ſhew how woful ſtate of this people was, who albeit they were almoſt ground to powder, yet did they ſtil grudge againſt God, and could not endure to be brought vnder ſubiection. He therefore often repeates this admonition, and ſtands the more vehemently vpon it, that he might tame the rebellion of this people.

He alſo taxeth their iniquities with many words, and ſingles them out one from another, hauing ſhewed before generally what ſinnes reigned euery where amongſt them. Neither doth he reprooue any pettie offences, or of a ſmall handfull of people, but rather a generall reuolt. For by this verſe hee giues vs to vnderſtand that they were ſo corrupted, that there was not one dram of faith, integritie feare, or conſcience in them. For what is it to *lie againſt God*, but wickedly *to departaway from him*, as if they plaid the flat rebels? He not onely reprocheth them then with the breach of one or two commandements of the law, but ſaith, that they renounced God, and reuolted from him, leſt they ſhould come at his call.

In the next place he ſaith, that they were giuen to *forge vvicked matters*, and that they were wholly ſtained with *falſehood*. For it is much more deteſtable to vtter falſe matters *out of the heart* then to be ſuddenly ouertaken *vvith a lie*, yea or to deceiue vpon the inſtant. In the meane while theſe rebukes no doubt cut the very hearts of the Iewes, who were readie to braſt with pride; taking themſelues to be exceeding holy men. But hypocriſie muſt bee thus dealt withall; becauſe a plaine admonition in ſuch a caſe would haue done little good. By this example then al Paſtors when they ſee the Church of God corrupt, and men to pleaſe themſelues in themſelues, & to lie rotting in their dung; thus muſt they oppoſe themſelues, and crie ſharply and ſhrillie againſt the ſame.

Verſ. 14. *Therefore iudgement is turned backward, and iuſtice ſtandeth a far off: for truth is fallen in the* * *ſtreet, and equitie cannot enter.* * Or, place.

THoſe are deceiued who thinke he returns to his firſt ſpeech, in verſ. 9, as if he now ſpake of the puniſhments which the people had felt from Gods hand. For he ſtill proſecutes his former diſcourſe; and diſcouers the corrupt diſeaſes of the people: to teſtifie vnto all that they were iuſtly puniſhed. But this verſe we muſt thus diſtinguiſh frō the ninth, where he ſaid, *That iudgement vvas gone farre off*. For in that place hee pronounced that the Iewes were depriued of Gods helpe, in regard they had made themſelues vnworthie that hee ſhould be any longer a defender of their cauſe. But here he ſaith that *iudgement vvas turned backward*; becauſe they had ouerturned all iuſtice and equitie amongſt themſelues. They receiued then a recompence according to their deſerts, when Gods *iuſtice ſtood a farre off*, and appeared not for their helpe; ſeeing they had baniſht iudgement and iuſtice farre away from them. For we doe but loſe our time, to expect that from God, which wee haue denied vnto others, and haue caſt behind our backes.

The former diſcourſe ſtill proſecuted in this, and in verſe 15.

In the place.] That is to ſay, in the publike aſſemblie. For his meaning is to ſpeake of thoſe places where they held their courts. And thus hee ſignifies, that corruptions had not onely ſeazed vpon ſome priuate perſons, but that the whole eſtate of the people was ſo depraued, that there was nothing ſound amongſt them. If any vices raigne among the common people, there may ſome good order be taken to remedie the ſame as long as iuſtice *hath place*: but if the iudgement ſeates themſelues be ouerturned or corrupted, then it muſt needes be that all things are infected with an vniuerſall contagion. Hee alſo bewrayes their vnbridled libertie, in that they were not aſhamed to doe euill in *publicke places*, and that they neither fled from the light, nor from the eies of men.

Where iudgement ſeates are corrupted, there the contagion of ſinne is vniuerſally ouerſpread.

Verſ. 15. *Yea truth faileth, and hee that refraineth himſelfe from euill maketh himſelfe a pray: and when the Lord ſaw it, it diſpleaſed him, that there was no iudgement.*

BY this it ſufficiently appeares, that *Iſaiah* ſpake not in the former verſe of the puniſhments which the people ſuſtained: For he proſecutes the very ſame diſcourſe with the former: and ſhewes that the people had no cauſe to complaine of the rigor of their chaſtiſments, ſeeing they had ſo groſely offended and prouoked the Lord. Hee confirmes his former ſpeech then: namely, that truth was fallen, iuſtice had no more place: and here he amplifies the ſame further, in adding that he which *refrained himſelfe from euill, made himſelfe a pray*. The moſt of the expoſitors among the Hebrewes reade this part of the

A confirmation and amplification of the former ſentence.

verse with a breath, thus; Truth is fallen, and was made a pray, in refraining it selfe from euill. But I see no reason why they haue accepted of this sense. Saint *Ieroms* exposition (which I also haue followed) is much better, and more agreeable. This phrase of speech is very frequent in Scriptures, as wee see in Iob 1.1. of whom it is said, that he was an vpright and iust man, fearing God, *and eschewing euill*. Salomon also saith, Prou.14,16. That a foole rageth; but the wise man feareth; *and departeth from euill*. Well, the Prophets meaning is, that all honest courses were so hated and abhorred, that the small remnant of the faithfull could not liue in safetie. As if he should say, Whosoeuer meane in these times to haue societie with men, must of necessitie be as wicked as they: according to the old prouerbe; *Hee must howle amongst vvolues*: but he that will *refraine from euill*, shall be deuoured of the wolues like a poore sheepe. Truly hee heere expresseth the height of impietie: for he shewes that *truth vvas so fallen*, that no honest man durst conuerse amongst them. Why so? Because whosoeuer refrained himselfe from euill, did by and by fall into the iawes of Lions.

S. Ierom.

Prouerbe.

The height of iniquitie.

And the Lord saw it.] This tends to the consolation of this people: for his meaning is, that notwithstanding this peoples obstinacie wich in a manner seemed irremissible, yet God would tender their welfare. And howsoeuer for a time he had seuerely punished them, yet would he at last thinke vpon his couenant: so as in curing their euils, hee would restore vnto them incredible comfort. He speakes heere of the time to come, and promiseth that a day will come after all these calamities, that God would send some reliefe to the remnant of his inheritance: for the Iewes had been left destitute of all hope, if the Lord had not added this consolation.

Aconsolatiõ.

Take a view heere then after what sort men are wont to plunge themselues into contrarie vices. Are they reproued? then either they grow stubburne, or being surprized with terrors, they fall into despaire. We are therefore carefully to obserue our Prophets course which he heere takes: for in the first place it was needfull that the Iewes should be sharply rebuked, that so being touched and humbled by repentance, they might cease to murmure or repine against God. In the second place he promiseth them a moderation of their chastisements, with hope of deliuerance, that they should not faint, but wait for the Lords helpe, who neuer suffers his Church to perish: for he so corrects his chosen for a time, that hee will neither forsake, nor vtterly consume them.

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2

If any had rather restraine this discontent and *displeasure* of God to his *iudgements*, in regard that hee iustly condemned and abhorred this wicked people; I gainsay him not. As if hee should haue said; God saw nothing in this people but matter of hatred: whence it followes, that he had no other motiue to send them reliefe, but onely because hee saw that things were brought to vtter ruine.

Verse. 16. *And when hee saw that there was no man, hee wondered that none would offer himselfe. Therefore his arme did saue it, and his righteousnesse it selfe did sustaine it.*

THe Prophet prosecutes the same argument still: but hee laies that out more at large now, which he briefly touched before. For that which hee said in the former verse, might peraduenture seeme obscure, namely, that it displeased the Lord, *because there vvas no iudgement*. In this place then hee repeates, that the Lord *saw* there was no man that would succour the Church, and he wondered at it. He vseth a verbe which signifies, that the Lord tooke vp an occasion of wonderment. As if he should say; He stood as one amazed. Some translate the word *Mephgia*, Intercessor: but I thinke the sense is, *that no man presented himselfe to set the things in order, that were confused; there vvas no Physition that vvould put to his hand to prescribe a remedie for this sicknesse, and therefore the Lord vvondered*. But it is easie to iudge why he attributes this astonishment vnto God: for by this reproch, he meant to shame the Iewes, that so (according to their custome) they might not seeke out pretences to couer their sinnes withall.

The same argument prosecuted.

Now in regard it was a thing incredible or rather monstrous, that amongst the holy and elect people there was not a man to be found that would oppose himselfe against iniustice, he brings in God as one astonied at so rare a matter, that by meanes hereof they might be brought at last to wonder and blush at their owne hypocrisie. For might they not worthily be taxed of detestable obstinacie if they would not blush at that which draue the Lord into this admiration, and that by reason of their stubbornnes? And therewithal he taxeth their hypocrisie, in that they made shew of hauing pietie and holines in great estimation, and yet when God came to make a diligent search, there was not a iust man to be found amongst them.

Moreouer, by this text he magnifies and extols the greatnes of Gods mercie, in that he vouchsafes to pull out a people as out of the bottome of hell, that were in such a pitifull plight. For no doubt but the Iewes by these words were admonished by what means they were to expect their deliuerance, namely, euen because the Lord was willing by a miracle to saue this forelorne people. Now this word *to vvonder*, sets forth Gods fatherly care. Sure it is that there are no such affections in God, namely, that he should be astonied at new and vnwonted accidents, as if they were strange to him. But herein he rather applies himselfe to our capacities, that being touched to the quick with the sense of our miseries, we might be brought to abhorre our wofull condition.

God is not subiect to humane passions.

When he saith then that the Lord *saw*, it is to signifie, that there is no reliefe to bee found in our industries: and when he *vvonders*, it telles vs that we are more then blockish

kiſh and ſenſeleſſe; in regard that we neither *know nor regard* the miſeries we are in. And yet that our careleſnes hinders not the Lord from working ſaluation of his Church.

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2

We muſt not deſpaire though mans helpe faile vs.

So his arme brought ſaluation.] In theſe words he ſhewes that we are not to deſpaire, albeit the helpe of man doe faile vs. Nay, all aides whatſoeuer being aboliſhed, the Prophet attributes the beginning and end of his nations ſaluation, yea, of all mankind, to the free goodneſſe, and onely power of God. Euen as then in affirming that God is powerfull enough; yea, almightie to deliuer the Iewes, he therefore reacheth out his hand to the weake: ſo in telling vs that we cannot ſo much as ſtir a finger towards the procuring of our owne ſaluation, he thereby caſteth to the ground all high imaginations, that ſo being ſtripped of all confidence in our workes, we might the more freely draw neere vnto God.

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2

We muſt not onely marke what the Prophets ſay; but alſo obſerue their ſcope and drift.

This is the Prophets meaning: and I would haue it well obſerued. For in reading the bookes of the Apoſtles and Prophets, we muſt not onelie marke what they ſay, but why and wherefore they haue ſaid this or that. In this place then we are principallie to conſider whereat the Propher aimes, namely, to ſignifie, that God is of ſufficient power in himſelfe to accompliſh the worke of our ſaluation, that our eies might be kept from wandring here and there; becauſe our minds are too much tied to outward meanes. What then? but that wee repoſe the whole hope of our ſaluation in the *arme* of the Lord: and the true reſtauration of the Church in his *righteouſneſſe*. Bee it therefore knowne, that ſuch erre groſely, who place it in any thing elſe, ſeeing God borrowes nothing out of himſelfe.

The vſe of this doctrine.

The vſe and profit of this [illegible] extends it ſelfe euen vnto vs. For albeit all helpes do ſometimes faile vs, yet will the Lord find ſufficient ſuccour for vs in his arme and power. As oft then as outward meanes doe faile vs, and that wee bee ouerwhelmed with all ſorts of miſeries, perceiuing nothing but preſent death before our eies: let vs haue our refuge to this doctrine: and let vs bee well aſſured that God is ſtrong enough to protect vs: and ſeeing he ſtands not in need of any mans helpe, let vs learne to reſt our ſelues boldly vpon his aſſiſtance. But yet we muſt herewithall retaine the generall doctrine. To wit, that the deliuerance of the Church is a worke and benefit which onely belongs to the wonderfull power of God: that ſo wee may neuer attribute any thing either to the ſtrength or induſtrie of man. We ought alſo to abhorre their pride who wreſt and wring part of this praiſe vnto themſelues, which whollie belongs vnto God: ſeeing in him alone conſiſts the cauſe and effect of our ſaluation.

Note.

The Churches deliuerance a benefit proceeding from Gods wonderfull power.

Arme here ſignifies his power and might: *Righteouſneſſe*, that equitie which he vſeth in procuring the ſaluation of his choſen when he becomes their protector, and deliuers them from death. Whereas he ſaith, that *his owne arme obtained ſaluation*: it muſt not be referred vnto God, neither muſt we reade it as if God had ſaued himſelfe: but it is to bee referred to the ſaluation of the Church which hee deliuered out of the hands of her enemies.

Verſ. 17. *For he put on righteouſnes, as an habergeon, and an helmet of ſaluation on his head, and hee put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was cladwith zeale as with a cloake.*

If God put himſelfe in armes to fight, he muſt needs carrie away the victorie.

THe Prophet armes the Lord at all points; not onely to confirme the faith of the godlie, but alſo to ſtrip all men of all confidence in their owne vertue. For the ſumme comes to this, that nothing ſhall be wanting vnto God, neither for diſcomfiting, nor for bearing away the victorie ouer his enemies. Why ſo? Becauſe that of his *righteouſneſſe*, power, grace, and exceeding affection towards his Church, he will make *armour of proofe*. And this we are to note with no leſſe diligence, then the doctrine of the former verſe. For albeit we confeſſe that God is almightie, yet doth not that ſatisfie vs, but wee will bee ſeeking out of other helpes. Our minds are alwaies giuen to infidelitie, ſo as *they* are wonderfully hampered, and glued faſt to outward meanes. To correct this vice our Prophet ſets before vs this liuely deſcription. As if he ſhould ſay, know ye that God hath all the ſafegards of your ſaluation readie, ſo that nothing ſhall bee wanting vnto him for your deliuerance, and for your returne home againe: doe your enemies what they can. There is no neede then why you ſhould tremble at all. Beſides, wee are verie eaſilie carried away to thinke, that wee bring ſome of our owne vnto God. And thus wee attribute part of his praiſe to our ſelues, which ſhould wholly be reſerued vnto him.

Whereas hee clothes the Lord with *vengeance and indignation as a cloke*; it appertaines vnto the enemies againſt whom God riſeth vp in wrath, for the *zeale* hee beares to his people. The more then that Satan indeuors, and with might and maine plots our ouerthrow, the more will *the zeale* of the Lord of hoſtes bee inflamed, and will ariſe with his admirable and omnipotent power to releeue vs. Although this worrier of mankind then, and all the reprobates with him ceaſe not day nor night how to oppoſe all the impediments they can, to hinder our ſaluation, yea, and that they breake forth into open rage to roote vs out; yet will our God ſcatter all their plots by his onely power.

Verſ. 18. *As to make recompence, as to requite the furie of the aduerſaries, with a recompence to his enemies: hee will fully repay the Ilands.*

A confirmation of the former concluſion.

HEe confirmes the concluſion of the former verſe. For heere hee ſhewes, what that *vengeance* is, wherewith hee clothed the Lord,

Lord, namely, that he is readie to render the like vnto his enemies. But the reason why the Prophet armes the Lord thus readie with indignation to execute his vengeance, is to be noted, to wit, because the deliuerance of his Church is ioined with the ruine of the wicked. It is needfull therefore that God should be armed to meete those enemies which would worke our destruction.

Vse. Hence let vs consider how infinite that loue of God towards vs is when he beares vs such an affection, as to hate those that hate vs, and to protest that he will *requite the furie of our aduersaries*. So exceedinglie doth he loue his little flock, that he esteemes it more then all the world besides. This is the cause then wherefore he testifies that he will *repay the Ilands*, that is to say, the nations beyond the seas farre remote from them: for, for the deliuerance of his people he ouerthrew such mightie Monarks as seemed inuincible.

Vers. 19. *So shall they feare the name of the Lord from the West, and his glorie from the rising of the Sunne: for the enemie shall come as a flood*, but *the spirit of the Lord shall chase him away.*

God will make the Churches deliuerance glorious in the sight of the whole world. NOw hee testifies that this deliuerance shall bee so glorious and magnificent, that all the world shall wonder thereat, and shall speake honourably of it: and afterwards, being smitten with astonishment, shall giue glory vnto God. But it is vncertaine whether he means this of the conuersion of the Gentiles, or of the terrour by which the Lord would bring downe his enemies. For mine owne part, I rather incline to the first exposition, namely, *that so the vtmost parts of the earth, Gods name shall be glorious and fully renowned: so as the Gentiles shall not onely bee amazed, but shall also worship and serue him in true repentance.*

The expositors agree not about the rendring of the cause which followes. But the true sense, as I suppose, is, That the violence of the enemie shall be so great, *that as a flood spoiles and carries all away before it with the force thereof, so shall he seeme to teare vp, and beare away*: But the Lord will forthwith cause him to recoile and to vanish away. It is an amplification then of Gods power, who in an instant breakes in sunder all the terrible power and furious rage of his enemies, so as their violence being turned backward, it falles to nothing.

Quest. Ans. But some may aske, of what deliuerance the Prophet here speakes. I answer, as I haue done in another place, that these promises must not be restrained (as they are wont to be) to one deliuerance only. For the Iewes referre it to the deliuerance out of Babylon, and the Christians only to Christ. Now I ioine them both together, that so we may comprehend the whole time frō the peoples returne, with that which followed vnto the comming of Christ: for this prophesie was neuer fulfilled, but in him; neither can that which is here said agree to any other then to him only, because Gods *glorie* was not manifested before to all the world, nor the enemie so put to flight, that they gathered not their forces together againe, vntill Christ came and triumphed admirablie, hauing obteined conquest ouer Satan, sinne, & death.

Vers. 20. *And the redeemer shall come vnto Zion, and vnto them that turne from iniquitie in Iaakob, saith the Lord.*

A second confirmation touching the redemption of the Church. HE againe confirmes that which he said before, namely, that the people should be deliuered, and that God would be the only author of so great a benefit. For this cause then he bids the people to be of good comfort in this exile, in regard it should not be perpetuall: afterwards he placeth the hope of their deliuerance in God only, to the end their thoughts might not rest in any thing but vpon the promises.

Vnder the word Zion, he meanes (as heretofore) the prisoners, and banished: for albeit they were scattered farre off from their countrie, yet was the Temple still to remaine planted as it were in their hearts. But lest the bastard children of *Abraham* should indifferentlie applie this vnto themselues with the heires of promise, he forthwith shewes who they be to whom this *deliuerance* shall come, namely, to such as shall be *truly conuerted vnto the Lord*. And yet it is very certaine that many returned from Babylon into Iudeah, which were not touched with any *repentance* at all; who neuertheless had their part in this benefit: but the Prophet speakes of that full redemption, which is onely proper vnto the elect. For howsoeuer the externall fruit of the deliuerance redounded to the hypocrites; yet imbraced they not this benefit of God to their saluation. The Prophet meant to say then, that the punishment of their banishment should haue fruit, to the end that the Lord hauing purged his Church from her filthinesse & corruptions, he might againe gather together her dissipations. We must also euer beare in mind that which I haue heeretofore touched, in respect of the diminution of this people. Thus then our Prophet exhorts the elect to the feare of God, that so they might make benefit of the stripes which they receiued.

To whom this deliuerance appertaines.

No reconciliation without conuersion. Hence let vs gather, that we can not be reconciled vnto God by the blood of Iesus Christ, vnlesse we be first of all thorowly displeased with our selues for displeasing of him. Not that our saluation depends vpon our repentance, seeing that is grounded vpon the remission of sinnes. But the hatred of euill, and the loue of good, is so conioined therewith, that they can not be separate. For those whom the Lord receiues into fauour, are in such wise regenerated by the holy Ghost, that they abhorre their vices, and change their course of life.

Conuersion deserues not remission of sinnes.

Papists confound repentance and remission of sinnes together. The Papists vtterly ouerthrow the whole doctrine of saluation, in mingling and confounding repentance and remission of sinnes together: neither are they of the ignorant sort

ſort only that do this, but thoſe alſo who will be reputed the moſt ingenious amongſt thé. They confeſſe indeed that a man is iuſtified freely by Chriſt: but they adde, it is becauſe we are renued by him. And thus they tie one part of their righteouſnes to the remiſſion of ſinnes, and another part to repentance. But in this doing our conſciences ſhall neuer be at reſt, becauſe we are alwaies farre off from being perfectlie regenerated. We muſt therfore diſtinguiſh theſe things without ſeparating or confounding them together, and ſo hold faſt the foundation of our ſaluation.

1 2

They muſt be diſtinguiſhed, not ſeparated.

S. *Paul* alleageth this place, to ſhew, that there yet remaines ſome hope of ſaluation for the Iewes, howſoeuer by their vntamed obſtinacie wee might gather, that they were vtterly reiected, and iudged to eternal death: Rom. 11. 26. But in regard that God alwaies remembers his couenant, and that his gifts and calling are without repentance, Rom. 11. 29. Saint *Paul* aptly concludes it to be impoſſible, that ſome remnant ſhould not at laſt bee gathered vnto Chriſt, to inioy that ſaluation which he hath purchaſed. The Iews in the end muſt be gathered in with the Gentiles, that both peoples may make one fold vnder Chriſt. But yet the Prophet ſpeakes heere (may ſome ſay) of the deliuerance from Babylon. I grant it: notwithſtanding we haue ſaid, that vnder this hee comprehends the kingdome of Chriſt, and that ſpirituall deliuerance, to which this prophecie belongs. Thence the Apoſtle concludes, that Chriſt could not ſo be the *redeemer* of the world, that it ſhould not appertaine to ſome of the Iews, out of whom he had elected their fathers, and made this promiſe expreſly in fauor of them: Rom. 11. 1, 2. In the end of the verſe, the *ratification* of ſo excellent a ſentence is added.

Queſt.

Anſ.

Verſ. 21. *And I will make this my couenant with them, ſaith the Lord; My Spirit that is vpon thee, and my words which I haue put in thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeede, nor out of the mouth of the ſeede of thy ſeede, ſaith the Lord, from hence forth, euen for euer.*

BEcauſe the doctrine before propoſed by our Prophet hitherunto was hard to bee beleeued, he labours by diuers meanes to confirme the Iewes that without wauering they might aſſuredly reſt vpon this promiſe of ſaluation: and ſhould ſo farre foorth honour the Lord, as to ſtay vpon his word. This word *couenant* is diligently to be noted. For thereby the Prophet ſets forth the greatnes and excellencie of this promiſe. For the promiſes haue a large extent, and may bee compared to ſtones in the building; whereof the couenant is the foundation, that ſuſtaines and beares vp the whole burthen. Thus then he hath vſed this word *couenant*, that they ſhould not eſteeme hereof, as of ſome common matter. And hee addes this confirmation, to the end that howſoeuer this promiſe was not by and by accompliſhed; yet they ſhould hope for the ſame, euen aboue hope. And it may be, here is a cloſe oppoſition, to cauſe the faithfull with the greater alacritie to aſpire to the new couenant which ſhould bee eſtabliſhed in the hand of Chriſt.

But that which he addes afterwards ſeemes to bring but colde comfort with it, when he would haue the Church to content her ſelfe with *vvords*, and the *Spirit*. As though forſooth there were ſome great happineſſe in hanging in ſuſpence, touching the accompliſhment of Gods promiſes. But howſoeuer the Prophet hereby recommends the excellencie and worth of doctrine; yet notwithſtanding I am well aſſured that it is not ſeparated from his effect.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Now in regard that God thus orders & diſpenceth his grace, that he alwaies exerciſeth the patience of the faithfull, whileſt they liue here below; and neuer wholly ſatisfies their deſires: this is the cauſe why he brings them to the *vvord*. As if he ſhould ſay, Thou ſhalt truely feele that I am liberall; and that I will many waies procure thy good: but thou oughteſt not to wiſh greater happineſſe, then to feele my preſence by my word. Whence wee gather, that the greateſt treaſure the Church hath, conſiſts in this, that the Lord hath choſen her for his dwelling place, that in the hearts of the faithfull he may make his abode by his *Spirit*, and may conſerue the *doctrine of the Goſpell* among them.

The richeſt treaſure the church hath.

Laſtly, he foretels that God will neuer forſake his people, but will alwaies aſſiſt them by his *vvord* and *ſpirit*: which two are conioined together, becauſe without the efficacie of the Spirit, the word would profit nothing, but would remaine fruitleſſe. On the other ſide, wee muſt not ſeparate the one from the other, as ſome fantaſticall ſpirits dreame, who in reiecting the *vvord*, pretend the *name* of the *Spirit*, and are readie to burſt with a vaine confidence, which they haue conceiued in their fantaſticall imaginations: for wee muſt hold that for the ſpirit of Satan, which is ſeparated from the word of God; to which, the holy Spirit is euer more annexed. Now when he quickens the externall word, writing it in our hearts by the finger of his Spirit, then is our condition happy euen in the midſt of infinite miſeries. Neither doe I doubt but it was the expreſſe purpoſe of the Lord to ſay, *that albeit God meant to deale graciouſly with his Church, yet ſhee muſt know that her life and ſaluation is hidden in him by faith*. And thus the ancient people is diſcerned from the new: for as the Kingdome of Chriſt is ſpirituall; ſo from his reſurrection from the dead, the ſoules of the faithfull muſt aſcend vp on high with him.

Why the Spirit is ioined with the word.

That is to be held for the ſpirit of Satan that is ſeparated frō the word.

Now hee promiſeth that the Church ſhall neuer be depriued of this inеſtimable benefit, namely, of being gouerned by the *holy Ghoſt*, and ſuſtained by *the heauenly doctrine*: for it were to little purpoſe that the Goſpell ſhould be offered vs, and the holy Ghoſt giuen

uen withall, vnleſſe they ſhould alwaies *dwell* and *remaine* with vs.

God ſpeakes vnto vs but by the mouth of his ſeruants.

When hee ſaith, *in thy mouth*, it is to ſhew, that the Lord ſo ſpeakes vnto vs, that in the meane while hee meanes to vſe the ſeruice and miniſtry of man. Hee might indeed if it pleaſed him, ſpeake vnto vs from heauen, or ſend his Angels from thence: onely heerein he hath reſpect to our weakeneſſe. Why ſo? Why God rather ſpeaks to vs by man, then by himſelfe. Becauſe hee would call and exhort vs by our like; that by their voice he might draw vs vnto him the more familiarly. This order therefore was by him eſtabliſhed in the Church: ſo as they who reiect his Miniſters, brag in vaine of their obedience vnto God. His meaning is then, that we ſeeke the doctrine and word of life, in the *mouthes* of his Prophets, and in the teachers who preach in his name, and by his commandement.

My words ſhall not depart.] Some tranſlate in the imperatiue; Let not my words depart: and ſo the future tence is often taken for this. But an exhortation or a commandement in this place agrees not, in regard the Prophet rather promiſeth what God meanes to accompliſh. I denie not but hence we may draw an exhortation: but the promiſe muſt goe before. Now the tenure of the promiſe is, that the Lord will ſo aſſiſt his Church, and haue ſuch great care of her, that he will *neuer* ſuffer her to bee depriued of the doctrine of the word. When afflictions preſſe vs then to the quicke, and things ſucceede not as wee would wiſh; let vs haue an eye to this ſentence: for it is the *word* and *Spirit*, by which we muſt be raiſed vp and ſuſtained; of which the Lord heere promiſeth *neuer to deſtitute vs.*

THE LX. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Ariſe* O Ieruſalem; *bee bright: for thy light is come, and the glorie of the Lord is riſen vpon thee.*

In Chap. 59. 21. hee ſpake of the word, now hee ſpeakes of the efficacie of it.

IN this place the Prophet ſhewes what the efficacie of this word is, whereof hee ſpake in the former Chapter. For he comforts the church in her low and afflicted eſtate, and *reſtores her to her brightneſſe.* And in reſpect that he repreſents the perſon of God, he heere manifeſts his *authoritie*: and for that cauſe, vſeth a *commandement*, that he might giue his ſpeech the greater weight: as if by his abſolute power, he placed the Church in that happy eſtate, which hee before promiſed her. The ſumme is, to aſſure the faithfull that the Prophet ſpake not as in the aire, but effectually.

Now he commands her to *Ariſe*, in regard that before he ſaid, ſhe ſate vpon the ground: which two words are oppoſites. In the 47. Chapter of this booke, hee ſaid to Babylon; Come downe, *and ſit in the duſt.* And in Chap. 32.18. he ſaid of the Iewes themſelues; *My people ſhall ſit in the duſt*: and yet on the contrarie, in Chap. 52.1,2. hee ſaith; *Ariſe, Ariſe*, O Zion, put on the garments of thy beautie: ſhake thy ſelfe from the duſt. Now in this place againe hee raiſeth vp the Church, as if he tooke her by the hand, to the end ſhee might againe recouer her ſeate of honor, who now ſate in the duſt, wholly couered ouer with filth and dung.

Now that the poore Iewes might not by reaſon of the darkneſſe of their euils, be vtterly ouerwhelmed with deſpaire, hee telles them that the light which had been ſmothered for a time, ſhould immediately *breake forth* againe. Heerein alluding to the ordinarie courſe *of the day, ſucceeding the night.* As if he ſhould ſay; The Lord hauing compaſſion vpon thee, will draw thee out of theſe obſcure dungeons, in which thou haſt ſo long bin held priſoner. I haue ſatisfied my ſelfe in correcting thee, it is time now therefore thou ſhouldeſt begin to take ſome eaſe. And therefore by the word *To ſhine*, vnder a figure hee meanes a recouery of health, and a floriſhing eſtate: as heeretofore by *darkneſs*, Chap. 58.10. and 59.9. he ſignified the calamitie of the Church. Simile.

But heerewithall he admoniſheth her, that this light ſhall ariſe vnto her from none but from the brightneſſe of *Gods countenance*, at ſuch time as *he* ſhall bee pleaſed to manifeſt ſome tokens of his fauour: for all things fall out to the beſt, when the Lord *lightens vs with his brightneſſe*: but if he be againſt vs, we cannot poſſible meete with a greater miſery nor infelicitie.

Verſ. 2. *For behold, darkneſſe ſhall couer the earth, and groſſe darkeneſſe the people: but the Lord ſhall ariſe vpon thee, and his glorie ſhall be ſeene vpon thee.*

NOw hee amplifies this grace which hee mentioned before by way of compariſon, to the end wee might conſider of the infinit loue which God beares to his elect; yea and how great the priuiledges are, which are giuen and granted vnto them by him. The ſumme is, that whileſt the world is preſſed, and in a maner *ouerwhelmed with infinite miſeries, God will haue care ouer his people to inrich them with ſundry benefits.* He ſhewes then that the *light* of grace and fauour, mentioned in the former verſe, ſhall not be common to all, but particular to the people of God. Wee told you before that the word *brightneſſe*, notes out the floriſhing eſtate of the church; but yet wee muſt not iudge thereof by any outward appearance: for the Prophet flies an higher An amplification of the grace mentioned in verſ. 1.

higher pitch. Neither make I any doubt, but he here propounds vnto vs a ſpiritual brightneſſe and light. Otherwiſe the phraſe of ſpeech which hee vſeth in verſ.3. (namely, that the Gentiles ſhould walke in this light) would not agree. And the coherence of the text of this chapter with the former, ſhewes it plainely. For in verſe 21. of chap.59. hee ſaid, that the *couenant* was encloſed in the *vvord* and *ſpirit*: from the oppoſition then, it is eaſily gathered, that the felicitie promiſed to the Church in the beginning of this Chapter conſiſts in ſomewhat elſe then in meate, and drinke, idleneſſe and carnall ſecuritie. Nay, let vs rather conſider of the matter aright, and wee ſhall ſee, that ſince that time, all the Gentiles were not couered with a cloud of miſeries, whileſt the Iewes in the meane while enioyed their eaſe. Seeing then the condition of the Church is ſeparated from the ſtate of the whole world; the benefit which Iſaiah poſſeſſeth the Church of in this place, is ſpirituall. As alſo this brightnes which he promiſeth, is ſpirituall. This therefore belongs to the ſpirituall kingdome of Chriſt, whereby the light of the Goſpell enlightned all parts of the world. Yea, the ſtrange nations were enlightned by it.

To this appertaines that which followeth, *The Lord ſhall ariſe vpon thee.* For albeit hee ſhewed that Gods fauour ſhould appeare by manifeſt ſignes and effects: yet he leaues not out that which was the principall: namely, that the faithfull ſhould ſenſiblie perceiue that hee was their father, to the end they might wait for their ſaluation from *him*.

Doctrine 1. Hence let vs gather, that we are ouerwhelmed with *darkeneſſe*, till ſuch time as the Lord lightens vs with the teſtimonie of his free adoption. I ſpeake of all mankind: for *Iſaiah* teacheth that this quickning light proceeds from *God* only: thereby to ſignifie that it is the eſpeciall gift of his owne hand. Secondly, we are to note, that the *Church* only partakes of this brightnes, ỳ is, the elect of God. Whence it followes, that it is no common or naturall gift: but ſuch a one as with which the Lord ſupplies the common defect of mans nature. And hereby alſo wee perceiue that there was neuer any ſparke of true light, but in the Church. For all men beſides are enwrapped with darkeneſſe, albeit they thinke to be in the light, and that they haue a great ſplendor: neither can they be deliuered out of this darkneſſe, but by the light of the Goſpell. He addes the word *glorie*. For after the Lord hath once receiued vs into his fauour, he ſo continues the ſame vnto vs, that his benefits doe daily more and more flow in vpon vs with greater increaſes.

2

No light out of the Church.

Verſ.3. *And the Gentiles ſhall walke in thy light, and kings at the brightnes of thy riſing vp.*

A confirmation in this and the verſe following. THe Propher now confirmes that which we were ſaying, to wit, that men haue no light of their owne, but that whereby the Lord enlightens them through his word. All will confeſſe ſo much; but they doe not worthilie eſteeme of this grace as they ought: they onely take it for ſome common thing which appertaines naturally to euerie man: but here it appeares that it is ſupernaturall. And therefore it muſt be diſtinguiſhed from nature; as the repetition of theſe wordes, *vpon thee*, ſufficientlie ſhewes. Firſt then let vs hold it for certaine, that this benefit proceedes onely from God: ſecondly, that all indifferentlie do not partake hereof, but the elect onely, whom the Lord enlightnes by his free grace, that he might exempt them out of the common rancke of other men. 1 2

Now this is done by Chriſt, who is called the *ſunne of righteouſneſſe*: Mal.4.2. becauſe we are inlightned by his beames. Moreouer, the Prophet teacheth, that the grace which was communicated vnto the Iewes, ſhall bee ſpread far and wide. According as the words of the couenant often ſound, In thy ſeede ſhall all the nations of the earth bee bleſſed: Gen.22.18. For the *light* which was proper onelie to a particular nation, would bring no benefit at all to others. But for as much as the doctrine of the Goſpell was to be ſpread into all parts of the world, Iudea *bare this light*; that from thence it might ſhine to the *Gentiles*, who ſaw not one ſparkle thereof before. For in that he makes *this light proper to one people*, he ſhewes that the world could not otherwiſe be enlightned nor attaine to the participation of this benefit, but in ſeeking this *light* in that word which came forth of Iudea, and was heard in Ieruſalem; where the lampe of the Lord was kindled; and from whence the *Sunne of righteouſneſſe* caſt his beames, that thence he might afterwards enlighten all the habitable corners and quarters of the earth. As in chap.2.3. wee haue ſeene, That the law *went forth of Sion*. There is no light then, but in the doctrine of the Prophets: ſo that whoſoeuer they bee that recoile backe from it, they falſely bragge of *vvalking in this light*.

By the *brightneſſe of thy riſing vp*, hee alludes to the breake of day. For as the morning ſtar begins the day, by ſtriking thorow the heauen onely, and foorthwith the *ſunne ſhines* ouer all the world: ſo *the breake of day began firſt in Iudea; whence the light aroſe, and ſpread it ſelfe throughout the vvhole vvorld*. For there is no corner of it, which the Lord hath not enlightned with this light.

This light belongs as well to Kings as to common perſons. He mentions *kings*, that we ſhould not imagine this light belonged to the common people only, but to Princes and great Lords, who otherwiſe doe much pleaſe themſelues in their dignities. Truely, the honour which he here attributes to the Church is exceeding great, ſeeing her brightneſſe ſhall bee ſo glorious, that it ſhall draw vnto her, *kings* and *nations*. He calles it the *Churches light*, not becauſe ſhee hath any light of her ſelfe; but in regard ſhee borrowes it from *Chriſt*, *as the Moone takes her light from the Sunne*.

As the Moone drawes her light from the ſunne, ſo the Church borrowes her light from Chriſt.

Verſ.4. *Lift vp thine eies round about, and behold: all theſe are gathered*

and come to thee: thy ſonnes ſhall come from farre, and thy daughters ſhal be nouriſhed at thy *ſide.*

BY many words he confirmes this promiſe touching the reſtauration of the Church, which ſeemed a thing altogether incredible: and therefore was a matter hard to bee beaten into the heads of the Iewes, in an eſtate wherein things were ſo perplexed and confuſed. For then none but the kingdome of Iudah ſtood: which daily decaied, till at laſt it fell flat to the ground. Afterwards, when the people were carried away captiue, all things grew ſo deſperate in theſe horrible ſcatterings and wofull ruines, that as it ſeemed the Church was vtterly aboliſhed. It was needful therfore that this doctrine ſhould be many waies confirmed, that mens minds, which of themſelues are too much inclined by nature to diſtruſt, might no longer remain intangled with doubtings. For this cauſe then he brings the Iewes as it were, to ſ̄ thing done, notwithſtanding it were yet farre off: to the end they might aſſure themſelues no leſſe of ſ̄ accompliſhment thereof, then if the thing were alreadie effected *before their eies.*

Men inclined ouermuch by nature to diſtruſt.

Now hee commands the faithfull to *lift vp* their eies on high, that is to ſay, aboue al humane thoughts: for whileſt we remaine fixed to outward appearances, wee cannot ſauour the fruit of theſe promiſes. He ads *round about*, that they might certainlie know the people ſhould not come from one nation alone, but from all parts, to be knit together into one bodie. Neither doth hee alone promiſe an end, and a remedie to the ſcattering which was to come, as in Pſalm. 147. 2. and chap. 56. 8. that God *vvould gather in the ſcattered of Iſrael:* but this gathering ſhould extend it ſelfe further off. For it ſignifies that there ſhould be a wonderfull change in the world: ſo as thoſe who before *vvere ſtrangers and diuided, ſhould be gathered into one bodie.* To conclude, the ſpreading of the Church to the vtmoſt bounds of the earth is here noted out vnto vs. We muſt alſo ſupplie a cloſe oppoſition here, which manifeſts that miſerable and wofull eſtate whereinto all mankind is plunged till we be gathered in vnder the conduct of Chriſt.

A teſtimonie touching the calling of the Gentiles.

Some, by *ſonnes* allegorically vnderſtand thoſe who were ſtrong and ſtedfaſt in faith: and by *daughters*, the weake. But I thinke the Prophet was not diſpoſed to ſpeake ſo acutely. I therefore take it ſimplie thus, *That ſonnes and daughters ſhall in time to come, runne vnto the Church.* That is to ſay, ſhall not onely be begotten within doores, but without alſo: yea, euen in the furtheſt parts of the world. For the wombe of the Church ſhall no more be ſhut vp in a corner of the earth, but ſhall ſpread it ſelfe as farre, and as wide, as the whole world hath any ſpace.

Verſ. 5. *Thou ſhalt ſee and ſhine: thine heart ſhall be aſtoniſhed, and enlarged, becauſe the multitude of the ſea ſhall be conuerted vnto thee, and the riches of the Gentiles ſhall come vnto thee.*

THeſe things at the firſt bluſh ſeeme to haue ſome repugnancie in them; ſeeing in the former verſe he ſpake in the preſent tence; and now *in the time to come.* But there hee ſpake of the *eies* of faith, which apprehends that, that men cannot comprehend by nature: here, hee handles that which concernes *the euent* of the thing it ſelfe. Or, rather; by ſpeaking in the preſent tence before, he meant to ſignifie the truth and ſtedfaſtneſſe of the promiſe: and now reſtraines the ſame ſentence; to teach the faithfull to limit themſelues within the bounds of patience. Beſides, howſoeuer the promiſes of God be for a time ſhadowed from mens ſight: yet doe the faithfull cleerely behold them by faith; ſo as they wait for the vndoubted accompliſhment thereof, though others will beleeue nothing at all of them.

By ſpeaking in the preſent tence verſ. 4. hee ſhewed the certaintie of the promiſe ſpeaking; now in the future, hee teacheth them to be patient.

And ſhine.] Becauſe the verb *Nahar*, ſignifies to ſhine, and to flow foorth, it may be tranſlated both waies. For we may referre it to that ioy which carrieth and cauſeth the Church to ouerflow, when ſhee growes and increaſeth in this world: or, to that decking of her, which makes her to *ſhine.* But it ſeemes to agree but vntowardly with the text, that hee couples *aſtoniſhment*, with *brightnes* or ioy. Truely I doubt not but by this word hee vnderſtands ſuch an *amazednes* as ariſeth from an *admiration* and wonderment, with which the Church ſhall be rapt vp and carried away in ſeeing her ſelfe to riſe to ſuch an vnexpected honour, and to be exalted to ſo high a degree of glorie. As if he ſhould ſay, The greatneſſe of this worke ſhall be ſuch, that it ſhall farre ſurmount thy hope. It is no *aſtoniſhment* then that is conceiued through ſome feare of danger or calamitie; but ſuch as we ſee to happen in great wonders, which ſurpaſſe the reach of our vnderſtandings: when being aſtoniſhed wee are for the time as in a dreame: Pſalm. 136. 1. And this *trembling* ſuites very well *with ioy.*

Verſ. 6. *The multitude of Camels ſhall couer thee: and the Dromedaries of Midian, and of Epha: all they of Sheba ſhall come: they ſhall bring gold and incenſe, and ſhew forth the praiſes of the Lord.*

7. *All the ſheepe of Kedar ſhall bee gathered vnto thee: the Rammes of Nebaioth ſhall ſerue thee: they ſhall come vp to bee accepted vpon mine Altar: and I will beautifie the houſe of my glorie.*

VNder borrowed ſpeeches the Prophet deſcribes the glorie of the Church, and applies his doctrine, both to the time and perſons, with which he had to doe. For wee muſt keepe that in mind which we haue often

He that is truly conuerted vnto God, will dedicate all he hath to his ſeruice.

ſaid, namely; that the Prophets had reſpect to the people whom they taught. And for that cauſe, mentioned the things beſt known, and the ceremonies moſt in vſe; that vnder the figures thereof, they might note out Gods ſpiritual worſhip and ſeruice. For it was good reaſon the *Iewes* ſhould bee firſt inſtructed: and the Gentiles (in the ſecond place) to whom the truth of theſe things is come. As if hee ſhould ſay; The people of farre Countries ſhall come with their riches, in the power of God.

And where he ſaith, the Church ſhall be *enriched*, it is not to be referred to the perſons of men: but in regard of the vnion which the head hath with the members, that which appertaines to God and Chriſt, is heere attributed to the Church. The Iewes deale abſurdlie therefore, who vnder colour of this propheſie, by their inſatiable couetouſnes deuoure all the riches of the earth: neither doe the Papiſts leſſe fondly wreſt theſe words to the maintaining of their riches, and ſuperfluous pomps.

Abſurd collections from this place of Iewes and Papiſts.

Now he mentions *Camels, incenſe, gold,* and *ſheepe*, as hauing regard to that wherewith euery region abounded in, thereby ſignifying, that all ſhould conſecrate vnto God whatſoeuer they inioyed; and ſhould offer themſelues and all their riches vnto him in ſacrifice. Whence wee are to gather, that we can not truly be conuerted vnto the Lord, vnleſſe we offer vp vnto him all that euer we haue: for theſe are thoſe ſpirituall oblations which he requires, 1. Pet. 2. 5. Rom. 12. 1. which we can not poſſiblie denie him, if our hearts be truly dedicated and conſecrated vnto him. The wicked abuſe the gifts of God to exceſſe and wantonnes, and as much as in them is corrupt them by an execrable prophanenes, but the faithfull who vſe them with good conſcience, conſecrate them vnto the Lord. None can rightly ſay hee is the Lords then, vnleſſe he therewithall dedicates and conſecrates vnto the Lord himſelfe and all that he hath.

Doctrine.

1. Pet. 2. 5. Rom. 12. 1.

As touching the regions here mentioned by the Prophet, it is not needfull for vs to diſcuſſe in what place euery one of them is ſituated. Notwithſtanding by the way we note, that he ſpeakes of ſuch as lay Eaſtward, and chiefly Arabia, and the places neere adioining, which he ſignifies by *Kedar*, and *Nebaioth*. The Papiſts haue alſo abuſed this place, to proue that Kings came from the Eaſt to offer gifts vnto Chriſt: wherein they ſhew themſelues too ridiculous, ſeeing the Prophet ſpeakes of all ſorts of people. But they ſnatch vp without iudgement all ſuch like places wherein mention is made of *gold*, or *incenſe*, as if the Prophets meant to ſpeake of the gifts which the wiſe men offred, Math. 2. 11. There is nothing obſcure in this place then: for the Prophets meaning is, that God ſhall in time to come be called vpon *in euery place*, and *all ſtrangers* ſhall be gathered vnto him to yeeld him obedience.

Another abſurd collection of the Papiſts. Kings of the Eaſt.

As touching the words, *they ſhall come vp*; ſome tranſlate, They ſhall come vp vpon mine altar in good pleaſure. And this ſeemes to me not vnapt; as if the Prophet meant to ſay, that the offrings of the Gentiles ſhould be acceptable vnto God. Others expound, They ſhall come vp acceptable: which ſuites not with the proprietie of this tongue. For *Raſon* ſignifies good pleaſure, good will, or fauor: and therefore I thinke it ſhould be read as I haue tranſlated it, namely, that the oblations ſhould come vp in good pleaſure vpon the altar; ſo as the words may thus be reſolued, *They ſhall goe vp, to appeaſe God:* for the altar was ordained, and the ſacrifices offred, to the end God might be mercifull and fauorable vnto men, who according to his promiſe, accepts the ſacrifice offred vpon his *altar:* for then the Altar was the meane to obtaine Gods fauor. Exod. 20. 24.

The Prophet then expreſſeth three things here diſtinctly. For firſt when he ſaith, that the ſacrifices *vvent vp*, he alludes to the ceremonie which in old time they vſed in the ſacrifices, for they *lifted vp their offrings*: Exod. 29. 24. Leuit. 8. 29. to ſignifie, that they were to lift vp their minds, that ſo they might not be glued to the earth; or only, to fixe their eies vpon that which was offred. Secondly, that theſe ſacrifices were *acceptable vnto God*, that ſo they might be diſtinguiſhed from the ſacrifices of the Gentiles, which were offred without faith. Thirdly, *vpon the Altar*, which only ſanctified the oblations: for whatſoeuer was offred vpon any thing elſe was polluted and abominable. Moreouer, this figure ought to leade vs vnto the truth of it: for *Chriſt is Gods altar*, as wee haue ſeene in Chap. 56. 7. and *vpon him* muſt we offer our ſacrifices, if we would haue them *vvell-pleaſing vnto God*.

Three things noted in the ſacrifices of the Iewes.
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Chriſt, Gods Altar.

Beſides, vnder the *beautie* of the Temple he ſignifies the reſtauration of the people; in regard the principall part of their felicitie conſiſted in hauing the *Temple* wherein God was purely worſhipped to ſtand in perfect beautie. And there muſt wee begin, namely, to haue God reigne amongſt vs, if we would be truly happie, for which cauſe the Lord minding to ſhew that his Church ſhall be reſtored, mentions the *Temple*, vpon which he will put his glorie. As if he ſhould ſay, *My houſe is now expoſed to the mocks of the Gentiles, but in the end I will put my glorie againe vpon it, vvherevnto it is now deprined.* Now out of *Zacharie, Haggai,* and *Malachi* it appeares, that this was not accompliſhed preſentlie after their returne out of captiuitie: for wee muſt not thinke that there was that true dignitie in this ſumptuous building, wherby *Herod* would cunningly haue inſinuated himſelfe into the fauor of the Iewes. The dignitie or glorie here mentioned therefore appeared not till God opened the dore of heauen to Ieruſalem, and afterwards manifeſted the hope of eternall ſaluation to all the Iewes.

Herod.

Verſ. 8. *Who are theſe that flee like a clonde, and as the doues to their windowes?*

The Prophet amplifies this multiplication of the Church by an admiration.

BEcauſe the Prophet could not content himſelfe with mentioning this benefit of God, being rapt into an admiration, he cries

out, Who are these? Which maner of speech hath much more vehemencie in it, then if he had simply affirmed, that a great number did flee; yea, though he had vsed the same similitudes. He meant then more fully to expresse how glorious this multiplying should be, seeing he could find no fit words to set forth the same withall.

Psa. 110.3.

Which flee as a cloud.] Some thinke that by this the Apostles are meant, who with an incredible swiftnesse, ranne to the vtmost parts of the world. I grant this exposition hath some colour: but the Prophet speakes of the assembling of the whole Church, namely, that the nations should runne vnto it from all parts, with great nimblenesse and alacritie.

Simile.

The similitude of *doues*, which hee vseth, is very apt for this purpose. For when these birds be in the fields, they seeme to be of the number of other wild birds; yet they belong to an house, and haue their louers, vnto which they retire, and in which they make their nests. So in like manner, the faithfull begin to know their gathering together, being illuminated by faith; that so they may withdraw themselues out of that horrible scattering in which they are. Whosoeuer shall consider the miserable and wofull state of those times, shall easilie perceiue how necessarie this aduertisement was. For if the Prophets, who without ceasing, had so many yeeres instructed the Iewes, reaped little or no profit thereby; what was to bee expected from the Gentiles, who were wholly estranged from God? Yet the Prophet hath not spoken excessiuely: but hee so admires the thing, that he also drawes vs therewithall into admiration with him.

Vers. 9. *Surely the Iles shall wait for me, and the shippes of Tarshish at the beginning, that they may bring thy sonnes from farre, and their siluer and gold with them, vnto the name of the Lord thy God, because he hath glorified thee.*

That these things might haue the more weight, God himselfe is brought in speaking.

HAuing magnified the excellent benefit of this restauration, with all the praises he could possibly deuise, hee brings in God himselfe speaking, that his speech might haue the greater authoritie. Some take *To wait* heere, To desire: as if he should say; Let this be done, because the strange nations are as men affamished, longing after him, by feeling themselues destituted of life and saluation. Others take it simply, To hope: but the word also sometimes signifies, To obserue. And in this sense *Dauid* takes it, in Psal. 56, saying, The wicked waited for my soule: that is to say, they spread snares for my life. And in this signification wee may take it heere. They shall wait: that is to say, they shall obserue my

Psal. 123.2.

countenance, as seruants are wont to depend vpon the will of their Masters: as if he should say; *Marueil not if so many nations runne after the Church, for the Iles which despise and resist me now, shall be so attentiue to my voice, that they shall doe whatsoeuer I command them.* And questionlesse it appeares by the rest of this verse, that such a kind of obedience is heere mentioned.

The shipps of Tarshish.] If any will, they may heere supply the particle of similitude thus; As the shipps of Tarshish once sailed vnto Iudea, and brought that which was necessarie for the building of the Temple, and for mens vse: so it shall come to passe, that they shall saile thither againe, and this interrupted nauigation shall recouer the first course.

By *Tarshish*, that is, Cilicia, which was opposite to Iudea; vnder the figure Synecdoche, he vnderstands all voyages and traffikes, which they made by sea with strange nations. Wee may also take it without figure thus; The shipps of Tarshish which were wont malapartly to scorne my Church, shall subiect themselues to my authoritie, and thereunto shall bring *children* from a far Country.

Their gold is vvith them.] He againe repeates his former speech, to wit, that the Gentiles shall so yeeld their obedience vnto God, that they shall offer to him both themselues and all theirs. The Popish Doctors doe heere againe (as I touched in vers. 6.) shew their extreme impudencie, when they abuse these and the like places, to vphold those tyrannous and Persian-like pompes, whereby that Antichrist of Rome, and his suppostes, glister and will be wondered at. And albeit they ouerflow in costly raiment, being couered from top to toe with gold and pearles: in a word, though they apparell themselues like a strumpet; yet are they not ashamed to make the holy Ghost the author of all these abominations. For when the Prophets doe but mention gold or siluer, straightway they apply the same to their dissolutions. Truly in this behalfe they resemble the Iewes, who leape for ioy as oft as the Prophets mention gold or siluer; hoping to wallow themselues therein, when the Messiah shall come. So the Papists thinke on nothing else but vpon *gold* and *siluer*, with which vaine appearance, their mindes are so bewitched, that they cannot aspire to heauen: but this blockishnesse hath no need of any refutation. The summe is, *that God vvill exalt his Church vnto an high and soueraigne degree of honour, and decke her vvith ornaments befitting her.* But to the end the faithfull might not doubt that any impediments should hinder them to receiue so glorious a promise: or lest they should attribute ought to their merits, *God himselfe promiseth to be the author of this thing.* Moreouer, *Isaiah* now assignes the riches of the Gentiles, whom heretofore he had abandoned from the Church, to bee an holy offering vnto God, and as spoiles and recompences of her victory. And thus hee more cleerely expresseth that which I haue said, namely, that wee ought to desire nothing so much, as to see the whole world subdued vnder Gods dominion.

Impudencie of Popish Doctors, in their absurd collections.

Rem. 17.8. Persian like pride noted in the Pope and his Clergie.

Iewes and Papists iump together in their fond collections.

Vers. 10. *And the sonnes of strangers shall build vp thy walles, and their*

Kings

kings ſhall miniſter vnto thee: for in my wrath I ſmote thee, but in my mercie I had compaſſion on thee.

The ſame argument proſecuted, and in the next verſe expounded.

HE proſecutes the ſame argument. And as hee ſaid heretofore that *ſtrangers* ſhould ſubmit themſelues vnder Gods authoritie to reedifie the Temple: ſo now hee ſaith, that the *ſtrangers* ſhall beſtow their labour in *building vp the walles*. The compariſons whereby he promiſeth the Churches reſtauration are diuers. For it is a thing vſuall in the Scriptures, where the Church is ſpoken of, ſometimes to ſet it foorth vnder the Temple, and then againe, vnder Ieruſalem. Now hee promiſeth that the *ſtrangers* ſhall helpe to ſet vp this building, leſt the Iewes ſhould faint being aſtoniſhed at their pouertie, or ſmal number. For in the captiuitie they might bee ſolicited to diſtruſt, thinking that albeit they ſhould returne into their countrie, yet there was no likelihood that euer they ſhould perfect ſuch a worke. But *Cyrus* did this, who furniſhed them with great ſums of gold and ſiluer. And yet theſe things were but figuratiue in him; for they had their full accompliſhment in Chriſt, to whoſe kingdome all that which is here ſpoken muſt bee referred. For firſt of all he vſed the ſeruice of a few weake men, to wit, the Apoſtles, who were diſfurniſhed of fit meanes for ſo long a buſineſſe; afterwards therefore he raiſed vp ſtrangers out of whom he choſe Paſtors, and made their Princes to be nurſing fathers to the Church.

Cyrus.

Apoſtles.

Paſtors.

Kings and Princes.

The Papiſts too malepertly do ouerthrow and corrupt this place, when they wreſt it to eſtabliſh the tyrannie of their Pope; to whō they giue ſoueraigne dominion our Kings and Princes. And herein they ſhew themſelues impudent liers (againſt the truth) in calling him Chriſts Vicar: ſeeing the kingdome of Chriſt is not of this world: Ioh. 18. 36. And yet this companion on the contrary domineeres in pride and crueltie; and takes vpon him to change kingdomes. Now *Kings* ſo ſubmit themſelues vnto Chriſt, that yet they ceaſe not to be kings ſtill. Onely they are to imploy their power for the maintenance of Gods ſeruice; and to gouerne their ſubiects with equitie. Whence wee ſee how farre off they are from Chriſts kingdom, who would rent from Kings their power and authoritie, to make themſelues Lords ouer them.

Papiſts malepert in giuing their Pope ſoueraigntie ouer Kings.

Papiſts ſhameleſſe liers in calling their Pope Chriſts Vicar.

Kings ſo ſubmit themſelues to the Church, that they hold their kingly authoritie ſtill.

From this place wee may alſo refute the Anabaptiſts, who ſo ouerturne politike gouernment, that Kings can no otherwiſe bee Chriſtiās, then in renouncing (ſay theſe bedlems) their authoritie. But wee ſee here that God will haue himſelfe honoured of the *Kingly order*.

Anabaptiſts would haue no kings.

Moreouer that none might obiect, that it had been an eaſier matter to haue maintained the Church in her firſt eſtate, then now to plucke her out of hell: God preuents this alſo, and ſhewes that the Iewes were iuſtly thus afflicted, in regard they had too much *prouoked* him by their iniquities. But hee giues them matter of *good hope, becauſe he will not puniſh them with rigor according to their demerits, but will content himſelfe that they haue been humbled vnder temporarie chaſtiſements*. And yet therewithal he informeth them touching *the cauſe* of ſuch a change: leſt they ſhould iudge therof according to their ſenſe. For when kingdomes are changed, and ſometimes on a ſudden exalted; and forthwith fall backe into ruine: we thinke ſuch things fall out by chance, and that it is but the courſe of the world. The Iewes might thinke the ſame, when after the ruine of the Chaldean Monarchy, they were ſet at liberty. And therefore the Lord *proteſts that all theſe things were guided by his Prouidence*; that they ſhould not be partners with infidels in their blindneſſe; It is as much then as if he had ſaid; If thou askeſt wherefore thou haſt endured ſo manie miſeries: truly, becauſe *I was angrie with thee*, and tooke vengeance of thy offences. But if thou wouldſt know the reaſon of thy deliuerance, it hath proceeded from my meere good will; not for thy merits: or a iumbling together of ſecondarie cauſes. Calamities then fall not out by chance. Neither is the Lord angrie without cauſe. Neither yet is he euer ſo angrie but he leaues way for his mercie.

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In my wrath I ſmot thee.

Gods free mercie, and not our merits, the cauſe of our redemption.

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Verſ. 11. *Therefore thy gates ſhall be open continually: neither day nor night ſhall they be ſhut, that men may bring vnto thee the riches of the Gentiles, and * that their kings may be brought.*

* Or, and their Kings led.

THis verſe is ill expounded of the moſt Interpreters. For they thinke the Prophet meant to ſay, that the Church ſhall be in ſafetie vnder the fidelitie and protection of God. Why ſo? Becauſe *open doores*, ſhew that danger is fare off. But me thinkes the Prophet expounds himſelfe: namely, that *the gates ſhall be open*, that riches may be brought into the citie from all parts. And in as much as they are wont to beare their burthens by day: the *day*, ſaith he, ſhall not ſuffice in regard of the continuall reſort of ſuch as ſhall bring precious treaſures thither. Wherefore *carriages* ſhall not ceaſe, in ſo much that the gates muſt be kept open *day* and *night*.

Where he ſaith, ỳ the Church ſhal haue the *riches of the Gentiles*, it is not to be referred to temporall commodities, but to the obedience which all the world ſhall yeeld vnto God in his Church: to which he giues that which is offered vnto him, in regard he hath nothing which is not hers.

What is meant by the riches of the Gentiles.

And their kings led.] I had rather retaine the participle which the Prophet vſeth, then to follow them who change it into a verbe: for they ouerthrow his meaning; in regard that he expreſſely addeth this, becauſe the pride of kings is ſuch, that they will not willingly ſuffer themſelues to bee led. Nay, on the contrarie, ſtanding too much vpon their owne power, they wax intemperate; and in ſtead of being *led* whither they ought; they carrie

Kings naturally vnwilling to ſubmit their neckes to Gods yoke.

carrie away with them al others as with a violent flood. He shewes then that notwithstanding their naturall and vntamed rebellion, they shall submit themselues to God and his Church.

Vers. 12. *For the nation and the kingdome that will not serue thee shall perish: and those nations shall bee vtterly destroyed.*

A confirmation of the former doctrine.

THe Prophet stands much vpon the confirmation of the hearts of Gods children, to assure them that they should behold the restauration of the Church one day, as hee hath now described it out vnto them. These thinge were altogether incredible: and howsoeuer we our selues are sufficiently confirmed by the euents of these things which are manifested in all mens sight; yet if wee were not gouerned by the spirit of Christ, hardly should wee conceiue them in our minde. He shewes then that there is no cause at all wherefore the Iewes should doubt of the restauration of the Temple; because the Gentiles should come to aide them with all their power. But *Isaiah* regarded something more high in this place, then the building of the visible Temple. For his meaning is to speake of that obedience which Kings, Nobles, and the commons should yeelde vnto the Church, when they should aduance as much as in them lay, the puritie of doctrine. Yea, hee passeth yet further in pronouncing that the *kingdomes and nations which will not serue the Church*, shall *perish*. If such as helpe not the Church, are condemned with this fearefull and terrible sentence; what shall we say of those tyrants who set themselues furiously against her, and labour with might and maine to worke her ouerthrow? If the slothfull and carelesse shall not escape vnpunished, ought not the wicked to wait for some horrible vengeance, seeing they striue to hinder and ouerthrow the worke of the Lord?

If such as serue not the Church shall perish, how shall they escape that persecute her?

He repeates that now in the *plurall number*, which he said before in the singular; to shew, that if the whole world were guiltie, yet they should wholly perish. For the *multitude* cannot free those from perishing, that estrange themselues from God: neither shall the wicked be excused, if they hinder one another from comming to saluation; or if they incourage one another to commit iniquitie. Now it is said (as we haue seene before) that Kings and nations serue the Church, not in regard that shee exerciseth any dominion of her selfe, but because God hath giuen and committed the scepter of his word, by which hee rules, vnto her custodie.

And those nations, &c.

Vers. 13. *The glory of Lebanon shall come vnto thee, the firre tree, the elme and the box tree together to beautifie the place of my sanctuarie: for I will glorifie the place of my feete.*

Isaiah vseth yet another similitude, which hee brought in when hee compared the Church to a building or Citie. For he recites such things as are necessarie to build withall, to wit, the *firre tree*, the *pine tree*, and the *box tree*; all which grew in *Lebanon*, a forrest that abounded with goodly and excellent trees. His meaning is then, that whatsoeuer was faire and exquisite in this forrest, should be brought vnto the Church. But we must refer the truth of these figures to Gods spirituall worship; for he adornes his Church with the title of the *sanctuarie*, because himselfe dwels in the midst thereof: notwithstanding hee hath alwaies respect to the Temple, and to the customes of those times. He sets before vs then a paterne of the Temple that stood in Ierusalem; that vnder the image thereof we might consider of the spirituall Temple, whereof wee are the matter and the liuing stones: Eph. 2. 21. 1. Pet. 2. 5.

By *the place of his feete*, he signifies that hee so dwelles in the Temple, that yet his Maiestie is not inclosed therein, for he is not contained within so narrow limits. There is nothing but his feete then, that is to say, his lowest and meanest part: thereby teaching vs, to aspire vp vnto heauen, and not to rest fixed in these externall signes, which instruct vs according to our slender capacitie. According to which, it is said in Psal. 99. 5. Worship *the footstoole of his feete*, for he is holy. Also, We will enter into his Tabernacle, and worship before his *footstoole*: Psal. 132. 7. Not that Gods essence is diuided into pieces, part in heauen, and part in earth; but in regard that by such helpes, hee raiseth vp his seruant as it were from his *feete* to his head.

Gods essence not parted into pieces.

Vers. 14. *The sonnes also of them that afflicted thee, shall come and bow vnto thee; and all they that despised thee, shall fall downe at the soles of thy feete, and they shall call thee, The Citie of the Lord, Zion of the holy one of Israel.*

HE prosecutes the same argument still. For he shewes how wonderfull this worke of redemption shall be, when those that *persecuted* or *despised* the Church, shall come to prostrate themselues humbly before her *feete*, and with their whole hearts shall submit themselues to her seruice. By the *children* of those that afflicted her, hee meanes the tyrants and persecuters which vexed her. Now this was partly accomplished when the Iewes returned into their country. But this returne was but an obscure shadow of that deliuerance which wee haue obtained by Christ. Thus these things then were truly accomplished vnder Christs kingdome; yet so, that we must wait for the perfect consummation thereof, till his second comming: as in another place before we haue noted.

The same argument still prosecuted.

But, will some say, is not this honor whereof the Prophet speakes, too excessiue, and greater then of right belongs to the Church? For to *bow*, and *fall downe vpon the ground*, are such signes of honour, which no mortall man ought

Quest.

Anſ. ought to accept of. I anſwer, that this honor is not made to the members, but to the head, which is Chriſt, who is worſhipped in the Church: and thoſe who hated and perſecuted him before, come now to do him this reuerence. Now we ſay that Chriſt is adored in the Church, not according to the Popiſh opinion, who thinke they indeed worſhip Chriſt whilſt they kneele before that Romane Idoll to kiſſe his pantable. Thoſe, in fauor of whom this is affirmed, hate and reiect ſuch a doctrine. They only honor Chriſt then who obey his voice; as alſo the Prophet ſaith, that the ſtrangers which were out of the Church ſhould willingly ſubmit themſelues to yeeld obedience vnto Chriſt, whoſe Maieſtie ſhines in the doctrine which himſelfe adminiſters by the ſeruice of men.

This honor not done to the Church, but to the head Chriſt.

The Romane Idoll.

And ſhall call thee, &c.] The Church was adorned with this title heretofore, but it was in a maner defaced when the Citie was deſtroyed, the Temple raced, and the people led away captiue. Ieruſalem was no more the ſame, neither was there ought to be ſeene in her but an horrible waſt, and yet he promiſeth that ſhe ſhall be ſo reſtored, that all ſhall acknowledge her for the *Citie of the Lord*. Afterwards he ſpeakes of the *Temple*, to ſignifie vnto vs that this dignitie is attributed to *Ieruſalem* in regard of the *Temple*: that is to ſay, for the ſeruice of Gods ſake which was there eſtabliſhed.

Zion of the &c.

Verſ. 15. *Whereas thou haſt bin forſaken and hated, ſo that no man went* by *thee, I will make thee an eternall glorie, and a ioy from generation to generation.*

THE Prophet had an eie to ỹ middle time which alreadie approched: for a little after his death the people were driuen out of their heritage, and led away captiue, ſo as all thought that the Iewes had bin for euer rooted out. That this thought then might not ariſe in the minds of the faithfull, whereby they were in danger to fall into deſpaire and ſay, We are vndone; there is no way left how to remedie theſe ſo extreame miſeries: neither are we euer to expect a better condition; he on the contrarie ſhewes, that theſe ſore calamities can not let God to reſtore them againe. For howſoeuer for a time they were after a ſort forſaken when the Lord thus corrected them, yet was it no maſterie for him to ſet them in a more happie and better eſtate then the former.

Obiect. If any obiect, that this magnificence of the Church was of no long continuance: the anſwere is ſoone made. For howſoeuer the people were diuerſlie afflicted after their returne home, and that the Chriſtian Church alſo did not long hold her excellencie, yet is all that which the Prophet foretold accompliſhed: for Chriſtes *glorie* ſhines forth from vnder the croſſe, ſo as Gods name reſ nes, and a people alſo that calles vpon his name by faith.

Anſ.

Chriſtes glorie ſhines vnder the croſſe.

Beſides, we are to note, that our owne vnthankfulnes hinders vs from receiuing the fruit of theſe promiſes, becauſe we breake off the courſe of Gods working by our infidelitie; and by our owne frowardnes wee loſe the profit which wee might reape from the ſame. To conclude, we are alwaies to remember that which I haue ſo often told you, namely, That the Prophet ſpeakes not of yeeres heere, or of a few daies; but comprehends the whole courſe of our redemption from the end of the captiuitie vntill the publiſhing of the Goſpell, and ſo ſucceſſiuely, till he ſhall giue vp the kingdome to God his Father.

Vs.

Verſ. 16. *Thou ſhalt alſo ſuck the milke of the Gentiles, and ſhalt ſuck the breaſts of the Kings: and thou ſhalt know that I the Lord am thy ſauiour and thy redeemer: the mightie one of Iaakob.*

HE ſpeakes of the ſpreading forth of the Church. But it was neceſſarie that one and the ſame thing ſhould be often repeated, in regard it ſeemed incredible that the Church of God being now brought to ſo low an ebbe, ſhould euer be raiſed, or ſpread ouer the whole world: for her condition was lamentable, but in the end ſhe was rebuilt againe, to the aſtoniſhment of all, and that by a ſmall remnant, as a brand recouered out of the fire; and the ſeed thereof was ſcattered farre and wide thorow all the quarters of the world. And therefore it is as much as if he had ſaid, Though thou beeſt now incloſed within ſtrait and very narrow bounds, and haſt nothing in common with the Gentiles, yet ſo it is that thou ſhalt receiue from them much fruites in abundance.

By *milke*, and *breaſts*, he meanes nothing elſe but that ſeruice and obedience which the Gentiles ſhould render to the Church to nouriſh her offspring. For hauing ſaid before, that of an handfull ſhould proceed an infinite number of children: now he prouides *milke* to ſuckle them with, vntill they be come of ſufficient age. And he expreſly ſpeakes of *Kings*, in regard it was the harder to be beleeued. And thus *Kings* by the way are admoniſhed of their duties, who if they will diſcharge the ſame as they ought, then muſt they be *ſeruants of the Church*, otherwiſe the Lord will call them to account for it, and we know what *Dauid* pronounceth in the ſecond Pſalme, verſe 10. 11.

Kings admoniſhed of their duties.

But wee muſt note after what maner the Church ſhall ſuck the *milke* and the *breaſts* of the Gentiles. For ſhe is not permitted wholly to draw in vnto her ſelfe all the abilities and riches of the world, but only thereby to preſerue her owne eſtate in ſafetie. For can any thing in the world be more contrarie to the nature of the Church, then to be an inſatiable gulph, ſwallowing vp into her belly whatſoeuer ſhe may come by? Theſe things therefore muſt be referred to the ſpirituall eſtate of the Church, namely, that by meanes hereof, God may be purely worſhipped in her, that the miniſtrie of the word may floriſh and be aduanced there, and that ſhe may thereby

No maruell contrarie to the nature of the true Church, then to be come an inſatiable gulph.

Discipline.

thereby retaine some discipline which may serue as a bridle to curbe euery one. And yet herewithall, that the faithfull must remember, it is a more blessed thing to giue then to take: Act.20.35, that thus they may be instructed to beare pouertie patiently, to the end they may inrich others with their spirituall riches.

Lastly he addes, that that which for a time was hidden shall be discouered: namely, the Iewes *should know*, that they were not elected in vaine, in regard they should feele by experience that God was carefull of their saluation. But some may aske if they knew not this before they were led captiue. I answere, this banishment resembled a thicke and grosse darknesse; which comparison also our Prophet vsed in the beginning of this chapter. Seeing then that vnder this grieuous seruitude, they could behold neither the power nor glorie of God, he now drew them into the open light. Not that faith failes in afflictions: but because the feeling thereof is one thing, and experience another. Whilest we seeme forlorne, then faith soares vp aloft farre aboue the present miserie, and those thicke mists with which we be enwrapped. And if God be pleased to restore vs to our perfect estate, then wee perceiue the thing, not by the eies of faith but by experience it selfe: loe here that manifest knowledge whereof hee speakes. As if he should say, after I shal haue dealt liberally with you, you shall then *see* by the effects that I am your *redeemer*.

Quest. Ans.

Faith and experience distinguished.

He doth of set purpose vse the title of the *mightie one of Iacob*: in regard he had formerly often shewed himself to be such an one towards them. And that not onely *Iacob* himselfe had many waies felt Gods power by experience, but that his successors also had prooued that it was in him in whom they were to seeke assured helpe. Thus then hee calles him *mightie*, to the end they might acknowledge that God would be the same for euer towards them, which in times past hee had been to their fathers.

Vers.17. *For brasse I will bring gold, and for iron will I bring siluer, and for wood brasse, and for stones iron. I will also make thy gouernment peace, and thine exactors righteousnesse.*

The excellencie of Christs spirituall Temple discribed.

THe Prophet alludes to the building of the old and ancient Temple, and compares it with the spirituall and heauenly. As if hee should say, When you shall bee carried away captiue, then you will bewaile the ruine of the Temple: but I will so worke, that you shall build it after a more excellent manner. In stead of *brasse* then, I will bring *gold*, and in stead of *iron*, *siluer*; for *wood*, *brasse*, and for *stones*, *iron*. As if he had said, All shall bee full of magnificence and glorie in that second Temple which shall succeed the first. Now we know that this propheste was neuer accomplished in the externall restauration of this people. Nay, it is certaine that the beautie of the second Temple was farre inferior to the first: Ezra. 3.12.13. It followes then, that the Prophet who in spirit, saw the true redemption, recites not only that which should fall out presently after the returne of the people; but publisheth the excellencie of the spirituall Temple, which is the Church of Christ: we must therefore come by a direct line, as it were vnto Christ, if wee will attaine the true meaning of this propheste. In his kingdome these things were fully accomplished, and the dignity of the first Temple was much surpassed: For the Lord shed abrode the gifts of his holie spirit, which farre excelled either *gold*, *siluer*, or precious stones. Wee may now then see the Temple built of precious stones, as it was in Chapter 54.11.12.

As concerning the word *superintendaner*, others tanslate tribute. Neither do I doubt but the Prophet meant closelie to compare ỹ miserable seruitude, vnder which the people should be held, with that excellent dignitie, to which they were afterwards aduanced. For to *peace* and *iustice*, he opposeth *the exactors*, who vniustly tyrannised ouer them, whilest the Iewes were vexed with the couetousnesse and crueltie of the Babylonians. Now he shewes that the exactors being cut off, there shall be no other superintendancie then *peace* and *iustice*. This was more fullie accomplished, when we were deliuered from the tyrannie of the diuell by Christ. For by his Gospell he erected a kingdome of righteousnesse, which is not yet finished. But wee are to wait for his last comming to see the perfection thereof: and yet in the meane while to content our selues with these first fruits.

Vers.18. *Violence shall no more bee heard of in thy land, neither desolation, nor destruction within thy borders: but thou shalt call saluation thy walles, and praise thy gates.*

An amplification of the former doctrine.

HE here more largely expresseth that which we haue said: namely, that in describing the happie estate of the Church, hee priuilie opposeth the miseries and calamities wherewith shee had been diuersly afflicted, thereunto. For which cause hee promiseth that in time to come shee should no more be *vexed* by them. I grant notwithstanding that many euils befell them after their deliuerance. What of that? Yet the people were neuer so vtterly wasted, but some forme of a Church still remained; and by meanes hereof they enioyed peace, feeling by experience that God kept and defended them by his power. Wee must not take it then as if the Prophet in these words promised them to be exempt from all trouble and encumbrance. But this consolation was added by way of comparison, in regard of the miseries to come: to wit, that the Lord will spare his Church; which shall be in safetie vnder his protection.

protection. And queſtionleſſe in the courſe of their deliuerance, they euidently perceiued ſome teſtimonies of this peace which the Prophet doth here ſo highly extoll. To bee ſhort, we muſt alwaies remember that which we haue ſo oft repeated; namely, that wee feele all theſe things in part onely; becauſe the kingdome of Chriſt is not yet accompliſhed.

And thy gates.] He alludes to the building of the Temple, or of the Church, as we haue ſaid elſewhere: and ſhewes that her ſafetie ſhall not conſiſt in towers, walles, or other encloſures; and that howſoeuer humane helpes ſhould faile her, yet ſhould ſhee haue ſufficient ſafetie and quiet contentment in God alone. But to the *ſaluation* of the Church he ioyneth *praiſe*, or ioy: for being now in perfect ſafetie ſhee ſhould reioyce: whereas before during her oppreſſion, ſhe lay trodden vnder foote in an hopeleſſe ſilence.

Verſ. 19. *Thou ſhalt haue no more Sunne to ſhine by day, neither ſhall the brightneſſe of the Moone ſhine vpon thee: for the Lord ſhall bee thine euerlaſting light, and thy God, thy glorie.*

20. *Thy Sunne ſhall neuer goe downe, neither ſhall thy Moone bee hid: for the Lord ſhall be thine euerlaſting light, and the daies of thy ſorrow ſhall bee ended.*

The Churches felicitie not temporall, but eternall.

HEe teacheth that the Churches felicitie ſhall not be temporarie, but eternall. For he ſeparates her from the common condition of men, among whom, nothing is ſtable nor permanent. Why ſo? Becauſe whatſoeuer is vnder the Sunne, be it neuer ſo well eſtabliſhed, yet is it ſubiect to diuers mutations and changes. But the ſtate of the Church muſt not be meaſured according to the dangers of this preſent life, in regard ſhee is preſerued euen in the midſt of greateſt ſtormes. As if he ſhould ſay; Iudge not of thy ſaluation by outward appearances; but bee thou ſure that God holds that ſafely in his hand. *The Lord* will bee thy *Sunne*; ſo as thou ſhalt haue no more need of the light, neither of Sunne nor Moone. Feare not any change then, or confuſion of things; for thou ſhalt inioy a perpetuall and an immoueable light. And yet we muſt not take it as if the Prophet meant heereby to affirme that Gods children ſhould be depriued of the commodities of this preſent life. For ſeeing the Lord hath beſtowed them on all men indifferently, then hath hee much more ordained them for his ſeruants, for whoſe ſakes, euen all things were created of God, in regard he hath a ſpeciall care ouer them. But the Prophet meant yet to ſignifie ſomething more excellent, which the children of God onely doe inioy, namely, that heauenly light. This the wicked cannot apprehend, and therefore they deadly hate it. For howſoeuer they haue the light of the Sunne, and other like benefits; yet cannot their felicitie bee firme nor ſtable, becauſe they are without feeling, which hinders them from taſting the principall good thing, to wit, that God is their Father. Our Prophet therefore diſtinguiſheth the condition of the Church, and of the faithfull therein, from the common eſtate of men in the world: to teach vs not to meaſure it according to the changes and alterations of inferior things: as alſo to informe vs, that in the midſt of the moſt palpable and *groſſe darkneſſe*, God vſeth to *let the light of his fatherly countenance ſhine vpon his children, to cauſe them to reioice.* Though all the elements then ſhould ceaſe to doe their office, or ſhould threaten vs with an heauie looke, let it ſuffice vs notwithſtanding that God fauours vs.

Though the felicitie of Gods choſen conſiſts in eternall good things, yet are they not therefore to be deprined of the vſe of temporall things.

By the name of *Sunne* and *Moone*, vnder a part hee comprehends the ſtate of the whole world, which is often times changed.

Verſ. 21. *Thy *people alſo ſhall be all righteous: they ſhall poſſeſſe the land for euer: the graffe of my planting, euen the worke of mine hands, that I may bee glorified.*

*Or, peoples.

THe Prophet ſhewes heere, wherein the true eſtabliſhment of the Church conſiſts: truly when ſhee is ſeparated from the godleſſe, and that the faithfull onely haue place in her. But we know that hypocrites are alwaies mingled amongſt the true children of God in the Church. We haue alſo told you that the kingdome of Chriſt is heere deciphered out; not ſuch a one as it ſhall be in euery particular moment of time, but in its perfection. Chriſt at his firſt comming, began to accompliſh that which is heere ſaid, when he purged his Church: in which regard, he calles his Goſpell a *fan*, becauſe by it the chaffe is ſeparated from the wheat: Mat. 3. 12. And he continues ſtill euery day to purge it, and wil hold on that courſe euen to the day of harueſt. In the meane while, there muſt be much refuſe mingled amongſt the good graine, which in that day ſhall at laſt bee vtterly purged and cleanſed out.

The Church is then truly eſtabliſhed, when ſhe is ſeparate frō the godleſſe, and that the faithfull alone haue place in her.

Moreouer, heere is a cloſe oppoſition betweene that prophane and wicked troope, who by their filthineſſe doe pollute the ſanctuarie of the Lord. Further alſo he ſeemes to mention the vocation of the Gentiles, when in the plurall number he ſaith, that *all peoples* ſhall be righteous.

Where hee addes, that they ſhall *inherit the land for euer*, I doubt not but he had reſpect vnto Iudea, and cloſely oppoſed the time of the reſtauration, to that of the captiuitie, which was at hand. As if he ſhould ſay; Albeit I doe baniſh my people out of their *inheritance*, yet after ſeuentie yeeres, I will bring them backe againe to *poſſeſſe* it for *euer*. It is alſo to be noted, that he reſtraines this promiſe which appertained to all the people of Zion, *to the righteous*. For thus there is a kind of correction, whereby he ſhuts out all hypocrites, who are wont vainly to vſurp & ſnatch

vnto

vnto them those titles, which onely belong to the true children of God. This sentence then agrees with the beginning of the 73. Psalme: Yet God is good to *Israel*, euen to the *pure in heart*. For here the Prophet attributes the name of *Israel*, which all bragged of, *to the true seruants of God onely*. And so in this place we may say as much of the word *peoples*, to wit, that little remnant which shall be purged from their vncleanesse. This was not wholly accomplished among the Iewes: they had the beginnings of it indeed, when they were restored home vnto their Country againe; that so afterwards by their meanes, the possession of the whole world might be giuen vnto Gods children. And as he spake heeretofore of the restauration of the Temple, which was not perfect in Ierusalem, but should bee extended thorow all the quarters of the world: so this *possession of the land* must not bee restrained to Iudea alone, seeing it stretcheth it selfe further off, in regard all men are called to haue their part therein: that so by faith they may bee the children of *Abraham*, and consequently be made heires.

The phrases of speech vsed by the Prophets, ought diligently to be obserued.

These phrases of speech then which are much in vse among the Prophets, ought to be diligently obserued, that we may the better attaine to their meaning, and not to curtall their sentences, nor wrest them to a wrong sense. Their exposition then is too far fetched, and farre remote from the propriety of the Prophets language; who by *the land*, vnderstand heauen & the blessed life. For the land of Canaan was giuen to the children of Israel, that being separated from the rest of the world, as the peculiar flocke of God, they might in that place serue him purely. And therefore to *possesse the land by right of inheritance*, signifies nothing else, but to continue and remaine in the Church of God.

Where God affirmes that *the graffe of his planting shall be the worke of his hands*; it serues to confirme the hope of the faithfull. For in mans iudgement it was a thing vnpossible that euer the Church should bud againe; for all esteemed her forlorne, chiefly in respect her roote lay hidden. That she might sprout afresh then, the Prophet saith, that God will play the husband man, namely, in replanting that which was withered after it was plucked vp by the rootes. In a word, hee signifies that the deliuerance of the Church out of this miserable seruitude, shal be an admirable worke *of the Lord*, and not of men; in regard she shall be raised vp as it were from death. And truly that which belongs to the heauenly life, is not giuen vs by nature, nor obtained by our industry; but flowes vnto vs, and proceedes from Gods free bountie. Euery one of vs also ought to apply vnto himself in particular, that which is here said of the whole Church in generall: for we were planted of God before the foundations of the world: Eph. 1. 4. and afterward incorporated and called; to the end we might haue assurance of our election and *plantation*. The wicked were neuer planted of God: and therefore Christ pronounceth that those whom his heauenly Father hath not planted, shall be plucked vp: Mat. 15. 13.

1 2

To conclude, the end wherefore we be planted, is by and by added, namely, that wee might set forth the *praise* of God, and tell of his wonderfull workes: as we are taught verie well by *Paul*, in Eph. 1. 12. And by *Peter* in his first Epistle: Chap. 2. 9.

The end why we are planted.

Vers. 22 *A little one shall become as a thousand, and a small one as a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in due time.*

A confirmation of that which was said before.

HE confirmes that which he hath alreadie said, namely, that albeit they were few in number, yet the Church of God should bee plentifully repleniſhed with people. When the Prophet foretolde these things, there were great multitudes of people: but in short time after, they were so diminished, that the remainders were very few; as we haue seene in the first and tenth Chapters, yet this *small* number, saith he, shal so increase, that in processe of time, it shall *become* an infinit people of great power.

Vse.

Let vs know then, that whatsoeuer was said vnto the Iewes in this behalfe, is also said vnto vs at this day. For howsoeuer we be but a poore handfull of people, and seeme to bee neere our vtter ruine, yet the Church cannot perish, but shall grow and increase to a great multitude, because it is the *planting of God*: vers. 21. which we must not esteeme of by outward appearances, nor by the force or multitudes of men.

I the Lord.] Now the Prophet shews to what end all his former speeches haue tended, namely, that we should not resemble God vnto men, whose counsels and indeuors easilie vanish and come to nothing. If they would take vpon them to alter the state of the world or of a kingdome; alas, they could doe nothing: but the *Lord can* change all these things in a moment. He speakes not then of an ordinary gouernment, but of a rare and admirable worke, whereby the Lord will deliuer and *multiply* his Church.

In the end of the verse he promiseth to *hasten* the accomplishment of this worke: but he addes a particle that is worthy to bee noted, touching the *time* of the Church. For the relatiue is in the feminine gender; so as they who refer it vnto God, are deceiued. And those who translate, In his time, are the cause of this error, in regard this word *His*, is ambiguous. The Prophets meaning is, that there is an appointed time set, in which the Church should be deliuered. And thus hee exhorts the faithfull vnto patience, that they should not fall away; but rather depend vpon the vnchangeable decree of God, who hath skill enough *to dispose of the moments of times*.

First of all the he notes the fit time wherein it shall be most for the Churches profit to be deliuered. We cannot iudge of this: for we would haue God doe that which hee hath promised out of hand: and if he foreslow the time, we storme. But he defers for our good; & in respect that the fit time is not yet come. Afterwards

terwards he ſpeakes of *haſtening*, becauſe we imagin that the Lord is aſleepe, or takes his eaſe, when hee deferres. And yet hee haſtens, to execute all things according to that time and ſeaſon which he alone knowes to be fitteſt.

THE LXI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is vpon me, therefore hath the Lord anointed me: hee hath ſent me to preach good tidings vnto the poore, to bind vp the broken hearted, to preach libertie to the Captiues, and to them that are bound, the opening of the priſon.*



That which is here ſaid appertaines to Chriſt as the head, and all the Prophets and Apoſtles as his ſeruants.

Or as much as Chriſt expoundeth this place of himſelfe, Luk. 4.18. therefore the interpreters doe without any difficultie reſtraine it vnto him: holding it for a principle, that Chriſt is here brought in ſpeaking: as if theſe things onely appertained vnto him. The Iews ſcoffe at ſuch, who inconſiderately haue attributed to Chriſt alone, the things which doe alſo agree to the reſt of the Prophets. To ſpeake then what I thinke, it ſeemes to me, that this Chapter is added as a ſeale vnto the former, thereby to confirme ỳ which hath been ſaid hitherunto touching the reſtauration of the Chriſtian Church. And that to this end Chriſt proteſteth, that *God* hath *anointed him*: which is the cauſe that he (and that very iuſtly) appropriates this propheſie vnto himſelfe: in regard hee hath exhibited that to vs clearely and manifeſtly which others haue taught obſcurely. Yet this hinders not, but ỳ this ſentence may in like manner agree to the reſt of the Prophets whom the Lord hath alſo *anointed*. For they ſpake not in their owne names, neither did they execute their offices from their priuate authoritie: but they ſhewed foorth the authoritie and office of Chriſt; to whom it not onely belongs to publiſh theſe things; but alſo to fulfill them. This place then muſt be thus vnderſtood, namely, that Chriſt who is the Prince of the Prophets, obtaines the chiefe place among thẽ: and that it is he only who manifeſts all that which is here mentioned: & alſo that *Iſaiah*, with the reſt of the Prophets, and the Apoſtles, are his ſeruants; euery one of them imploying theſelues to the vtmoſt in preaching and publiſhing the benefits which we receiue frõ him. So as ỳ which *Iſaiah* hath ſaid ſhould be finiſhed by Chriſt, wee now ſee it accompliſhed by the effects.

This Chapter is added as a ſeale vnto the things before going.

For this cauſe he hath anointed me.] This ſecond member was added in ſtead of an expoſition. For firſt it would haue been obſcure to vs, *If he had concealed the cauſe, wherefore God had giuen him his Spirit*: but now wee may euidently perceiue his meaning, when he ſhewes the vſe thereof: namelie, *that hee exerciſeth a publicke office*, that ſo hee may not bee taken as ſome priuate perſon.

Now as often as the Scripture mentions *the ſpirit of God*, and ſaith, *that it dwels in vs*: 1.Cor.3.16. let vs conſider of his efficacie and power; and not imagine it to be ſome vaine and idle thing in vs without any effect. Wherefore after the Prophet hath ſpoken of the *Spirit of the Lord*: in the ſecond place he addes *the anointing* thereunto: thereby vnderſtanding *the vertues* which proceed from that ſpirit. To which purpoſe *Paul* ſaith, 1.Cor.12.4. that there are diuers gifts: but only one ſpirit from whence they flow. This place is diligently to be obſerued of vs, for no man ought to take vnto himſelf power or authoritie to teach in the Church of God, vnleſſe he be able to ſhew that he is called therunto by the vertue of Gods ſpirit. And ſo teſtifies S. *Paul* in 1.Cor.12.3. namely, that no man can ſay, Ieſus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghoſt.

We muſt not thinke of the ſpirit without his efficatie.

No man ought to take vpon him the office of a Teacher, vnleſſe he be able to manifeſt that hee is called therunto of God.

But, may ſome ſay, wee ſee that euery one bragges of the ſpirit. For the Pope, the Anabaptiſts and other heretikes and fanaticall ſpirits haue alwaies the holy Ghoſt in their mouthes, as if hee were their gouernour. How, or by what meanes then may wee diſcerne of him that is ſent by God, and conducted by his ſpirit, from him that is not? *By the anointing*. That is to ſay, if he be endued with gifts anſwerable to this charge. If hee then who is ſent of God haue the graces and gifts which his office requires; then hath he aſſuredly the holy Ghoſt. But if hee will take vpon him the office of a teacher; and in the meane while is deſtitute both of knowledge and doctrine, let him be held for a ſeducer.

Obiect.

Anſ.

To preach.] The Prophet attributes not vnto himſelfe the authoritie of a teacher, till hee hath made it manifeſt that he was *ſent of God*. His *authoritie* is founded vpon his *anointing*: namely, in being fitted and furniſhed by the Lord with ſufficient gifts. It is our duties to giue him audience then, not as to a priuate perſon, but as vnto a publike Miniſter ſent from heauen.

To the afflicted.) Others tranſlate, To the mecke: and the word *Anauim*, ſignifies both the one and the other. But I had rather retaine the firſt ſignification, in reſpect the Prophet ſpeakes of the *priſoners*, and of thoſe that are bound. And yet, as I take it, he comprehends both. For he ſpeakes of ſuch, who being vtterly forſaken and reiected, are alſo miſerable in themſelues. Chriſt is only promiſed to ſuch as are humbled and brought low by the ſenſe of their miſeries, who hauing no conceit of their own worth, do willingly containe themſelues within the bounds of modeſty and humility. Hence we gather that our Prophet ſpeakes properly of the Goſpell. For the law was giuen to bring downe all loftie

imaginations,

imaginations, and ſuch as are ſwollen with vaine confidence: but the Goſpell is ordained for the afflicted: that is to ſay, for ſuch as confeſſe thẽſelues emptie of all good things, that by and through it they may be raiſed vp and comforted. For to what end are the Prophets, Apoſtles, and other Miniſters anointed, but to reſtore and comfort the heauie hearts by the doctrine of grace?

To binde vp.] The Prophet vſeth diuers phraſes of ſpeech that he might the better expreſſe one and the ſame thing. In the word *to binde vp*, he expreſſeth ſomewhat more then in the former member. For he ſhewes, that the preaching of the Goſpell is no emptie ſound vaniſhing away in the aire, but a medicine that is operatiue, which works not vpon thoſe that are ſtubborne and ſtrong, but vpon ſuch as haue *broken* and contrite *hearts*. It is alſo the end of the Goſpell to ſet the *captiues* at libertie. We are all priſoners and fettered, vntill Chriſt haue let vs free by his grace, Iohn 8.36. But let vs beware that we reiect not the benefit which he offers vs whẽ he is about to ſmite off our yrons. Generally we may note that the benefits here mentioned are diſtributed vnto vs by the Goſpell, but none are capable hereof, except thoſe who feeling their pouertie doe ardentlie deſire the help of Chriſt, according as himſelfe ſaith, Math.11.28. Come vnto me all yee that trauell and be heauie loden, and I will refreſh you.

Vpon whom the Goſpell works.

Who are capable of the Goſpell.

Verſ. 2. *To preach the acceptable yeere of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourne.*

HE here expreſſeth the very time wherein this ſo excellent grace ſhould be ſpread abrode, ỹ ſo he might take away all ſcruples & doubts that might come into their heads. For all of vs are ſubiect to ſundrie cares, and many incumbrances ariſe vp in our minds, which hold them intangled with infinite diſcourſes, whereof we taſt by dayly experience. Now the Prophet affirmes that he is the Herald of the grace which is to be reuealed, the time whereof reſts wholly in the diſpoſition of the Almightie: for as himſelfe was to be the redeemer of his Church, by his meere fauor, ſo was it in his owne power (and that by good right) to make choice of the time himſelfe wherein to performe the ſame. It may be the Prophet alluded to the yeere of Iubile, Leuit.25.10. Howſoeuer it be, he boldly pronounceth that they were patientlie to wait with meeke and quiet ſpirits, vntill it pleaſed God to ſtretch forth his hands.

The time when this grace ſhould be manifeſted.

The yeere of Iubile.

S. *Paul* in his Epiſtle to the Rom.16.26. and to the Galath.4.4. calles this *yeere* the fulnes of time. We haue alſo ſeene heretofore that the Prophet in Chap.49.8. ſaid, *Behold the acceptable time, behold the day of ſalvation*: which ſentence S. *Paul* in 2.Cor.6.2. applies to his preaching of the Goſpell. For when the Lord ſummons vs thereby, then is the gate of heauen ſet open vnto vs, that wee ſhould forthwith enter into the poſſeſſion of Gods graces. Wee muſt not therefore put it off till to morrow; but wee muſt make vſe of the time, and take the occaſion whileſt ſo large mercies are offered vnto vs.

But heere ſeemes to be a repugnancie betweene theſe two, namely, the acceptable yeere, and the day of vengeance. What is the reaſon why *Iſaiah* hath ioined things ſo different together? Truely, becauſe God can not *vvorke the deliuerance of his Church*, but he muſt therewithal ſhew himſelf a iuſt Iudge in *reuenging himſelf* vpon ỹ wicked. *The acceptable time* then is to be referred vnto the elect: and *the day of vengeance* vnto the wicked, who neuer ceaſe perſecuring of the Church. It is needfull therefore that in the deliuerance thereof they ſhould be chaſtiſed. According to which *Paul* ſaith, 2.Theſſ.1.6. that it is a righteous thing with God *to render vengeance* vntó the enemies who vniuſtly afflict the faithfull, and *to giue reſt* to the afflicted. Neither could the Iewes expect any good iſſue out of ſo many miſeries, vnleſſe it were by the confuſion of their aduerſaries.

Queſt.

Anſ.

In the meane while it is good to note the cauſe of this deliuerãce, which muſt be wholly aſcribed to the free grace of God, and not to our merits, worthines, or any induſtrie that is in vs. The Prophet ſeemes indeed, as I haue ſaid, to allude to the yeere of Iubile: but yet we muſt principallie obſerue this, namely, that our ſaluation conſiſts altogether vpon the free will of our God.

To comfort.] We muſt remember what I haue touched before, to wit, what the end of the Goſpell is: namely, That we being deliuered out of all miſeries, and reſtored to our firſt liberty, our teares wiped from our eies, we may enioy ſpirituall comfort and conſolation. But if we be depriued of ſo great a benefit, let vs impute the ſame to our owne incredulitie and vnthankfulnes, whereby we both reiect and repulſe God, who freely offers himſelfe vnto vs.

Verſ.3. *To* appoint vnto them that mourne in Zion,* and *to giue vnto them * beauty for aſhes, the oyle of ioy for mourning, the garment of gladnes for the ſpirit of heauines, that they may be called trees of righteouſnes, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.*

*Or, to eſtabliſh.

*Or, magnificence.

HE proſecutes the ſame argument, and declares, that the chaſtiſement wherewith the people ſhould be exerciſed, ſhould not be ſo ſharp, but that there was hope notwithſtanding left for them touching remiſſion of ſinnes. Which that hee might the better perſwade thẽ of, he ſaith, the Lord hath *giuen him charge* to publiſh this deliuerance, and that not to himſelfe alone, but alſo to all the Prophets, euen til the comming of that great Embaſſador, to wit, Chriſt Ieſus, who ſhall indeed publiſh and accompliſh that which God would now haue diuulged for the time to come: yet therewithall he ſignifies, that their *ſorrowes* ſhall not be able to let God from giuing them matter of ioy, whẽ it ſhould ſeeme good

The ſame argument continued.

good vnto himſelfe. For to *eſtabliſh*, is as much to ſay, as to appoint a time, that the long delay might not diſcourage them. Againe, by the verb, *To giue*, he recommends vnto them the efficacie of his prophecie, to the end they might be vndoubtedly perſwaded touching the euent thereof. Well, he alludes herein to the ancient Ceremonies of the Iewes, who, when any affliction in thoſe times preſſed them, were wont to couer their heads with *aſhes*, and to clothe themſelues with *ſackcloth*. By theſe things then he notes out that *mourning and deformitie*, which of neceſſitie was to enſue vpon the peoples wofull condition, and oppoſeth the ſame to that ioy and gladnes which they ſhould be filled withall, after they had obtained their freedome and libertie.

But yet me thinks I can not let paſſe the anſwering of theſe words *Peer*, and *Epher*, one to another, which ſignifie *magnificence, and aſhes*. For by the tranſpoſition of the letters, they ſignifie things cleane contrarie: by which elegant turning of the words vpſide downe, he meant to note out the change of their eſtate.

Trees of righteouſneſſe.] By theſe words hee ſets out the peoples reſtauration. As if hee ſhould ſay; Whereas in times paſt you were rooted vp, and reſembled a withered ſtocke; now you ſhall be planted againe and eſtabliſhed. He brings them then to the conſideration of Gods power, to the end that howſoeuer they ſhould be ouerwhelmed & brought to deaths doore, yet were they notwithſtanding to aſſure themſelues to bee ſo reuiued, that they ſhould take roote, gather ſtrength, and grow.

A generall Doctrine. Hence we may gather a generall doctrine, namely, that we cannot be quickened, vnleſſe we be planted by the Lord. True it is that we are called his plants, Chap. 60.21. becauſe hee hath *elected* vs from the beginning: Eph. 1.4. But yet there is another kind of planting

Two kinds of planting. which ſucceeds this firſt; to wit, our *calling*, which by faith grafts vs into ye body of Chriſt. This the Lord brings to paſſe by the labours of his ſeruants, the Miniſters of the Goſpell: but the whole muſt be aſcribed vnto him, becauſe it is hee onely that giues the increaſe: 1.Cor.3.7. Yet we are alwaies to keep in mind that doctrine, which brings vs from this firſt deliuerance, vnto the ſpirituall kingdome of Chriſt.

He cals them *trees of righteouſneſſe*, in whom Gods iuſtice ſhines, or, an order rightly compoſed. Yet let vs know that the Lord adopts vs vpon condition that we be new creatures, and that righteouſneſſe may rule and raigne in vs. And thence it followes that by nature we are all corrupt and peruerſe, and cannot bring forth any good fruit, till the Lord haue changed and planted vs. This alſo aboliſheth

Popiſh preparations. that vaine and proud conceit of the Papiſts, who in forging vnto themſelues preparations, forſooth, or, ſome helps of free will, vſurp vpon that which belongs vnto God. If we bee planted of the Lord, then it followes that by nature wee are drie and vnfruitfull.

For my glory.] See heere the end wherefore we be *planted*. But of this matter we haue ſpoken in Chap. 60.21.

Verſ. 4. *And they ſhall build the old waſte places, and raiſe vp the former deſolations: and they ſhall repaire the Cities that were deſolate and waſte thorow many generations.*

THe Prophet amplifies this reſtauration of the Church, and inſiſts principally thereabouts; that the Iewes might conceiue in their mindes a certaine and an aſſured hope of their deliuerance: for theſe promiſes ſeemed altogether incredible. And this is the cauſe why hee adornes the benefit of this redemption with ſo many glorious and goodly titles. Thoſe erre, who will haue theſe words, *Of the age*, and from generation to generation, referred to the time to come. As if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid; that the *building* whereof he ſpeakes, ſhall be firme and ſtable: whereas his meaning is farre otherwiſe. For he ſhewes (as I noted in Chap. 58.12.) namely, that the old ruines of the Citie ſhould not hinder the Lord from rearing it vp againe. After the inhabitants of any Citie haue been long ſcattered heere and there, what hope is left that it ſhould be built againe? As for example; who is he that thinkes of the reedifiing of Athens? So whileſt the Iewes were baniſhed for a long time into a forrain country, and that Ieruſalem lay waſte the ſpace of ſeuentie yeeres; who durſt expect that euer the Citizens thereof ſhould haue reedified it? For this cauſe *Iſaiah* calles deſerts of an age, the *places formerly deſolated; the Cities waſted, the ſolitarie places from generation to generation*: to ſhew that none of theſe ſhould hinder the Lord in due ſeaſon, as was noted in Chap. 60.22. to bring backe his elect to Ieruſalem, and to cauſe them to dwell there.

An amplification in this & the verſes following.

Athens.

Vſe. Moreouer, theſe things ought to bee applied to our deſolate times. For howſoeuer the Lord permits his Church to be raced, and to lie long in her ruines, without any hope at all of being reſtored; yet let vs confirme and ſtrengthen our hearts with theſe promiſes; for it is Gods proper and peculiar office to *build vp* and to renue the things which for a long time haue beene ruinated and lien rotting in a perpetuall conſumption. But wee haue handled this matter before in Chap. 58.

Verſ. 5. *And the ſtrangers ſhall ſtand and feede your ſheep: and the ſonnes of the ſtrangers ſhall be your plowmen, and dreſſers of your vines.*

HIs meaning is, that the *ſtrangers* ſhall bee readie to obey them. For in reſpect they were at that time diuided from other nations, no man would lend them their hand. And therefore hee ſaith, that the ſtrangers doe *ſtand*: that is to ſay, are readie preſt to meete and to ſuccour them.

Where he addes, that they shall *feede their sheepe* and shall be the *plowmen* and *vinedressers*, these are borowed kinds of speeches. For the Prophet speakes of Christs kingdome, which is spirituall; and sets foorth the perfect felicitie thereof, vnder these figures; that we might the better conceiue of those things which are here proposed vnto vs by examples. Let vs know therefore that wee shall bee truely happie, when Christ shall reigne ouer vs: for by meanes thereof many commodities whereof the posteritie of *Adam* is worthily depriued, shall be restored vnto vs vnawares.

Who shall be truly happie when Christ shall reigne ouer vs.

Vers. 6. *But yee shall be named the Priests of the Lord; and men shall say vnto you, The Ministers of our God: yee shall eate the riches of the Gentiles, and shall be exalted with their glory.*

THis verse giues vs a little better light into the former: for in the second part thereof *Isaiah* foretels, that the faithfull *shall eate the riches of the Gentiles*, and shall be *exalted with their glorie*. The Iewes lay hold of these places with great earnestnesse, and greedily deuoure al the goods of other nations, as if one day they should be masters of all: and glorie, as if all the pompe of the world should fall to their shares. But for our better vnderstanding of these things, wee must especially obserue two points. First, that the Prophets minding to set forth the glorie and felicitie of Christs kingdome; borrow similitudes from things belonging to men. Secondlie, in speaking of the Church, they so conioyne the head with the members, that sometimes they rather respect him then the members.

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Two points must be obserued for the better vnderstanding of the Prophets.

Neither must we reape this fruition of other mens goods, as if those which should bee conuerted vnto Christ should gripe vnto themselues riches, glorie, or the dignities of others; for this would not stand with the rules of charitie. But in respect that all things should be subiected vnder Christs dominion; that so he might obtaine the soueraigne rule and authoritie ouer them. This is it which I haue alreadie said, to wit, that the Prophet hath not so much regard of the members, as of the head himselfe. But when riches are brought vnder Christs power, then they are called *ours*; because he hath nothing which belongs not to his spouse the Church. It is said in chap. 45.14. in the same sense that the enemies of Christ shall fall downe at his feet, and make supplication vnto him: and yet this is done to the Church, in whom they acknowledge Christ, & submit themselues vnto his doctrine. See chap. 60.14. *Isaiah* then shewes what the Father will giue to the Sonne, who hath lawfull power ouer all the world: to whom also all things ought to be subiect.

In the meane while we must not omit that which I touched erewhile: namely, that God feedes his elect liberally in this world, to the end thy might feele that their estate is better then that of the infidels. For howsoeuer they may want many things, yet a little contents them; for which they giue God heartie thankes: so as their wants to them are much better, then all the wealth of the world is to the wicked.

By the word *Priests* hee shewes, that the condition of the common people shall bee much better then it was in times past. As if he should say, Hitherunto the Lord hath chosen you for his heritage onely: but hereafter he will indue you with more excellent giftes, for hee will make you *Priests*. Now howsoeuer all the people were a kingdome of Priests, Exod. 19.6. yet wee know that the Tribe of *Leui* onelie exercised this office, Deut. 33.10. But our Prophet here testifies that afterward it shall be common to all. Yet this was not manifested till Christ came. I grant that the restauration of the Church began at the returne of the people out of Babylon: but in the end at Christs comming, the faithfull were adorned with this dignitie.

Hereunto appertaines that which is written in 1. Pet. 2.9. You are an holy nation, a royall Priesthood. But withall we ought diligently to note what this kind of Priesthood is: for we must no more offer vnto God any brute beasts; but reasonable men must now be offered and sacrificed to the obedience of Christ. According to which S. *Paul* saith, that hee *offered vp the Gentiles* by the sword of the Gospell, that they might afterwards *yeeld their obedience vnto God*. Rom. 15.19.

Childishnes of Papists in prouing their Priesthood.

Hence we see how childishly the Papists trifle in abusing this place to proue their priesthood: for the Pope and his chaplens ordaine Priests to *sacrifice* to Iesus Christ; and *not to teach* his people (both which *Moses* ioines together in Deut. 33.10.) But Christ offered vp himself by an eternall redemption, & he only once for all hath performed this Priestly office: Heb. 9.12. Minding that the *fruit of this sacrifice should now be offered* vnto vs *by the preaching of the Gospell*. They which vsurp this office are sacrilegious persons, namely, such as wil reiterate, that which Christ hath by himselfe accomplished. Euery one ought rather to offer himselfe, with all that hee hath vnto God: Rom. 12.1. that he may exercise this Priesthood as hee ought to doe. Secondly, the Ministers who are especially called to teach, ought to vse the sword of Gods word to offer vp, and to consecrate men vnto God. Lastly, those are indeede faithfull and true Ministers, who enterprise nothing of their owne heads, but boldly and vprightly put those commandements in execution, which they haue receiued from God.

Vers. 7. *For your shame*, you shall receiue *double* *, *and for confusion they shal reioyce in their portion: for in their land, they shall possesse the double: euerlasting ioy shall be vnto them.*

* Or, honour.

A confirmation of the former sentence.

HE confirmes the former sentence, where he had said that the faithful which *mourned*,

med, being couered with *ſackcloth and aſhes*, ſhould be *ſprinkled vvith the oile of gladneſſe*: verſ.3. Now this *change* of their *ſorrow into ioy*, is heere againe promiſed. Some interpret *double* to bee in regard that thoſe whom God hath redeemed, ſhould be happie before him, and before men. But I know not whether this expoſition be ſolid enough or no. I had rather take it more ſimply then, as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid; The proſperitie of the Church ſhall be ſo great, that it ſhall much exceede all the calamities and aduerſities wherewith it is now oppreſſed. If ſhe be now then diſcontented with her eſtate, ſhee muſt caſt her eies towards *this day*, in which ſhee ſhall be moſt happy. And ſo Saint *Paul* oppoſeth *a vveight of glory to the momentany afflictions*, which are ſuddenly gone: 2.Cor.4.17. The wicked ſcorne vs without meaſure: for they ſeeme luſtie and ſtrong; they abuſe their proſperitie, and tread vnder their feete the poore children of God: but the Lord promiſeth in ſhort ſpace, to cauſe the faithfull (being deliuered from vnder their tyrannie) *to reioice in their portion*. This began to be accompliſhed when the people returned out of captiuitie: but in Chriſt we haue a more full teſtimonie of it, which daily manifeſts it ſelfe, and at his laſt comming ſhall be finiſhed, who will perfectly renue all things; and the wicked ſhall be conſumed, to the end the *poſſeſſion* of the world may be ours.

To this appertaines that which hee ſaith by way of yeelding or granting; namely, that *the land* is now indeede *theirs*. For then they vaunted themſelues as being Lords of the whole world: but in the end they ſhould feele that it is the proper and particular *poſſeſſion* of Gods children. *Euerlaſting ioy* may be referred to the externall eſtate of the Church; becauſe God daily furniſheth them with ample matter of thankſgiuing: but in regard they are conſtrained to ſwallow many anguiſhes, and are inuironed about with all kindes of incumbrances, this prophecie is not accompliſhed vntill the *ioy* of the Spirit hath gotten ſtrength in vs, and obtained the full victorie in our hearts; nor till wee feele that ſweete peace which paſſeth all vnderſtanding, to raigne there; as ſaith Saint *Paul* in Phil.4.7. Col.3.15. which peace onely the Saints of God inioy, when they feele liuely teſtimonies within them of their adoption. Hee calles it *perpetuall*, to ſhew how farre it differs from the ioy of the wicked, which is but of ſhort continuance, and ſuddenly vaniſheth away: yea, and is conuerted into gnaſhing of teeth.

Difference betweene the ioy of the godly, and the wicked.

Verſ.8. *For I the Lord loue iudgement*, and *hate robberie for burnt offering: and I will direct their worke in truth, and will make an euerlaſting couenant with them.*

An exhortation added to the former confirmatiõ.

THe Prophet not onely confirmes that which he hath promiſed in the name of God, but alſo *exhorts* the Iewes *to repentance*, and ſhewes them from whence they were to looke for ſaluation, and with what a terrible Iudge they had to deale. For he reaſons from the *nature* of God; and thence ſhewes after what manner they were to frame their liues, that ſo they might not reiect this grace of God now offered them by their owne rebellion.

Vnder the word *iudgement*, he comprehends all iuſtice and equall dealing. For hee oppoſeth this word to thoſe idle inuentions whereby the Iewes thought to ſatisfie God withall, which yet were but cloakes for their wickednes. But as we haue often ſeene heeretofore, the Lord cares for none of theſe maskes and vaine pretences, but onely requires the true puritie of the heart and hands, purged from all iniquities. He then that will be approued of God, with all that he performes in his ſeruice, muſt needs haue a pure heart, and leade a blameleſſe life.

Hating robberie for burnt offerings.] Vnder a part he comprehends all the fained ſeruices of God. And by burnt offering, is vnderſtood all ſacrifices. There is nothing then more hatefull, then that men ſhould ſacrifice their *robberies* and coſenages vnto God: or, when they mingle their lies, hypocriſies, and filthineſſes of heart therewith; or, in defrauding God maliciouſly of his right, doe corrupt his pure worſhip. Whoſe ſeruice it is that God approues of.

But this is a vice not onely practiſed of that age, but in all times. For euery one will ſeeme to ſerue God, and the wicked themſelues will be aſhamed to be without the appearance of deuotion, in regard the ſenſe and feeling of the diuine nature is ſo ingrauen in the hearts of all men, that it cannot be raced out. But in the meane while, the moſt part of men doe but triſle & dallie with God, and labor to ſatisfie him with pretie gawdies and roies. *Iſaiah* therefore condemnes and deteſts ſuch an hypocriſie; and teacheth that the Lord rather requires *mercy* of vs, then *ſacrifices*: Hoſ.6.7. Mat.9.13. and 12.7. For wee cannot *ſerue God, vnleſſe vve obſerue the duties of the ſecond table*, namely, in abſtaining from all violence and fraudulent dealing: for he who either deceiues, or offers violence to his neighbours, doth alſo therewithall offer violence vnto God himſelfe. To bee ſhort, the Prophets meaning is, to teach vs the true meanes to attaine repentance: firſt, if in caſting off all hypocriſie, and in reiecting *all inuentions of men*, the ſeruants of God *doe giue themſelues to the duties of brotherly loue*. The meanes to attaine true repentance. 1 2

I vvill eſtabliſh their vvork.] Some expound, The reward of their work. But I rather thinke heereby are vnderſtood all the enterpriſes of this life, vnto which the Lord promiſeth an happie ſucceſſe. That which men purpoſe in themſelues to doe, comes not to a good end, either in regard they neglect to aske counſell of God, or becauſe they doe not things vnder his conduct and leading. And therefore they worthily beare the puniſhment of their boldneſſe: for they either truſt in their own counſels, or depend vpon chances. Now in any of all theſe things there is not ſo much as a dramme of *truth*, but onely a deceiueable ſhadow of it. On the other ſide, it is no mar- Why mens affaires haue commonly ill ſucceſſe.

uell if all things prosper well in their hands, that are gouerned and *directed* by the holie Ghost, and doe whollie cast both themselues and their affaires vpon the prouidence of the almightie: for all prosperitie doth absolutelie flow from his onely blessing.

Moreouer, by the word *truth* is vnderstood an equall course: for the vnbeleeuers are sometimes puffed vp with a worldly ioy, but it foorthwith vanishes into smoke. In the end of the verse hee shewes the cause of this stabilitie; namely, God doth not only guide them with his hand for once, and so away: but *directs* them in their way *continually*. Loe here the solid stay and vpholding of our perseuerance: to wit, in that he vouchsafeth to make *an euerlasting* couenant with vs: wherein he binds himselfe voluntarily; and freelie bestowes all things vpon vs, albeit in truth he owes vs nothing at all.

Vers. 9. *And their seed shall be knowne among the Gentiles, and their buds among the people. All that see them shall know them, that they are the seede whom the Lord hath blessed.*

An amplification touching the enlargement of the Church.

THe Prophet discourseth here more clearely touching the aduancement and growth of the Church which was then shut vp within a narrow scantling, and in an out corner of the world, and were afterwards much diminished and lopped: as wee haue seene in the first and tenth Chapters. *Isaiah* then speakes of the Church, which after so many diminishings shall spread againe ouer the whole world, and that in such wise, as she shall bee *viewed* of all *nations*. And yet this fell not out, no not vnder the reigne of *Salomon* whilest the Iewes flourished in greatest abundance of riches and glorie: 1. King. 10. 21. 27. now this seemed incredible. This is the cause also why the Prophets insist so much in perswading the Iewes, repeating it ouer againe and againe: to wit, that they should not measure this restauration according to their carnall sense, nor to outward appearances.

Quest. Ans. 1 2

Now it may be asked, whē these things came to passe. I answer (as I haue often done) that they began to be accomplished, when the people came home into their countrie: for then, and afterwards in succession of time they tasted many waies of Gods fauour towards them. Yet in regard there were but a few small sparkles of these things to bee *discerned* in those times: therefore the perfect beautie of them *shined* in Christ, vnder whose kingdome these things were whollie accomplished. For then religion was as it were buried; *Abrahams* posteritie began to sprout; in respect that strangers were by faith ingrafted into the bodie of the elect people. And thus the barbarous nations came to *know*, that the Iewes were the *blessed seed of God:* namely, when they vnited themselues vnto them in the same confession of faith. Neither was this only accomplished once, but is euery day more and more fulfilled. Whereas the Iewes were first preferred, and obtained the chiefe place in Gods couenant, it must be attributed vnto Gods free mercie as S. *Paul* teacheth in Rom. 3. 2. For hauing there shewed that they differ in nothing by nature from the Gentiles, and that hee hath subiected them to the same condemnation with them: he therewithall shewes that they had this excellent priuiledge to be the first vnto whome the word and promises of God were giuen. But that all these things proceeded meerelie from Gods free grace, and not from their merits or deserts.

Vers. 10. *I will greatly reioyce in the Lord, and my soule shall be ioyfull in my God: for hee hath clothed me with the garments of saluation; and couered mee with the robe of righteousnesse: he hath decked mee like a bridegrome, and as a bride tireth her selfe with Iewels.*

THe Prophet here brings in the Church giuing of thankes vnto God, the better to perswade them of the truth of that which he hath said heretofore. And it is a liuely description, as it were, wherein he paints out the thing done in a table, and placeth it before their eies, that hee might remooue all scruples. For naturally wee are inclined to distrust: and withall so inconstant, that wee will rather giue credit vnto mens dreames, then to the word of God. But touching this kind of confirmation wee haue discoursed both in Chap. 12. 1. and 26. 1. as also in other places.

To what men are naturally inclined.

For he hath clothed me.] Surely these things were yet very farre off. But it was necessarie they should be seene and comprehended by faith. Yea, it is very needfull that wee lift vp our eies to heauen, when the Prophet preacheth to vs the doctrine of righteousnes and saluation. There is nothing visible here, and much lesse can we apprehend so great a felicitie: seeing all things are still bending towards a dissolution. But in regard that euen at this day such a beauty, as this appeares not in the Church, which (for the most part) on the contrarie is vnder the horror of the crosse, and therefore contemptible to all the world: it is needfull here that faith should come betweene, which comprehends celestiall and inuisible things.

Iustice is ioyned with *saluation*, in regard the one cannot be separated from the other. These similitudes of *garments* & *robes*, are well enough knowne: and it is as much as if the Church should haue said, that *iustice* and *saluation* were giuen her together. Seeing it is the *Lord* then who distributes these benefits, let vs conclude in our selues, that it is onelie he, of whom we must aske them, and none but he, from whom we must expect them. In these words, *he hath decked me*, there is a figuratiue kind of speech, which they think to be taken from the Priests garments: for which cause some haue descanted here vpon the

Priesthood

prieſthood of Chriſt. But as I thinke, the Propher meant not to ſpeake ſo ſubtilly, in vſing the ſimilitudes of the bride & bridegroome. The Church was in miſerable plight before, and euery one contemned her as *a vvife diuorced from her husband*. But he hauing receiued her into fauour againe, *ſhee ſhines vvith vvonderfull beautie*. And the place in Hoſea, 2. 20. anſwers vnto this. Such an ornament was giuen at the comming of Chriſt, and we alſo receiue it daily, when the Lord *clothes vs with righteouſneſſe and ſaluation*. But all theſe things ſhall bee fully accompliſhed at Chriſts laſt comming, as we haue often ſaid.

Verſ. 11. *For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden cauſeth to grow that which is ſowne in it: ſo the Lord will cauſe righteouſneſſe to grow, and praiſe before all the heathen.*

THe Prophet confirmes the former promiſes, by another goodly ſimilitude: for he brings the Iewes to the ordinarie power of God, which ſhines in his creatures. Wee ſee that the earth brings forth her *bud* euerie yeere; the *gardens grow greene* after they haue beene *ſowen vvith ſeedes*: to be ſhort, the graſſe and plants which in winter ſeemed as good as dead, doe reuiue againe in the ſpring time, and recouer new ſtrength. Now theſe are infallible teſtimonies of Gods power, and of the good will which hee beares vs. Seeing theſe things then come thus ordinarily to paſſe, ſhould men doubt thereof? Hath hee giuen this *vertue and power vnto the earth*, and will he not much more manifeſt the ſame for the deliuerance of his people? Will not hee cauſe *the elect ſeede to bud*, and bring forth; which as he hath promiſed, ſhall alwaies remaine in the world?

Before all the Gentiles.] Hee ſhewes againe that the bounds of the Church ſhall no more bee ſo narrow as they were; becauſe the Lord will cauſe her to repleniſh the whole world. Afterwards he mentions *righteouſneſſe*, which was fully reuealed at ſuch time as the Lord redeemed his people: but Gods *righteouſneſſe* did then eſpecially appeare, when Chriſt was manifeſted vnto the world. Not that he concealed it till that time, but in regard men attained not to ſuch a cleere knowledge of it. It is as much then as if he had ſaid; The Lord will ſo deliuer and reſtore his Church, *that all ſhall know his righteouſneſſe*: for *deliuerance* is an excellent teſtimonie thereof.

He addes *praiſe*, in reſpect that ſuch a benefit ought to be accompanied with thankſgiuings: for the end of righteouſneſſe is Gods glory. And therefore he exhorts vs to beware of ingratitude, ſeeing it were too vnworthy a thing to haue our lippes ſhut vp, after the receiuing of ſo many benefits from God. 1 2

THE LXII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *For Zions ſake I will not hold my tongue, and for Ieruſalems ſake I will not reſt, vntill the righteouſneſſe thereof breake forth as the light, and the ſaluation thereof as a burning lampe.*

The cauſes of theſe often repetitions.

IN regard that this ſorrowfull exile approched neere, which ſhould in a maner vtterly extinguiſh the name of this people, it was needefull for the faithfull to bee confirmed and hartened with many words, that in ſure and ſtedfaſt confidence, they might bee ſupported with theſe promiſes, vnder the heauie burthen of the Croſſe. In this verſe the Prophet diſcharging that office which was committed vnto him, plainely proteſts, *that hee will no vvay be idle* in the performance of his duties; neither *will be ceaſe to ſpeake, till he hath cheered vp the hearts of the faithfull in the hope of their ſaluation to come*, that they might know and bee perſwaded that God would deliuer his Church. For himſelfe (good man) might be diſcouraged in beholding the peoples incredulitie, and might be driuen to forſake all, in regard he knew things would grow euerie day worſe and worſe. Adde alſo, that he well foreſaw this horrible vengeance to bee at hand. But as one vtterly neglecting all theſe incumbrances, hee notwithſtanding *vowes* a conſtant perſeuerance in his courſe: to ſignifie vnto all, that *neither the common calamitie*, nor yet *the peoples diſſidence*, ſhould be able to hinder God from the performance of his promiſes, when the appointed time thereof was come. Now it was needfull that theſe things ſhould be often repeated vnto them, becauſe the peruerſitie of our minde is ſuch, that we preſently forget Gods promiſes. 1 2

In that he ſaith, *he vvill not hold his peace*: he therewithall admoniſheth *others alſo of their duties*, that they might be couragious, and with aſſurance of faith to wait for their redemption, though it were deferred for a time: yea, that their *hope* ſhould not ceaſe to anſwer Gods voice, which ſounds continually in their eares. We haue daily experience of the neceſſitie of this dutie, when Satan labours with might and maine to turne our feete out of the right way. Thus then the Prophet not onely ſhewes what hee himſelfe would doe, but by his example teacheth what end all faithfull Miniſters ſhould propound vnto themſelues; to wit, wholly to imploy their vtmoſt indeuors for the benefit of the Church. For when he ſaith, *for Zions ſake*, it

What ought to be our principall care.

it is to shew that our principall care ought to extend it selfe about the procuring of the perpetuall safetie and prosperous estate of the Church: as also that such deserue not the titles of good and faithfull Pastors, vnlesse they haue taken the care of her welfare so to heart, that they refuse no paines whatsoeuer, for the bringing thereof to passe.

Some referre these words to praiers: but I
1 had rather referre it to preaching; and so the sense agrees best, namely, that the Prophet will not be discouraged for any incumbrance or iniurie, that he should meete withall in the way: neither would he suffer his zeale to bee cooled, for any impediment whatsoeuer, from pursuing his office of publishing that which God had inioined him, touching the Churches deliuerance. For had he liued vntill this wofull desolation fell out, no doubt but hee should haue suffered many outrages, by reason of the multitudes infidelitie, as well as other Prophets did. But what euer came, hee protests that he is fortified with such inuincible constancie, that he will neuer be ashamed for any disgraces that men shall offer him, but will manfully hold on his course. By
2 this phrase of speech also he shewes, that his prophecies are all true, and therefore addes the more authoritie vnto them, that after his death they might neuer cease to sound in the eares and hearts of the faithfull.

Hee takes *righteousnesse* for the Churches right, which during the time of her affliction, seemed to be condemned. Her *righteousnesse brake forth* and appeared then, when shee was restored vnto her perfection, and had recouered her first estate: for this *righteousnesse* was hid as long as they were captiues.

Saluation is coupled with righteousnesse: for whom God *iustifies* or maintaines their right, such recouer their *saluation* by the same meanes. Hence we gather that wee are most miserable and succourlesse, whilest God withdrawes his grace, in regard of our frowardnesse. The Prophet therefore in other places hath attributed that righteousnes vnto God, which he now saith belongs vnto the church. Wee are vndone then when we are depriued of Gods grace; that is to say, whilest wee lie snorting in our sinnes, and God manifests his iust iudgement in punishing vs for them.

Moreouer, the verbe *to breake forth* signifies, that the righteousnesse of the Church was hidden and buried as it were for a time. Truly shee deserued to haue been consumed and brought to nothing before God. Nay, more then that, her great iniquities were come to such an height, that there was nothing to be expected but the iust vengeance of God. Verily, it was so in respect of men, who gaue the Church thus afflicted, for lost; and by their pride and cruelty, deiected her euen almost to the bottome of hell. To be short, he compares her with the world, in respect whereof she is righteous, when hauing been purged from her filthinesse, God beginnes to take her cause into his owne hands. By this then the Prophet aduertiseth vs alwaies to hope well touching the restauration of the Church, though for a time she be plunged into an horrible darknes, yea euen into death it selfe. For howsoeuer for a moment she seemes to be ouerwhelmed and forlorne; yet hath she God still for her defence in the heauens, who after he hath corrected her in measure, (as it is in Chap. 27. 8.) will at last manifest the care he hath ouer her. For it must needes be that his righteousnesse should *breake forth* and be manifested; namely, in the saluation of such as he hath chosen for his people and heritage.

Vers. 2. *And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousnesse, and all Kings thy glorie: and thou shalt bee called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.*

NOw he shewes more fully, why hee protested before that hee would not hold his tongue; euen because the faithfull might bee assured that saluation was not promised them in vaine. *Glory* is heere taken for saluation. In this place wee see with what argument the Prophets must furnish themselues to preserue their constancie; to wit, that the Lord is faithfull, who will in the end accomplish that which he hath promised, albeit he deferre for a time. The reason of the Prophets vehemencie in verse 1.

The word *Kings*, serues for amplification: as if he should say; Not onely the cõmunaltie and meaner sort should see and admire the *glory* of God; but that euen *Kings* themselues, who were wont proudly to contemne that which in it selfe is precious and honourable: for their owne glory so blindes them, and their greatnesse so bewitcheth all their senses, that they cannot willingly ackonwledge any dignitie but their owne. Kings do not willingly acknowledge any dignitie but their owne.

The *new name* is taken heere for magnificence: for the people were in such wise scattered and dispersed, that there was no certaine body of them to be seene, but seemed as vtterly forlorne. I grant the multitude of them which were carried into captiuitie was very great; yet in respect they were mingled here and there among the Babylonians, they were rent one from another, as a body diuided into many peeces: so as they could not well bee said to retaine so much as *the name* of a people any longer: which also they had beene forewarned of. But at their returne home, they beganne to bee knit into a bodie againe: and thus recouered that *name*, of which they had been depriued. Notwithstanding *new* is taken for vnaccustomed. As if the Prophet should haue said, your glorie shall bee singular, and such as was not heard of before. Which we know in processe of time came to passe. For this handful of people which inhabited the country by way of entreatie, were not able to get vnto themselues such a magnificence by any greatnesse, or signes of honour: but at length after the preaching of the Gospell, the *name* of the Iewes was both knowne and renoumed.

Now *Isaiah* confirmes that which was hard

hard to bee beleeued, by adding that *God* ſhould be the author of this *glorie*. For it was not in the power of man thus to raiſe vp the poore Church, being then couered ouer with ſhame and diſhonour: but *God who raiſeth the needie out of the duſt*, was able in a moment to adorne and beautifie his Church with new honour. For example, was there ſo much as any face of a Church to bee ſeene amongſt vs within theſe 40. yeeres? The Lord had indeede a ſmall ſeede (ſcattered here and there) but it was ſo confuſed and couered, that there could be no viſible Church of God perceiued. And yet hee gat his Church *a name*, when it pleaſed him to gather the ſame by the preaching of the Goſpell. This ſo admirable a worke of God then, ought to confirme vs in this point, namely, that God wil neuer vtterly abandon his church. For albeit the wicked do rent & teare vs in peeces with curſed ſpeakings, and that they ſlander and abhorre vs; endeuouring by all meanes poſſible to make vs an abomination in the eies of the world: yet let vs remember that they cannot plucke *Gods righteouſneſſe from him*, but that he will make our *glorie* to ſhine here below, ſeeing hee hath been pleaſed to write our names in heauen: Luk. 10. 20.

1. Sam. 2. 8.

God will neuer forſake his Church.

Others expound this more ſubtillie, namely, that in ſtead of being called Iſraelites, they ſhould be called Chriſtians. But I rather ſuppoſe, that the former ſenſe ſutes beſt with the ſcope of the Prophets text: as alſo with that language which he is wont to vſe. Moreouer, we ought dilligently to obſerue and marke theſe phraſes of ſpeech, which are peculiar vnto the Prophets; that wee may acquaint our ſelues with their ſtile. In ſumme, *Iſaiah* meant to ſay, that the people, which ſeemed to be rooted out, ſhall be reſtored: and ſhal receiue *a newe name*, not from men, but from *God*.

Verſ. 3. *Thou ſhalt alſo be a crowne of glorie in the hand of the Lord, and a royall diadem in the hand of thy God.*

The ſame argument further proſecuted.

HE proſecutes the ſame argument; which wee are not to wonder at. For, to iudge thereof according to humane reaſon, what man could euer haue conceiued in his mind, or by hope expected a thing of ſo great conſequence? Beſides, his meaning was by theſe words to raiſe vp the hearts of the faithfull to looke towards the kingdome of Chriſt: which it behooued him *to beautifie and adorne with theſe glorious titles*, by how much the more it was then obſcure and farre remote from them. For it was needfull to preuent a twofold danger, leſt the Iewes in ſeeing themſelues ſo farre recoiled backe from their firſt dignitie, ſhould neither deſpiſe the grace of God, nor reſt themſelues in theſe ſmall and firſt beginnings. And thus in ſetting light by Chriſt, they ſhould ſuffer themſelues to be glued onelie to the commodities of this life preſent. It is the Prophets drift then, as you ſee, to aduertiſe the Iewes, that their returne home ſhall be as a preparatiue to this honour, which they were to looke for in the manifeſtation of Chriſt in the fleſh.

1

As touching the firſt member; theſe poore baniſhed exiles, and bondmen could apprehend nothing at al but matter of deſpaire, in conſidering the outward eſtate of things: yea, after they were returned and ſettled in their countrie, yet they proceeded but ſlowlie forward in building of the Temple. Hee therefore ſtirres them vp to looke vnto *God*, that from him they might expect *that glorie* which now was hidden, in reſpect of mans reaſon. And in as much as they were aſſured that they were deare and precious in his ſight, that they ſhould content themſelues therewith, till he ſhould more liberallie endow them by the hand of Chriſt.

2

He calles the Church the *crowne of God*, in reſpect that he will haue his glorie to ſhine in vs. Wherein wee haue great cauſe with admiration to conſider of the ineſtimable goodneſſe of God towards vs: who though we are by nature corrupt and vncleane, and more vile then the filth in the chanell; yet he vouchſafes *ſo to adorne vs*, as to make vs *the diadem of his kingdom*. Let vs be prouoked then by this goodnes of God to hunger and thirſt after holineſſe of life, that ſo his image may daily bee reformed in vs more and more.

God ineſtimable goodneſſe ſingularlie ſet foorth.

Verſ. 4. *It ſhall be no more ſaid vnto thee, forſaken; neither ſhall it be ſaid any more to thy land, deſolate: but thou ſhalt bee called Hephzi-bath, and thy land Beulah. For the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land ſhall haue an husband.*

HE now meetes with a difficultie which might trouble the minds of the faithfull, whileſt they ſaw themſelues reiected and left deſtitute: and yet in the meane while had theſe glorious titles giuen them, of a *crowne* and a *diadem*. For might not theſe titles ſeeme ridiculous; ſeeing the Iewes were hated and abhorred of all nations, yea now and then their enemies trampled them vnder feete; and no ſuccour appeared: and yet notwithſtanding that they ſhould be exalted vp to heauen, and *incloſed in the hand of God?* Thus his meaning is to ſay, that howſoeuer the people were for a time, *as a woman left and forſaken of her husband:* yet they ſhould be reſtored againe in ſuch wiſe, that their *name and condition ſhould be changed*. As if he ſhould ſay, *this ſhall bee no perpetuall diuorce, for God will at length marrie thee againe vnto himſelfe*. Howſoeuer the Church then ſeemes to be contemptible, and in outward appearance bee like a woman reiected and put away, yet will the Lord one day put an end vnto her miſerie and calamities.

The preuention of an obiection.

Though for a time the Church ſeeme contemptible, yet ſhall ſhe not remaine ſo alwaies.

But withall the Prophet teacheth, that this proceedes onely from Gods *delite*; that is to ſay, from his free fauour: leſt any *thing* ſhould bee attributed to the merits or dignitie of

men. To which purpose hee saith in Hosea; *I will marrie thee vnto me in mercy and compassion.* Hos. 2. 19. Thus then the Prophet shewes that their prosperitie shall spring from none other fountaine then this, namely, because God will be pleased of his owne infinit loue, freely to be reconciled with those whom hee hath reiected. Now howsoeuer this appertaines properly to the Church; yet generally are we hence to learne, that Cities and Kingdomes also are restored to their first estate, by the fauour and good will of God: which whilest his wrath and indignation lay vpon them, seemed as vtterly forlorne.

The Prophet then discouers vnto the Iews, the originall of all calamities, in witnessing that their happinesse rests onely in Gods being *well pleased* with them. For hence wee may gather, that God was displeased with them before, whilest they were afflicted. Moreouer, the similitude of *marriage*, whereby he notes out the peoples restauration, is very notable, and containes two points in it. First, that the discord betweene God & his Church shall cease. Why so? Because she that before was *diuorced*, shall be receiued againe *into the place of a wife*, Gods anger being pacified: and secondly, that the multitudes of the people shall abolish the shame of their widowhood. For the land is married with her inhabitants, as the trees with the vines: on the other side, it is called a widow, when it is destituted of those who were wont to inhabit there.

Simile.

The good pleasure of the Lord is in thee.] *Isaiah* repeates and confirmes that which wee said euen now; to wit, that it is *of Gods free fauour*, when the Church is restored and setled in her first estate, and that the land receiues her inhabitants. For if he turnes his louing countenance away from vs, and reiects vs, there is nothing to be expected but desolation: neither can we then expect any thing that shall doe vs good, either from the power or policies of men.

Vers. 5. *For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sonnes marrie thee, and as a bridegroome is glad of the bride, so shall thy God reioice ouer thee.*

An exposition & confirmation of the former verse.

THis verse onely containes the exposition and confirmation of the former. But there seemes to bee some repugnancie betweene them, because in the latter member hee makes God the sole husband of his Church; and in the first he assignes her many. Yet the solution is easie: for when we speake of this marriage of the Church, she hath but one husband, that is, God; who alwaies attributes this title to himselfe. Now this is accomplished in Christ, to whom the Pastors *marrie and couple the Church, as a chaste and pure virgin*; as Saint *Paul* speakes, 2. Cor. 11. 2. Notwithstanding, this hinders not that this similitude of the marriage should not be transferred to expresse the vnitie of faith, which all the children of God haue with their mother the Church: yea, God is so her husband, that yet hee marries her with all nations that are gathered into her: for whilest shee is lest destitute of children, she is after a sort left as a desolate and solitarie widow. This therefore is spoken in regard of God, who by his wisdome, ratifying the holy vnion betweene the members of his Church, extends the fruit of this marriage to all the body.

From this verse we must gather, that then the Church of God shall bee truly peopled; that is to say, *shall haue many children when shee shall be married vnto her husband*; namely, *vnto God:* for at him wee must beginne, that he may raigne ouer his Church, and that vnder his conduct we may be gathered into her lap. Then indeed shall this marriage be holy: but if this be wanting, it is not the multitude of people that makes the Church, but rather a filthy brothell house. As in the Papacie, where Gods name roles vp and downe amongst them, and yet his Maiestie is no where more defaced with horrible sacrileges. Doctrine.

Vers. 6. *I haue set watchmen vpon thy walles, O Ierusalem, which all the day and all the night continually shall not cease: yee that are mindfull of the Lord, keepe not silence.*

THe Prophet minding to describe the perfect felicitie of Christs kingdome, collects into a summe all things that belong to the *prosperous and florishing estate of a Citie or Country.* To the rest of the former benefits then hee addes *garisons and watch*; because the abundance and sufficiency of all things would serue to small purpose, vnlesse wee were well *fortified* against the rage of the enemie. Hee therefore shewes, that the Lord will not onely furnish the Church with all things necessarie, but will also plant sufficient gardes about her, to defend her from theeues & enemies: that thus it might appeare how God is the author both of the inward and outward blessed life. God is the author not onely of inward graces, but of outward defences.

Shall not cease.] To hold ones peace, is heere taken to be quiet. As if he should say; They shall euermore be vpon their watch, to espie a far off imminent dangers.

But in the next place he shewes what these watchmen are; to wit, those that are *mindfull of the Lord:* that is, such as haue his name in an honourable estimation. The Angels also may bee put in the number of these *watchmen*, for we know that is their office: Psal. 91. 11. But in regard they watch willinglie and cheerefully for the saluation of the Church, Heb. 1. 14. and haue no neede of being quickened vp by exhortations, the Prophet directs his speech to other watchmen.

The verbe which he vseth is somewhat ambiguous. For sometimes it signifies Remember, and sometimes To call to minde: either of both expositions sute not ill. But me thinkes the Prophet meant simply to say; that these *watchmen* should be *Ministers* of God, to celebrate his name. Some translate; Those which

which publiſh or preach the Lord. But this is too conſtrained, and breaks off the Prophets ſentence: for ſuch expoſitors keep not themſelues to the ſimilitude of watchmen of a Citie, which the Prophet heere vſeth. Albeit indeed his meaning was to teach without any figure; that the Church ſhall bee freed from all dangers, in regard ſhee hath God for the protector of her ſaluation.

The nature of Chriſts kingdome.

And yet reſpect muſt alwaies be had to the nature of Chriſts kingdome here on earth. For it is not maintained, neither by weapons, nor force of men: but as it is in it ſelfe ſpirituall; ſo is it vpheld *by ſpirituall armour, and defences*. The Lord then will haue his Miniſters, whoſe ſeruice hee will vſe for the preſeruation of his Church by the ſword of the ſpirit, which is the word of God. Shee ſhall be ſafelie kept then, not by mans helpe; but by the ſecret and ſpirituall power of God.

And the Prophet in ſaying, *You that remember the Lord*, expounds himſelfe. Now howſoeuer this ſentence appertaines to all the faithfull, who are commanded as much as in them is to extoll the name of God in all places: yet hee alludes eſpeciallie to the Prieſts, who being publike officers were to leade the way vnto others, and to bee giuen wholl their affections to the ſetting foorth of Gods praiſes. Beſides, the Paſtors are here admoniſhed of their duties: for it is not enough to feede the Lords flocke, vnleſſe therewithall they defend the ſame againſt the aſſaults of wolues and robbers. *They muſt be vigilant then, and ſtand day and night in their watch-tower*, if they meane to diſcharge their duties as they ought. The Lord forbids them to be ſilent: for he would haue them carefull and diligent in their places. In which hee ſhewes what great care he hath ouer his hurch. This text alſo witneſſeth that it is a ſingular fauour of God, when he ſends faithfull Paſtors amongſt vs that are carefull of our ſaluation. For we lie open to infinite dangers, and are by and by inuironed with Satans nets, if the Lord preſerue vs not by his ſuccours. We ought therefore euermore to begge of him that hee would furniſh vs with meete helpes, which he knows to be neceſſarie for vs.

Paſtors muſt not onely feede but alſo defend the Lords flocke.

Verſ. 7. *And giue him no reſt till hee repaire, and vntill he ſet vp Ieruſalem, the praiſe of the world.*

To the dutie preaching, he addes prayer.

HItherunto the Prophet hath diſcourſed touching the office and dutie of teaching. But becauſe this would not ſuffice without prayer were added, hee exhorts the Miniſters thereto. For as I take it the particle *him*, muſt be referred vnto God. We ought therefore to be inſtant, and to importune ỹ Lord continually, that he may be pleaſed to giue good ſucceſſe vnto our labors, which otherwiſe would become vnfruitfull. So then whileſt we ſhall diligently imploy our ſelues in preaching the word, and forciblie reſiſt and withſtand the practiſes of Satan with all our might, let vs learne therewithall foorthwith, to turne our hearts towards God, beſeeching him by humble prayer, that hee would not ſuffer our labours to be in vaine. Euen as in the beginning of the Chapter then, hee referred ſilence vnto doctrine, ſaying, *That hee vvould not hold his tongue*: ſo in this place hee referres it *vnto prayer*, by which we obtaine ſome fruit from the doctrine. Yea the very Angels whet on our diligence by their example to this affection of prayer. For one of them, as we reade in Zach. 1. 12. praies with great feruencie for the reſtauration of the Church.

Prayer muſt goe with preaching.

Till hee repaire.] Hence let vs gather that theſe are two diſtinct benefits, firſt, in enioying faithfull paſtors which watch for the ſaluation of the Church: ſecondly, that the Church is reſtored and vpheld in her eſtate by their paines. But God who ſpeakes here, doth properly attribute ỹ beſtowing of theſe benefits to *himſelfe*, as in many other places. How ſhall they preach, ſaith S. *Paul*, vnleſſe they bee ſent: Rom. 10. 15. It is Gods peculiar office then to eſtabliſh good paſtors: for otherwiſe no man would euer bee fit to exerciſe ſo difficult & inſupportable a charge: 2. Cor. 2. 16. Againe, hee onelie ſets forward the reſtauration of the Church by their meanes, for their endeuours would proue vterlie vaine and fruitleſſe, if the Lord gaue them not good ſucceſſe. Here wee ſee then, that mens externall labours, are ioyned to the efficacie of the holie Ghoſt. For albeit the Lord himſelf alone begins, and makes an end, yet hee vſeth inſtruments by whom hee ſerues his turne for the erecting & building vp of his Church. This admoniſheth vs, not to be out of hart, no, though we ſee nothing but ruines, and a wofull ſcattering. But let vs pray that the Lord would bring all confuſions into a right order: which he for his part hath alſo promiſed to doe.

1
2
1
It is Gods peculiar office to eſtabliſh good Paſtors in his Church.
2

Where he adds, *vntill he ſet vp Ieruſalem*, it is as much to ſay, As to cauſe the Churches beautie to appeare: ſo as matter of ioy may proceed thence. For as long as wee onelie feele Gods ſeueritie, wee become mute and confounded: but when he frees vs from trouble, therewithall he reuiues vs and opens our mouthes in furniſhing vs with matter of praiſe and thankſgiuing.

Verſ. 8. *The Lord hath ſworne by his right hand, and by his ſtrong arme, ſurelie I will no more giue thy corne to bee meate for thine enemies, and ſurely the ſonnes of the ſtrangers ſhall not drinke thy wine, for the which thou haſt laboured.*

* Or, if I giue.

ISaiah proſecutes the ſimilitudes which hee vſed before. For in regard Chriſts kingdome could not otherwiſe bee deſcribed, by reaſon of the ſhallowneſſe of our capacities, it was requiſite it ſhould bee repreſented before vs vnder ſuch borrowed ſpeeches. Euen as heretofore then, hee hath promiſed

The ſame ſimilitudes proſecuted.

*Verſ.*3,4. *Verſ.*6. promiſed abundance of all good things: and ſecondly, a faithfull gard, who ſhould carefully watch for the good eſtate of the elect: ſo in this place hee promiſeth *peace and tranquillitie*, which the faithfull ſhould quietly inioy, and ſhould *neuer be diſappointed thereof*. As if he ſhould ſay; Whatſoeuer thou poſſeſſedſt heeretofore, was expoſed to pillage and to the ſpoile: but *now* all things ſhall be ſecured vnto thee, and thou ſhalt *be abundantly ſatisfied vvith thy vvheate, and vvith thy vvine*. In a word, *thy felicitie* ſhall bee *full of tranquillitie*.

But in regard our peruerſitie is ſuch, that we cannot belieue in God, though he makes vs neuer ſo large and liberall promiſes; therefore *Iſaiah brings in the Lord binding himſelfe vvith an oath*: for the Lord ſtoopes ſo low vnto vs, as to ſweare, the more to reproue our diſtruſt and obſtinacie. Now *he ſweares by himſelfe*, becauſe hee hath no greater to ſweare by; as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, Heb.6.16. Now he alſo mentions *the right* hand of God: that is to ſay, his power; becauſe it was fitting for this purpoſe. As if hee ſhould ſay; *If there bee any power in mee, then vvill I manifeſt the ſame for your ſalvation: and leſt your mindes ſhould vvax drovvzie in ſo difficult a thing, I ſweare by my invincible hand, that conquers all things, that you ſhall remaine ſafe and ſound by my meanes, vvhatſoeuer dangers can befall you to the contrary*. As oft then as hee promiſeth vs *ſalvation*, let vs forthwith bethinke vs of his *vertue and power*.

Why God bindes his promiſes with an oath.

If I giue, is a phraſe of ſpeech wherein more is vnderſtood then that which is vttered: and it teacheth vs with what holineſſe and feare we ought to vſe an oath. The words themſelues are as much in effect as if he had ſaid; Let mee not be beleeued heereafter, if the euent of theſe things doe not manifeſt the truth of theſe promiſes.

With what reuerence we ought to vſe an oath.

When hee promiſeth a peaceable inioying of *vvheat and vvine*, it is to ſhew, that when the Church is deſtituted of them, that it fals not out by chance, but by the iuſt iudgement of God. For as oft as the enemies ſpoile and rob vs of them, let vs aſſure our ſelues that this falles out by Gods permiſſion, according as he threatens vs in his Law: Deut.28.33. As on the contrary, it is by the ſpeciall bleſſing of his hand, when euery one ſits in peace vnder his owne vine, and vnder his owne figge-tree: 1.King.4.25.

God the author both of weale and woe.

Verſ.9. *But they that haue gathered it, ſhall eate it, and praiſe the Lord, and the gatherers thereof ſhall drinke it in the Courts of my ſanctuary.*

An expoſition & confirmation of the former ſentence.

SEe heere both the expoſition and confirmation of the former ſentence. For hauing proteſted that hee would no more ſuffer the goods of the church to be expoſed for a pray, he now addes, that ſhee ſhall inioy them. In the meane while he ſhewes, that we may iuſtly call wheate and wine *ours*, when wee haue obtained them *by our honeſt labour*: for thoſe who rob others of their bread, or get it by vnlawfull meanes, hold it not by any right from the Lord; neither can they attribute goods ſo gotten, to his bleſſing, as if they iuſtly poſſeſſed them. To which alſo, anſwers that in Pſal 128.2. *Thou ſhalt eate the labour of thine hands: thou ſhalt be bleſſed, and it ſhall goe vvell vvith thee*.

Obiect. But ſeeing *he* aſſignes food to ſuch as ſhall till the ground; wherefore ſaith he, that they *ſhall giue thanks to God?* Wherefore ſhould men praiſe the Lord when *they reape the corne, and gather in the grapes by their labour* and induſtrie? This might ſeeme to be but a fained thanksgiuing, ſeeing it is attributed to mens good husbandry, and that God ſhould deſerue no thanks for that which a man hath atchieued by his honeſt paines. Anſ. But wee muſt note that after the Prophet hath taught them the lawfull meanes of getting their liuing, he therewithall addes, that our labour ſhall be in vaine, if the Lord himſelfe doe not by his bleſſing of the ſame, furniſh vs with things neceſſarie. For all that we inioy, belongs of right to him: and to him alone, ought we to giue the honor of all that which we haue gotten.

When he addes, *in my holy courts*: he alludes to the ſolemnitie of the ſacrifices. They might drinke any where elſe: it was in euery ones power to eate at home. But he alludes to the cuſtome which they held in ſacrificing their firſt fruits vnto God, at what time they conſecrated the reuenues of the whole yeere, as the Law inioined them: Leuit.2.12. and 23.10. And this ſentence is very frequent in the bookes of *Moſes*; Thou ſhalt eate and reioice in the preſence of thy God: Deut.12.18.

Verſ.10. *Goe thorow, goe thorow the gates: prepare you the way for the people: caſt vp, caſt vp the vvay, and* *gather out the ſtones, and ſet vp the ſtandard for my people.*

*Or, paue it with.

FRom the former words he concludes, that they ſhall freely paſſe thorow the gates of the Citie, which were either ſhut vp, or broken before: *ſhut vp*, during the ſiege of the enemie: *broken*, when the Citie was deſtroied and raced euen with the ground. Thus his meaning is then, that the Citie ſhall be ſo reſtored, that the inhabitants thereof ſhall be gathered in great troopes, and that they ſhall often paſſe to and fro.

Some thinke that this ſpeech is directed to the Paſtors, namely, they ſhould *enter into the gates, and paſſe thorow before others, as their leaders*. But the ſentence is generall and figuratiue; wherein hee compares the Church *to a Citie* well peopled, which notwithſtanding had been laid waſte for a time, and deſolate, as Ieruſalem was. Others deſcant more wittily, and ſay; that the *gates* of the Church ſhall be open, when remiſſion of ſinnes is there preached; by meanes whereof, God cals men vnto himſelf. But if we will haue the Prophets true meaning, then let vs note that all this is ſpoken figuratiuely, as wee touched before.

Cleanſe

Cleanſe the vvay for the people.] See wherein the office of the Paſtors properly conſiſts, but the Prophet hath ſpoken generally, and addreſſeth his ſpeech to all ſuch whoſe ſeruice God vſeth to prepare the way for his people. Then, he ſpake to the Medes and Perſians, through whoſe meanes the Lord gaue the Iewes paſſage to returne home, but afterwards he comprehends all others, by whom God reſtored his Church. Now he *commands* all men with authoritie *to cleanſe and make the vvay plaine*, that the Iewes might know how euery impediment ſhould eaſily be remoued; and that their greateſt enemies ſhould forthwith yeeld obedience to Gods commandement: and herewithall *he alſo bids the faithfull to fit themſelues in good earneſt for their iourney*, as if many workmen were alreadie preſt to ſecond them. And the weight which is in the *repetition* of the words ought to be noted, for they ſerue for the further confirmation of the matter.

Chap. 57. 14.

Paue it vvith ſtones.] The verb *Sakal*, ſignifies as wel to take away the ſtones as to paue. And I had rather take it in this latter ſignification, though the expoſitors for the moſt part be of the contrarie opinion. Hereunto appertaines that which he ſaith touching the ſetting vp of the *ſtandard*. For his meaning is, that the nations ſhall as readily obey Gods commandement, as the ſubiects doe their Princes. For they aſſemble and runne together when *the enſigne* is diſplaid, and imploy their endeuors to bring back the people. He ſpeakes very magnificentlie then of Gods power, that the Iewes might be well aſſured to be reſtored to their firſt eſtate one day.

Verſ. 11. *Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed to the ends of the world: tell the daughter of Zion, Behold thy Sauiour commeth: behold his wages is with him, and his worke is before him.*

An obiection preuented.

THe Prophet meant to ſay, that ſ Lord in working miraculouſlie beyond all hope and conceit of fleſh and blood will cauſe all nations to know, that this was done *by his commandement*. For ſome might obiect, How can it be that the nations who now proudly reſiſt God ſhould come to yeeld him obedience? He anſwers, Becauſe the Lord will *proclaime* your returne, in ſuch wiſe, that they ſhall vnderſtand how you muſt be reſtored by his commandement.

Obiect.

Anſ.

But as touching that he addes, *Tell the daughter of Zion*, it properly appertaines to the Prophets and Miniſters of the word, to whom the Lord giues this charge, to promiſe ſaluation and deliuerance vnto his Church. Hence wee gather that theſe promiſes ought not to be reſtrained to one particular time, but muſt bee extended euen to all ages, till the ſecond appearing of Chriſt. For if wee beginne at the returne out of Babylon into Iudea, wee muſt paſſe along ſtill to the comming of Chriſt, becauſe then this prophecie was truly fulfilled, and the end of the deliuerance came; becauſe the *Sauiour* then appeared, when the grace of God was publiſhed by the Goſpell. In a word, he affirmes that Gods voice ſhall one day ſound from the Eaſt to the Weſt, and ſhall not be vnderſtood of one people onely, but of all. Now this voice is; *Behold, thy Sauiour commeth*: which we know is the proper voice of the Goſpell. He therefore inioines the *Teachers* of the Church to raiſe vp the hearts of the faithfull, *vvith the comming of the Lord*; though vnto the people it ſeemed a thing far remote.

Doctrine.

But this promiſe belongs chiefly to Chriſtes kingdome, who fully and perfectly did accompliſh theſe things, for he indeed ſhewed himſelfe to be *the ſauiour of the vvorld*, as we haue ſeene heretofore in Chap. 40. 10. And leſt any ſcruple might remaine, he furniſheth the Lord with *power*, when he ſhall appeare, as it is in that very place which we before alleaged; for hee vſeth the very ſame words there which are heere mentioned, as if he meant to ſhew, that as ſoon as it ſhould pleaſe God to ſtretch forth *his hand*, *the effect* will in a moment appeare: for whileſt he either ceaſeth or deferres, fleſh and blood eſteemes him idle. Wee alſo ſee that many fantaſticall ſpirits forge I know not what diuinitie, as if they meant to paint out a dead image. The Prophet therefore very aptly addes the *vvorke* and *reward* before God, to ſhew that he is the iuſt Iudge of the world in the time of neede.

Verſ. 12. *And they ſhall call them, the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord, and thou ſhalt be named a Citie ſought out, and not forſaken.*

The fruit of the Lords comming.

HE ſets forth the benefit of the Lords comming, namely, that in ſhewing how his elect are as deare vnto him as his owne heritage, he will make it knowne to all the world that the couenant of Adoption by him contracted with *Abraham*, is not in vaine: for this cauſe he calles them *the holy people*, in regard the Lord had ſeparated and conſecrated them vnto himſelfe, for though he gouerned all the nations of the world, yet he vouchſafed to chuſe the poſteritie of *Abraham*, to haue a ſpeciall care thereof. And in this ſenſe God meant to ſay, that his people *ſhal be holy*, when he ſhall appeare their *ſauiour* and *redeemer*. And as the people are called prophane when they be plunged in their dregs, being afflicted and vexed by the ſcoffings of the wicked: ſo on the contrarie they are ſaid to be *holy*, when the Lord ſhewes himſelfe by effects to be the God of their ſaluation, which came to paſſe in their wonderfull deliuerance, for then God ſhewed indeed that he remembred *his holy couenant* touching his heritage which he had (as mans reaſon deemed) vtterly reiected and caſt off. For in theſe words *ſought out and not forſaken*, we muſt note the oppoſition betweene the *ſtate* wherein the Lord *found vs this diuorce* againſt his people: and that wherein he *reconciled* thoſe againe vnto himſelfe *vvhom he had put away*.

CHAP.

THE LXIII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Who is this that commeth from Edom with red garments from Bozrah? he is glorious in his apparrell, and walketh in his great strength. I speake in righteousnes, and am mightie to saue.*

A prevention of a dangerous temptation.

THE expositors Christian haue misinterpreted this place, as if that which is heere said should appertaine vnto Christ, seeing the Prophet speakes simplie of God himselfe, and thus they haue *made a Iesus died all over with red*, in regard he was thorowly bathed in his owne blood which he shed vpon the Crosse. But the Prophet had no such meaning at all. The true and plaine sense is, *That the Lord presents himselfe here clothed with red garments before the people, to aduertise all that he would maintaine the cause of his chosen, and be auenged on their enemies.* For whilest the people of God were pressed with infinite miseries, and that the Idumeans, with the rest of their aduersaries (who were as it seemed out of all danger) ouerflowed in all excesse of riot: it might dangerouslie tempt the Iewes to thinke, either that these things were guided by fortune; or that God made light account of his children: or that at least he chastised them with ouer great seueritie. So then, if God corrected the Iewes because of the contempt of his name and religion; how much more were the *Idumeans* and *other enemies* to bee roughlie dealt withall, being the sworne enemies thereof? The Prophet meetes with this so cumbersome a temptation by bringing in God *the auenger*, Psal. 94.1. *returning from the slaughter of the Edomites, as if hee had been stained all ouer with their blood.*

The naturall meaning of this verse.

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The force of interrogations.

Now this description is liuely and full of efficacie, when hee saith, *Who is this?* For such an interrogation rauisheth the minds of the hearers into an admiration, and affects them more, then if it had been vttered in plaine termes. The Prophet did the rather vse it, that hee might thereby awaken the Iewes, who were become dreuzie and besotted. We know that the Idumeans were somewhat akin to the Iewes, in regard they were descended from the same ancestors with them. For they were thus called of *Esau*, who was also called *Edom*: Gen. 36.1. These hauing corrupted the pure worship of God, though they had the same marke of circumcision, notwithstanding persecuted the Iewes most despitefully. And besides, they exasperated the rage of other enemies against the Iewes; manifesting to all what great pleasure they tooke in the ruine of this poore people, as it appeares by their egging on of the Babylonians. Remember O Lord, saith the Church, Psalm. 137.7. *the children of Edom*, who in the day of Ierusalems *ruine, said, downe* with it, downe with it euen to the ground. Thus then the Prophet denounceth, that the Edomits shall also keepe *their turne*, in being iudged according to their deserts, that none might otherwise think, but they should surely bee punished for the barbarous crueltie by them exercised against their brethren. For the Lord wil so *auenge* himselfe of the wicked and enemies of the Church, that hee will thereby shew what care hee hath ouer her.

See Obad. 10.11.

Now howsoeuer *blood* doth vsuallie spot and staine him that vanquisheth, yet *Iesiah* affirmes that God *shall bee glorious in his apparell*, after he hath made hauocke of his enemies. As in chap. 34.6. we haue seene that the slaughter of the wicked there was compared to the sacrifices, in regard Gods glorie shined therein. For what garment could hee put on more glorious then his *iustice?* Therefore that he might speake honourablie of Gods iust reuengings, hee shewes that the blood wherewith he is besprinckled by the slaughter of these desperate wicked ones, is glorious and excellent. As if hee had said, Thinke not that God resembles any common person: for though hee bee died ouer with blood, yet shall not this hinder, but that his Maiestie and glorie shall shine therein.

The Iewish expositors take the word *walking* diuerslie: for some among them referre it to the people whom the Lord should bring backe from the captiuitie: others, to the nations, whom the Lord would transport into other countries, notwithstanding they then seemed to haue a setled habitation. But I thinke it will better sute to the scope of the Prophets text, if we take it absolutelie. The Prophet then describes the glorious *walking of God*, and his noble presence, by which he will manifest his admirable power.

The certeintie of the prophesies noted.

I am, that speake.] The Lord himselfe answers: which carries much more maiestie with it, then if the Prophet had spoken in his owne person. And herein he brings the faithful to the former prophesies, to enforme them, that not only Gods righteousnesse and goodnesse, but also his faithfulnesse should appeare in these iudgements. As if he should say, Now you see the accomplishment of that which hitherunto I haue declared vnto you by my seruants. For this effect of my promises, plainely demonstrates that I am true of my word; and that I speake from my heart without fayning, so as I will not by any meanes disappoint your expectations. Now the vision of it selfe had not beene forcible enough, vnlesse the Iewes had therewithall bin put in mind of the things they had heard of before. Seeing the end thereof was to settle their hearts vpon the saluation of God, hee

bee therewithall attributes vnto himſelfe, an extraordinarie *power and might to ſaue.*

Verſ. 2. *Wherefore is thine apparell red, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine preſſe?*

The former argument ſtill proſecuted.

HE proſecutes the ſame argument. But becauſe the bare recitall would not haue been of ſufficient weight, therefore he doth not at once manifeſt from whence this red colour in Gods garments did proceede, but rather continues his *interrogation* ſtill, that he might the better rouze vp their ſpirits, to the conſideration of ſo rare & vnwonted a thing. For his meaning is to ſay, that this ſprinkling with blood is a matter extraordinarie, and not ſeene before. And therefore the ſimilitude of the *preſſer* of grapes, ſutes very well. For *Bozrah*, which hee mentioned in the firſt verſe, was ſituated in a countrie of vines: as if he would haue ſaid, *the grape gatherings* ſhal be much differing frō the old wont: for *blood*, in ſtead of the *iuice of grapes*, ſhall now bee ſqueezed out.

Verſ. 1.

Verſ. 3. *I haue trodden the wine-preſſe alone, and of all the people, there was none with mee: for I will tread them in mine anger, and tread them vnder foot in my wrath, and their blood ſhall bee ſprinkled vpon my garments, and I will ſtaine all my raiment.*

The viſion expounded. *Verſe* 1.

NOw the Prophet expounds the viſion, and ſhewes wherefore the Lord is thus *died with blood*; namely, becauſe he muſt be auenged on the Idumeans, and other enemies, who haue vſed his people very inhumanely. It ſhould bee a thing ridiculous to referre this verſe vnto Chriſt, in regard he hath redeemed vs *without the helpe of any man*: for the Prophets meaning is, that the Lord will ſo puniſh the Idumeans, that he ſhall ſtand in need of no mans helpe, becauſe *himſelfe* will bee ſtrong enough to roote them out. For the Iewes might obiect, that the Idumeans were mightie: that no warre was made vpon them, but that they floriſhed and liued at their eaſe. But the Lord ſhewes, this ſhall not hinder him from ſmiting them, when him liſteth. I grant he vſed mens helpe, when hee auenged himſelfe of the Idumeans: but yet in ſuch wiſe, that it was apparant to all how the whole action was managed by his owne hand: neither could any thing therein be aſcribed either to the *counſels, or forces* of *men*. For they were ſurprized with a ſudden and vnexpected deſtruction: in reſpect whereof the people could not doubt, but that *God only* was the author thereof, ſeeing they had been ſo often aduertiſed of it before.

Obiect. Anſ.

Where he ſaith, *And of all the people there was not one with him*; it is to ſhew, that howſoeuer ſome ſhould be raiſed vp to bring deſtruction vpon Edom, yet Gods worke therein ſhould be ſeparate from theirs. For the infidell enemies neuer dreamed of auenging the vniuſt cruelties of the Idumeans. The Lord would then that *his iudgement* ſhould ſhine and be conſidered of in the clattering of the harneſſe and weapons, and in theſe violent mouings.

I will goe vpon them. For mine owne part I willingly retaine the *future tence*, in regard the Prophet ſpeakes of things to come, and not yet accompliſhed. For the Idumeans were to bee ſeuerelie puniſhed for their crueltie: though for the preſent, they were at their eaſe, and in great tranquillity.

Wee haue alreadie in part touched the cauſe why the Prophet hath vſed the ſimilitude of a bloodie preſſer, which is both a hideous and wofull ſight: yet therewithall he addes, that the puniſhments and vengeances of God againſt his enemies are properly his owne, as if himſelfe had gathered them together, when he ſhall either conſume or ſcatter them. Euen as in Chap. 34. 6. ſuch an execution is called a ſolemne ſacrifice: to teach vs that wee are no leſſe to glorifie God, when hee executes his iudgements, then when hee manifeſts the tokens of his mercie. In the meane while hee expreſſeth his ſingular loue towards the Iewes, ſeeing for their ſakes he vouchſafeth to *ſprinkle* himſelfe with the blood of his enemies ſo farre; that hee vſeth the verbe to ſtaine, or to defile.

In my vvrath.] The Prophet ſhewes that this alone ſufficeth for the deſtruction of the Idumeans: namelie, that the Lord *is angrie* with them. As if he ſhould ſay, No man ſhall be able to deliuer them when God ſhal haue to doe with them. Hence we are to gather, that mens ruine proceedes from no other cauſe but Gods *vvrath*: as on the contrarie, our ſaluation depends wholly vpon his meere grace. To conclude, the Lord meant here to teſtifie that the Idumeans ſhould not eſcape vnpuniſhed, ſeeing they had bin perſecutors of his Church.

Mens ruine proceedes from Gods wrath.

Verſ. 4. *For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the yeere of my redeemed is come.*

IN the firſt member of this verſe, the Prophet ſignifies that God will not ceaſe to performe his office: though he executes not his iudgements at the firſt but deferres them to a fit opportunitie which he foreſees to bee beſt fitting. Neither indeed ought wee to preſcribe vnto him either the time when, or the manner how he is to doe this or that; but to commit it as well to his ſecret counſell, as leaue vnto him the time when to execute all things, according to his good pleaſure. Let vs not thinke then that hee ſleepes, or is idle, when he deferres.

Though God ſeeme for a time to deferre, yet he will pay home at length.

In the latter member hee ſhewes, that all theſe things are done in reſpect of his loue to the faithfull, when he ſpeakes of the *yeere of his redeemed*. *Day* and *yeere*, are here taken for one and the ſame terme. Onely the word

yeere notes out the length of the banishment, to the end the Iewes should neither despaire, nor be discontent, if their deliuerance was foreslowed. Thus then the Lord punisheth and destroies the wicked, for the deliuerance of the faithfull, and for the redemption of his Church, to which hee hath a speciall regard. And this ought greatly to comfort vs, that when the signes of Gods wrath against the wicked appeare, wee may therewithall know, that the fruit of the blowes which light vpon their backes, shall be ours. By this also wee may euidently perceiue, that our gronings haue been heard; namely, because that when God is *minded* to succour the afflicted, we see he armes himself with strength, for the confusion of his Churches enemies. Wherefore, howsoeuer the crosse lie heauily vpon vs, & presseth vs downe with the weight thereof, yet in vndergoing it patiently, let vs learne by hope to raise vp our hearts *to this yeere*, which God hath limited for the execution of his vengeance.

A consolatiō.

Vers. 5. *And I looked, and there was none to helpe; and I wondered that there was none to vphold: therefore mine owne arme helped mee, and my wrath it selfe sustained mee.*

A further illustration of the former Doctrine.

ALbeit the Iewes were destitute of all helpe, and that no man relieued them either by words or deedes, yet he shewes that the onely *arme* of the Lord shall suffice to punish the enemies, and to set his Church at libertie. Hee teacheth them then to looke for saluation from God onely; that they should not gaze heere and there, but depend wholly vpon God, who stands in no need of other mens helpe. For this cause he brings him in wondering, that *no man* reached him forth his hand, when he was about to execute his iudgements, the better to imprint this doctrine in the hearts of the faithfull, namely, that God needes no mans aid, but is al sufficient of himselfe to obtaine saluation for his people. And by this circumstance he further illustrates that succour, which he was determined to giue vnto the faithfull; partly to correct their distrust, and partly to exhort them to thankfulnesse for the time to come: for when God saith he *wondred*, and was vtterly astonished; hee puts vpon him another person, because this astonishment was indeed properly in the Iewes, who neither would, nor could beleiue more then what *men* were able to doe. He therefore opposeth his *arme* to all meanes whatsoeuer; shewing that hee will satisfie himselfe with the inuincible power thereof, as well to manifest himselfe the Sauiour of his Church, as to scatter and ouerwhelme all the wicked.

Vers. 6. *Therefore I will tread downe the people in my wrath, and make them drunken in mine indignation, and will bring downe their strength to the earth.*

The conclusion.

FRom the former sentence hee concludes that Gods wrath is strong enough to confound the wicked, without hauing aid from any other; lest the power of the enemies might any way daunt the Iewes from conceiuing good hope.

To make drunken, must heere bee taken in a contrary sense, to that which it is in some other places, which we haue expounded heretofore; as in Chap. 29. 9. one while we are said to bee drunke when God takes from vs our senses, or smites vs with giddinesse; or when as at length hee giues vs vp into a reprobate mind. But it here signifies no other thing, but to fill, or to beate them to the full, as we commonly say: and this similitude is often vsed of the Prophets.

I will bring downe their strength: that is to say; though they thinke themselues inuincible, yet will I bring them downe and confound them. The summe is, that the Iewes being afflicted, ought not to despaire of their saluation, as if God hated them; neither to wax obstinate vnder his rods, as if they were smitten at all aduenture; because the rest of the nations, who now oppressed them, should be punished, things should be changed, and those that cried victory before the conquests, should not escape in the end. Now he culles out the Idumeans for a particular instance and example hereof, because they dwelt neerest, and were better knowne then others, who also most molested them.

Vers. 7. *I will remember the mercies of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, *according vnto all that the Lord hath giuen vs; and for the great goodnesse towards the house of Israel, which hee hath giuen them according to his tender loue, and according to his great mercies.*

*Or, as vpon.

What ought to be our meditation in the day of affliction.

Isaiah comforts the people in this so miserable and wofull a case, and by his example commands the Iews that in time of their extreme affliction, they should call to mind the former *mercies* of the Lord, and should betake them to their praiers; that so they might not resemble hypocrites, who neuer haue any taste in Gods goodnesse, but in time of prosperitie. For in aduersitie they are so cast downe, that all the promises in the Bible will not be able to comfort them. Now when the Lord chastens vs, we ought to remember his former benefits, and to breake out into the extolling of them, still hoping of better for the time to come: for God is alwaies like himselfe, and neuer changeth neither his counsell, nor will. And therefore, *if wee giue place to his mercy, wee shall neuer be cast off.* This I take to be the context, though others take it otherwise, namely, that the Prophet hauing spoken heeretofore of the peoples captiuitie, comforts now himselfe by this assurance of Gods mercy, because God was purposed to saue some. But they are deceiued, in regard they thinke that *Isaiah* hath hitherunto spoken of the Iewes; as if God meant to punish none but them. Whereas he on the contrarie testifies,

teſtifies, that other nations ſhould alſo be chaſtiſed, that the Iewes ſhould not perſwade themſelues that God only hated them. For which cauſe he now exhorts them to celebrate the memorie of thoſe benefits which God had beſtowed vpon their fathers, that by their example they might the better come to apprehend Gods loue towards themſelues. The ſcope of the text alſo ſhewes, that the Iewes are conioined with their fathers, to the end the couenant common to them both might encourage them to hope for better times.

According vnto all things.] He vſeth this particle *As*, to ſhew, that in aduerſitie theſe benefits of God giuen vnto his people ſhould forthwith come vnto our remembrances, no leſſe then if they were preſent before our eies, though otherwiſe they may ſeeme to be worne out with age. For if they appertained not vnto vs, it were but labor loſt to remember them, which the Prophet alſo confirmes by the particle *Vs*. Why ſo? Becauſe the Iewes being members of the ſame body, he had good reaſon to account them as the right ſucceſſors of their grandfathers, and other anceſtors. Truly *Iſaiah* felt not theſe benefits paſt which he heere mentions, but in regard they had bin beſtowed vpon the Church, the fruit of them reached in part vnto *him*, becauſe he was a member of the ſame.

How wee ought to eſteeme of the communiõ of Saints.

And queſtionles this communion of Saints whereof we make profeſſion, ought to be of ſuch value with vs, as to thinke that whatſoeuer the Church receiues from the hand of God, is alſo giuen to vs. For there is but one Church of God; and that which is now, hath nothing ſeparate from that which was in times paſt.

Iſaiah alſo expounds himſelfe when hee addes, *for the great goodnes towards the houſe of Iſrael*. Seeing then the Lord ſhewed himſelfe a liberall benefactor towards his people, we ought at this day to expect the like, in regard that we be of his *houſhold*, and members of his Church. Wel then, albeit we feele him angrie againſt vs for our ſinnes, yet muſt we cheere vp our ſpirits through a liuely hope, and arme our ſelues againſt all diſtruſt, becauſe God can not forſake his Church.

The foundation of our ſaluation.

In the meane while we haue to note that the Prophet highly extols and magnifies *Gods mercie* heere, thereby to teach vs, that the foundation of our ſaluation and of all other benefits flowes from thence. And this ſhuts out all merits of men, that ſo no man may preſume to attribute any thing at all vnto himſelfe. But to the end this doctrine may be the better vnderſtood, let vs conſider *the time* whereof *Iſaiah* ſpeakes. Religion and Iuſtice then principallie bare ſway and floriſhed: for howſoeuer the people had corrupted themſelues, yet *Moſes*, *Aaron*, and other holy perſonages ſhewed forth good teſtimonies of their innocencie and holines. And yet the Prophet teacheth, that all the good things which *Moſes* and the reſt receiued, were not to be aſcribed to their *merits*, but to *Gods mercies*. But what are we in compariſon of *Moſes*, that wee ſhould thinke to merit ought at Gods hands? Thus then as theſe repetitiõs of Gods *great goodnes*, *tender loue*, and *great mercies*, doo greatly ſerue for the raiſing vp on high the weake and broken hearted, that they may ouercome their greateſt temptations, ſo ought the ſame to put to flight and to ſwallow vp all thought and conceit of mens merits. 1 2

Verſ. 8. *For he ſaid, ſurely they are my people, children that will not lie: ſo he was their Sauiour.*

God lookes that our conuerſation ſhould anſwer our vocation.

HE ſpeakes of the peoples election, and brings in God diſcourſing of it, to put vs in mind of the end of our vocation, namely, that he will haue a people *ſeparated* vnto him from the world, in the midſt of whom his name may be worſhipped and called vpon. And yet therewithall he accuſeth the Iewes ingratitude, who deceiued God of his expectation: not that the Lord was indeed deceiued, ſeeing he foreſaw well enough what they would be, which he had alſo teſtified by *Moſes*, Deut. 32. 15. 16. But the ſcripture ſpeakes thus, when men by their vnthankfulnes care not to defraud the Lord of his due, as wee haue ſeene in Chap. 5. *I looked that it ſhould haue brought me forth grapes, but behold, wilde grapes.* He ſpeakes not of Gods ſecret counſel, but ſpeakes after the manner of men, to ſet forth the mutuall conſent which ought to be betweene God and the faithful, that all thoſe to whom he vouchſafes his preſence as their father, ſhould be readie for their parts to anſwer when he calles vnto them: for this foundation remaines ſure, namely, that none of Gods elect can periſh, becauſe God knowes who are his, 2. Tim. 2. 19. And yet we know that the end of our vocation is to liue in holines & righteouſnes, as all the Scripture witneſſeth, and alſo according to that which hath bin often ſaid in many places: Chap. 43. 21. & 55. 5.

The Lord had iuſt cauſe therefore to ſay that he had choſen the people to be holy and *true*, and that he might haue *children* farre from lies and vanitie. But the people did falſifie their promiſed faith, and reuolted from that ſimplicitie of heart which they ought to haue followed: for they were whollie replete with fraude and hypocriſie; and yet the Prophet giues them hope of pardon, if ſo be they would ſeeke the Lord, and humble theſelues before him with true repentance.

He alſo notes out that which is the principall in Gods ſeruice, to wit, that we bring with vs thereunto a pure and vpright heart. Whence it alſo followes, that the Lord neuer forſakes vs, till we haue bin diſloyall towards him in breaking our faith. Seeing this people then pleaſed themſelues in their vices, it was needfull they ſhould be firſt conuinced of their infidelitie, that being conuerted vnto God, they might in the end feele him their *ſauiour*.

Verſ. 9. * *In all their troubles he was troubled, and the Angell* * *of his preſence ſaued them: in his loue and in his mercie*

* Or, in all their anguiſh there was no anguiſh.
* Or, of his face.

he redeemed them, and he bare them and caried them alwaies continuallie.

The inestimable loue which God beares to his Church.

HE amplifies and sets forth Gods goodnes towards his people, shewing, that he bestowed benefits vpó their fathers whilest they suffred themselues to be conducted by him: yea, he had such care ouer them, that himselfe was *troubled in their troubles*, and bare their miseries and anguishes. In speaking thus, he notes out the inestimable loue which God beares towards his chosen. And the Lord also the better to draw and allure vs to come vnto him speakes *after the maner of men*, attributing vnto himselfe all the affection, loue, and fatherly compassion that can possiblie be in them. And yet it is impossible to thinke of any loue or good will of men in this world, which he farre surmounts not.

No loue comparable to Gods loue.

I vtterly reiect not the other exposition, to wit, that the people were not troubled in their trouble; because God alwaies supplied them with some remedies for ỹ affwaging of their sorrowes. But in my iudgement, the learned expositors haue hit the marke, in taking the first sense: wherein the Prophet testifies that God laid vpon *himselfe* the whole weight of the peoples burthen; to comfort them in their calamities and anguishes. Not that he can any way be grieued: but hee attributes to himselfe humane passions by a figure much vsed.

God no way touched with humane affections.

Afterwards he manifests the effect of this care, namely, in that he alwaies saued them by his *Angell*, whom hee calles *the angell of his face:* because he was a witnesse of Gods presence; and as it were his herald to execute his commandements. To teach vs, that the Angels runne not before they bee sent, neither that they intrude themselues into this office of succoring vs, by any priuate motion of their owne. For the Lord vseth their seruices; and manifests his presence to vs by their meanes. The Angels can doe nothing of themselues, neither doe they yeeld vs any succour further forth then as the Lord sends them to bee the Ministers of our saluation: Heb. 1.14. Les vs not stay our thoughts vpon them then, seeing their office is only to lead vs directly vnto God.

The seruice of Angels.

If any had rather say that the liuely image of God, is here noted out by this *Angell*; who being the conducter and protector of the people, did therein openly manifest the face and presence of God as in a glasse; such a sense will not be amisse. And for my part I doubt not but that the office of *saving* ought to be attributed vnto Christ, who as we know, is the great Angell of the couenant, vnder whose leading, sauegard and protection the Church hath euer hitherunto been vpheld in safetie.

Mal. 3.1.

The cause from whence all benefits proceede.

In his loue he redeemed them.] The Prophet shewes what the cause is from whence these great benefits proceeded: namely, *Gods loue* and good pleasure. As *Moses* also teacheth, Deut. 4.37, and 7.7.8. Whence is it that God hath gathered thy fathers, saith hee, but because *he loued them*, and *did set his heart vpon them?* And thus he meant to dispossesse them of all opinion that they might conceiue touching any merit: for in themselues they were proud and arrogant and insulted more then they had cause. Now yee see the reason why he shewes, that Gods onelie free bounty was the cause of so many blessings.

In the next place *Isaiah* takes vp the similitude which *Moses* vsed in his song: namelie, that God *bare* his people, as an Egle; which teacheth her young ones to flie: Deut. 32.11. Vnlesse any had rather referre it vnto *sheepe*, as we haue noted, in Chap. 40.11. *He shall feed his flocke like a shepheard: hee shall gather the lambes with his arme, and carrie them in his bosome*, &c. And yet this similitude *of a mother* agrees very well: for shee not onely *beares* the child in her wombe: but also nurces it vp, till it be come to a competent age. 1 2 3

The sum is, that when the people were deliuered, it was not the first fauour that they receiued from God, but they had tasted so sufficiently thereof in the whole course of their liues, that it was to him only, to whom they were to ascribe all the benefits which had been bestowed vpon them.

For this cause the clause, *alvvaies continually*, is added: for the Lord is neuer wearie in doing good, neither contents he himselfe to manifest the tokens of his fauour to one age only: for he neuer ceaseth to inrich and adorne his Church with diuers and sundrie gifts.

God neuer wearie in doing good to his Church.

Vers. 10. *But they rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore hee was turned to be their enemie, and he fought against him.*

THe Prophet now descends to the second member, in which hee shewes that the Lord was *turned* to be ỹ aduersary of his children, because they rebelled, and turned back from him; as if the people (in a word) should thus haue obiected, God shewed many tokens of his louing kindnesse to our fathers for a long time together; wherfore taste we not of the same also? Is hee now of another mind. No, God forbid. But wee our selues by our disloyaltie, haue been reiected: yea, we haue thereby repelled and put backe his benefits from vs: Ier. 5.25. And yet the Prophet condemnes not onely the men of his age, but those also of the ages before. For we see that vnder the conduct of *Moses* himselfe, they rebelled and murmured against God, Exod. 17.2, Numb. 20.3. Hence it came, that God who tenderly loued them, as it is in vers. 7. became their enemie, by their owne rebellion. Are they punished for their iniquities then? let them thanke themselues for it. For the Lord is inclined to nothing more then to shew mercie, neither is any thing more acceptable vnto him, then to pursue vs with his fauours.

The preuention of an obiection.

Mich. 7.18.

Now he saith by a phrase of speech borrowed from men, that wee *vexe* the holie Ghost by our rebellion: to teach vs to haue sinne in the greater detestation; because it prouokes

prouokes the holy one of Israel to anger and indignation. And seeing it is one and the same Spirit, by which God workes our saluation, the Prophet aduertiseth vs that our sins doe estrange vs farre from God, by breaking the band of our coniunction. Vnto which tends Saint *Pauls* exhortation, Ephes 4.30. *Grieue not the holy Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed vnto the day of redemption.* From this text also we are to note, that we haue no cause to accuse those, by whom wee are molested and persecuted, because it is the Lord himselfe who fights against vs, and by their hand auengeth himselfe vpon our sinnes. Let vs rather accuse our sinnes, and condemne them: for thereby wee are exposed to all the miseries, vnder which we are pressed.

Vers. 11. *Then hee remembred the old time of Moses and his people, saying, Where is hee that brought them vp out of the sea, with the shepheard of his sheepe? Where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?*

Or, in the midst of whom.

The fruit of this chastisement.

THis is the end of the chastisement; namely, that the people might bee awakened out of their drowzinesse, and bee brought to thinke vpon the things they had forgotten before; because prosperitie so besots vs, that the remembrance of God is vtterly buried. These rods therefore serue to recall those thoughts which were abolished in vs; to wit, where is that God which in times past shewed so many mercies to our fathers? For I referre these things to the time past, and therefore haue translated, *from the daies of old*: for the word *age* agrees not in this place, seeing the Prophet mentions that time wherein *Moses* gouerned the people of God. The true sense therefore is, *that the Iewes being miserably oppressed, called to minde the ancient times, in which the Lord manifested his power for the preseruation of his people.*

Whereas some referre this vnto God, as if he had wrestled with their obstinacie, and had rather gratified the vngratefull, the leaue that worke imperfect, which hee had begun: this seemes harsh, and too far fetched. The Prophet rather recites the sighes and complaints of this poore people, after by chastisements they had learned how miserable a thing it is, not to bee vnder Gods protection.

By the *Shepheard*, he meanes *Moses*. Neither see I any reason why it should be translated in the plurall number, rather then in the singular. He also expresseth the means by which he guided the *sheepe*; namely, in that hee was indued with singular graces of the *holy Spirit*: for to *put his Spirit in the middest of him*, is as much to say, as to manifest the power of his Spirit.

Others had rather referre it vnto the people. Neither contradict I their opinion: but in regard that God had chosen and ordained *Moses* to be the conducter of his people, it is he principally of whom it is said, that *the holy Spirit was put vpon him*. Now this Spirit was giuen him for the good of the whole people, that he might be an excellent Minister of Gods grace, and might *set them at liberty*. And so by consequence, the power of the *Spirit* of God appeared in the *middest* of all the people.

Vers. 12. *Hee led them by the right hand of Moses with his owne glorious arme, diuiding the waters before them, to make himselfe an euerlasting name.*

He goes on in describing the peoples deliuerance out of Egypt.

HEe heere prosecutes that miraculous deliuerance of the people, who vnder the conduct of *Moses*, were brought out of Egypt, and also continues to recite the complaints: which might happily come into the minds of the faithfull. We see heere two things ioined together; to wit, *the right hand of Moses*, and *the glorious arme of the Lord*. Who so vseth *mans trauaile*, that *his praise and glory* ought at no hand to be lessened or darkened: for these things were so done vnder the conduct of *Moses*, that they ought wholly to be attributed to the power of God.

As at this day, when it is said, that the Ministers of the Gospell remit sinnes, (which yet belongs to God onely) doth this diminish ought from his authoritie and Maiestie? Truly no: for they are but instruments, who bestow their paines for God, to whom all the glory thereof must be attributed. Alas, what could the sillie *hand* of man haue done, if the *arme* of the Lord had not fortified it? 1.Cor.3.5.

For this cause in the end of the verse hee expressly addeth, that God at that time wrought after so admirable a maner, to *make himselfe an euerlasting name*: whereof, seeing it is vnlawfull to despoile him, so it shall bee no more lawfull to attribute the least part of praise vnto a mortall man.

Vers. 13. *Hee led them thorow the deepe, as an horse in the wilderneſſe, that they should not stumble.*

14. *As the beast goeth downe into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord gaue them rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thy selfe a glorious name.*

These verses are added as an amplification of the former.

THis is added to amplifie and set forth so great a benefit. He also ioinoines similitudes thereto, to expresse this so great and admirable a power of God; namely, *as the horse* in the desert, and as the *beast* in the plaine: that is to say, hee led his people as nicely, as one doth an horse vpon the downes. For the word *desert*, signifies not that desert of Paran, where the people were by the space of fortie yeeres: but according to the common phrase of the Hebrew tongue, it signifies the pastures where sheepe and heards of beasts walke at their pleasure. Which yet better appeares by the verse following, where in stead of desert, he names the *plaine*. And so one and the same sense flowes from them both, name-

lie, that the people walked ouer deepe pits *without stumbling*, as horses doe in the wilderneſſe.

In a word, his meaning is, to teach that the *red ſea* did no more let or hinder the people from paſſing ouer, through the middeſt of deepe places, then if they had walked vpon a *plaine* and leuelled ground.

In v. 12 he called his *name, euerlaſting*: and here he calles it *glorious*; but the ſenſe is one. The people then obiect againſt the Lord, that if hee once made himſelfe a glorious name; then he ought ſtill to haue the ſame care. Otherwiſe it will come to paſſe that the remembrance of the benefits, which hee in former time beſtowed vpon their fathers, would vaniſh quite away.

Verſ. 15. *Looke downe from heauen, and behold from the dwelling place of thine holineſſe, and of thy glorie. Where is thy zeale, and thy ſtrength, the multitude of thy mercies, and of thy compaſſions? They are reſtrained from me.*

The application of the whole.

HAuing mentioned the benefits of old in the name of all the people: now hee comes to apply the ſame vnto his purpoſe, and intreates the Lord that hee would looke downe from heauen vpon them.

Looke downe, &c.] By theſe words hee ſignifies that the power of God is not diminiſhed, though it appeare not at all times alike. For there muſt be an oppoſition ſupplied, namely, that God had then as it were hid himſelfe, neither ſhewed he himſelfe ſuch a one towards them, as hee had done towards their fathers. As if they had ſaid, *Albeit O Lord, that we ſee no tokens of thy preſence, but that thou haſt withdrawne thy ſelfe from vs, as if thou wert ſhut vp in heauen, ſo as thou ſeemeſt vtterly to neglect vs: yet vve beſeech thee vouchſafe to looke downe once againe from heauen, and from the dwelling place of thine holineſſe, behold our miſeries.* See how we ought to ſeparate the vnbeleeuers from the faithfull, who acknowledge God to bee both mightie and mercifull: yea euen then when they can diſcerne no ſignes at all, either of his power or bountie. And thus they ceaſe not *to call vpon him ſtill*, though he hides himſelfe farre away from them. For the Lord neuer ceaſeth to haue care ouer his people, ſeeing without wearineſſe, hee orders and gouernes all the parts of the world.

How to diſtinguiſh betweene vnbeleeuers and the faithfull.

Where is thy zeale?] By this interrogation it ſeemes the faithfull after a ſort vpbraid the Lord, in regard hee is no more touched with his *vvonted zeale* toward them; or that his power is diminiſhed. But the Prophet hath another meaning. For hee mentions theſe benefits, as I haue ſaid heretofore, becauſe he meant thereby to confirme the harts of the faithfull in good hope: thereby alſo teaching them that God is alwaies one and the ſame, and neuer puts off the bowels of compaſſion towards his Saints. And this will be euident enough by y which followes.

He takes the *multitude* of bowels and mercies, for the infinit goodneſſe of God: for he diſcouers and powres out his bowels as it were, in ſhewing himſelfe a liberall benefactor towards vs. And theſe ſaid fauours are ſo great, that wee cannot poſſiblie eſteeme nor value them as we ought. But it is no new thing to ſee the faithfull preſſed with griefe to powre out their complaints familiarly in the preſence of God, charging him that hee hath ſhut his bowels from them. I grant they retaine this principle, that God is alwaies mercifull; in regard his nature is vnchangeable: and howſoeuer they impute it to their ſinnes, that they feele him not ſuch a one to them, yet to preſerue themſelues from deſpaire they *expoſtulate vvith him*, how it can be that hee ſhould handle them ſo ſeuerelie. Yea, in ſhewing them nothing but the ſignes of his wrath, as if he had *forgotten himſelfe*.

The faithfull euer retaine this principle, namely, that God is alwaies mercifull.

Verſ. 16. *Doubtleſſe thou art our father: though Abraham be ignorant of vs, and Iſrael know vs not, yet thou O Lord, art our father, and our redeemer: thy name is for euer.*

THe Lord permits vs familiarly to powre out our hearts before him. For prayer is nothing elſe but a manifeſting of the heart in the preſence God; ſo as the beſt remedie we haue to releeue our cares and anguiſhes is to lay them vp in his boſome. Caſt thy burthen, ſaith *Dauid*, vpon the Lord, and he ſhall nouriſh thee: Pſalm. 55. 22. and 37. 5. The Prophet then hauing numbred vp Gods benefits towards the Iewes, whereby his power and goodneſſe was ſufficiently manifeſted; and yet that men by their ſinnes depriued themſelues from taſting the fruit thereof: he now comes to this point; namely, that Gods goodneſſe is ſo great, that it ouercoms mens ſtubbornneſſe.

A definition of prayer.

He calles him *father* in the name of the whole Church. For all cannot call him thus; becauſe it is a priuiledge that peculiarly belongs to the Church of God to call him *father* in his preſence. Thence we may gather, that Chriſt as the firſt borne, or rather as the onely ſonne of God, hath alwaies borne the chiefe ſway ouer the Church: for God cannot be called *father*, but by him. And againe, here wee ſee that the faithfull contend not with God: but onely draw arguments vnto themſelues from his *nature*, whereby to ouercome all temptations, and to ſettle their hearts in good hope.

The Churches priuiledge.

God hath neuer been called vpon as a father in the Church, otherwiſe than by Chriſt.

Though Abraham knovv vs not.] Some aske here why the people ſay that the Patriarke knew them not. S. *Jerome* thinks it was becauſe they were degenerate, and therefore were not worthie of ſo great an honour. But I take this expoſition to be ouer curious. The true ſenſe is, That albeit our forefathers diſauow vs, yet God ſtil holds vs for his children, and ſhewes himſelfe a father towards vs. Thoſe who ſay that *Abraham* and the reſt of

Queſt. Anſ. Saint Ierom.

the

the faithfull had caſt off all care, touching the affaires of this life, doe too ſubtilly wreſt the Prophets words to a wrong ſenſe. I ſpeak not of the thing in it ſelfe; but I ſay theſe words proue not that the Saints are altogether careleſſe of vs. The moſt natiue and pure ſenſe is this; Lord, we acknowledge that in regard thou art *our Father, it is a thing ſo firme and ſure, that albeit our fathers after the fleſh ſhould faile vs, yet vvilt thou neuer ceaſe to bee a father vnto vs*: Pſal. 27. 10. *So as all rights of nature ſhall ceaſe, rather then thou ſhouldeſt ceaſe to ſhew thy ſelfe a father vnto vs: or that thine holy adoption ſhould bee made void, ſeeing it is eſtabliſhed in thine immutable counſell, and ratified by the death of thine holy Sonne.*

The true ſenſe of this place.

And yet in the meane while we may hence gather, that the holy men ſo pray and preſent themſelues before God, that they looke not to the interceſſions of others: for praier is inioined them vpon this condition, that wholly reſting themſelues in the fatherly loue of God, they reiect all other confidences. But if our Prophet taught the Iewes not to direct their hearts toward *Abraham* and *Iacob* (who yet had receiued ſo many precious promiſes) to be heard of God: then is it certaine that we haue now no more cauſe to runne to S. *Peter*, to S. *Paul*, and the reſt, then to them. For this is not a priuate praier made by one or two, but publike, and appertaining to the whole Church in generall: as if the Prophet had heere ſet them downe a forme of praier. And queſtionleſſe our confidence ought ſo to be ſetled vpon Gods fauour and fatherly goodneſſe towards vs, that we ſhould ſhut our eies againſt all interceſſions of men, whether aliue or dead. In a word, the faithfull heere proteſt, that they gaze not heere nor there, but reſt themſelues in God alone.

Saints not to be praied vnto.

But ſome may aske now, why hee onelie names *Abraham* and *Iacob*, and makes no mention of *Iſaack*? The reaſon is, becauſe the couenant was more ſolemnly ratified with theſe two heere noted. I grant that *Iſaack* had no leſſe part therein then they; but yet hee neither receiued ſo full, nor ſo many promiſes.

Queſt.

Anſ.

Our Redeemer.] *Redemption* is heere expreſſed as a teſtimonie of this adoption: for by this experiment, God ſhewed himſelfe the *Father* of this people. And therefore the people pray vnto God, and with aſſurance call him Father, in regard he had manifeſted vnto them ſo admirable a ſigne of his fatherly good will, which gaue them incouragement to hope well. But *redemption* ſimply in it ſelfe, would not haue ſufficed, vnleſſe the promiſe had bin therewithall annexed. Euen as then hee did once redeeme them, ſo doth he promiſe to be their father for euer.

The clauſe, *from all time*, ſets forth the ſtedfaſtneſſe and ſtabilitie of Gods fatherly loue. For we haue not deſerued the name of children; but in regard that his will onely, by which hee hath once adopted vs for ſuch, is vnchangeable. Seeing the Lord then hath an *eternall name*, it thereupon followes, that the title and grace which is thereunto conioined and flowes from this eternitie, ſhall indure for euer.

Verſ. 17. *O Lord, why haſt thou made vs to erre from thy waies, and hardened our hearts from thy feare? Returne for thy ſeruants ſake, and for the Tribes of thine inheritance.*

Or, wherefore haſt thou turned.

BEcauſe theſe phraſes of ſpeech ſeeme harſh and tart; ſome thinke the vnfaithfull are here brought in murmuring againſt God, and blaſpheming him: for their malice turnes into rage, whē they haue loſt all hope. But the ſcope of the text croſſeth this conceit. For the Prophet ſhewes the fruit which ſhould proceed from theſe miſeries and calamities of the Iewes. How? Becauſe being humbled and brought low, they ſhould ceaſe either to be proud, or to pleaſe themſelues in their vices. They were aſhamed then that in times paſt they had *erred* ſo farre out of the right way, and acknowledge their owne offences. And to ſay the truth, *vvhen they attribute their ſinnes to the vvrath of God*, their meaning is not to exempt themſelues from blame, nor to aboliſh their faults.

But the Prophet vſeth a phraſe of ſpeech very ordinary. For the holy Ghoſt is wont to ſay, that *God cauſeth men to erre, hardens*, and giues men vp into a reprobate mind: 2. Theſ. 2. 11. Rom. 9. 18. and 1. 28. Now when the faithfull ſpeake thus, they meane nothing leſſe then to make God the author of euill, and of ſinne, as if themſelues were innocent; or as if they meant to extenuate their crime. But they aime at an higher marke, and *rather confeſſe thus their ſinnes haue ſeparated them from God, and is the cauſe vvhy they are left deſtitute of his holy Spirit. Yea, that thaner is come to paſſe*, that they haue been plunged into infinit miſeries.

Thoſe who ſay that God leades vs into error by priuation, that is to ſay, in regard he bereaues vs of his ſpirit, but not the very white. It is ſaid that God both hardens and blinds when he deliuers men vp to be blinded by Satan, who is the miniſter and executioner of his wrath, for otherwiſe we ſhould euer be a pray vnto the will of the diuell: but in regard he is able to doe nothing of himſelfe without Gods commandement, to whoſe beck he is ſubiect, we truely affirme, that God is the author of this blinding and hardening, which alſo the ſcriptures doe witnes in many places. And yet it followes not thereupon that he ſhould be the author of ſinne, becauſe he puniſheth mēs ingratitude by ſuch a blinding. And thus the faithfull in this verſe confeſſe that God hath left them, but their ſinne was the cauſe, ſo as they ſtill acknowledge Gods iuſt reuenging hand vpon them. In like maner after *Moſes* hath ſaid, *Thus thitherunto God had not giuē the people eies to ſee, nor an heart to vnderſtand, hee layes not the blame thereof vpon God, but ſhewes the Iewes where they were to ſeeke the remedie of ſuch a benummednes vvherof they vvere conuinced*, Deut. 29. 14. But theſe ſeeme to take another pretext heere, in that they aske a reaſon, and expoſtulate the matter

God the author of blinding & hardening, yet not the author of ſinne.

Anſ. with God, as if he had bin bound to haue handled them more mildly. But I anſwere, that the faithfull haue ſtill an eye to Gods goodnes, whileſt they confeſſe that their afflictions are the iuſt recompences of their ſinnes.

Some referre theſe words to the captiuitie, as if the faithfull complained of the Lord for ſuffring them to languiſh ſo long a time in the ſame. As if the Prophet ſhould ſay, That their obſtinacie increaſed, becauſe the Lord gaue them no taſte of his grace. For the faithfull are often ſurprized with a very dangerous temptation, when they ſee the wicked ouerflow in all abundance, and are almoſt diſcouraged, as *Dauid* hath well expreſſed it in Pſalm. 125. But the Prophets ſentence ſeemes to be more generall: for the faithfull acknowledge themſelues to haue *erred*, becauſe they were not guided by the Spirit of God: whereof they complaine not, but rather deſire that this ſpirit may bee giuen them, by which their fathers in former times were gouerned and obtained all things proſperouſlie.

Why haſt thou cauſed our hearts to turne from thy feare?] Some tranſlate, Wherefore haſt thou hardned? but becauſe this ſutes not with that which followes, *from thy feare*, I had rather tranſlate, To turne backe. And the verbe alſo ſignifies ſo much.

Some thinke theſe words, *returne for thy ſeruants ſake*, appertaine to all the people. As the Scripture indeede is wont to terme all the houſhold of faith by the name of *Gods ſeruants*. But I thinke it is properlyto be referred vnto *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Iacob*, which ſure lie is much more probable. Not that the people reſted in their intercеſſion, but in regard that God had made the couenant of grace with them, that they might deliuer it ouer from hand to hand vnto their ſucceſſors. Thus then the faithfull ſet not theſe Patriarkes before them as common perſons onely, but in the qualitie of Miniſters, witneſſes, or mediators of the couenant, with the foundation of their faith: as in that ſong *Lord, remember Dauid*. In which place, the name of this good Patriarke is not ſet before the Lord, as if the faithfull thought hee had been their aduocate; but in regard the promiſe, which was made vnto him touching the reſtauration of the eternall kingdome in his familie, did appertaine to the whole body of the people.

Pſal. 132. 1.

How Papiſts wreſt theſe words, to proue their interceſſion to Saints.

The Papiſts ſnatch vp theſe words with great ioy, as if by them the interceſſion of Saints were proued. But by the true expoſition of the place, we may plainly ſee how eaſie a matter it is to anſwer them. For it is ſpoken of the Fathers, not as if they deſerued ought at Gods hand of themſelues, or were now interceſſors betweene God and vs; but becauſe the free couenant, which not onely appertained vnto them, but alſo to all their ſucceſſors, was contracted onely with them.

To the Tribes.] That is to ſay; Returne to thy wonted fauour towards thy people. By this we ſee that the things aforeſaid, tend to no other end, but onely that the people doe labour, thereby to prouoke the Lord to mercie, after they haue laid before him their miſeries and calamities. Here then we ſee the maner how we are to addreſſe our ſelues vnto God; namely, by putting him in minde of his former benefits, and by manifeſting in his ſight our griefes and ſorrowes. Thus we muſt doe if we would obtaine deliuerance.

How wee muſt come to God.

Of thine heritage.] That is, becauſe God had choſen this people as his proper portion. As if hee ſhould ſay; What ſhall become of thy people if we periſh? Not that God was tied to this people, but in reſpect hee had giuen them his faith by oath. Thus the people durſt very well vrge God with his promiſe, and importune him by their praiers, in regard hee had voluntarily obliged himſelfe both vnto their fathers, and to their children.

But now, ſeeing all promiſes are ratified and confirmed in Chriſt, 2. Cor. 1. 20. and that we haue the truth of all things, wee ought to bee built vp in ſo much the greater confidence: for the couenant is not onely contracted in his hand, but it is alſo confirmed and ſealed with his blood. I grant he was the mediator as well for the fathers as for vs: but all things are now more cleere and manifeſt, in regard they then ſtucke in many obſcure ſhadowes.

Verſ. 18. *The people of thine holineſſe haue poſſeſſed it but a little while: for our aduerſaries haue troden downe thy ſanctuarie.*

IT is a wonder ỳ the Prophet ſaith ỳ people poſſeſſed the land *but for a very little ſpace*, ſeeing 863. yeres were expired ſince they began to poſſeſſe it, and 1400. yeeres and more ſince *Abraham* entred into the land of Canaan. But the promiſe muſt be conſidered, in which it was ſaid, that *Abrahams* poſteritie ſhould inioy the land, as an euerlaſting poſſeſſion: Gen. 17. 8. and 48. 4. This was *but a little while therefore*, if it be compared *vvith eternitie*. The people of God then obiect this ſhort time vnto him, not as accuſing him of breach of promiſe, but to put him in mind of his couenant, and that he ſhould rather haue reſpect to his owne goodneſſe, then to the chaſtiſements which they had iuſtly deſerued. And after this manner the ancient Church complaines, in Pſ. 102. 23, 24. that her ſtrength was abated in the way, & that her daies were ſhortened: and therefore praies, *that God vvould not cut her off in the midſt of her daies*, becauſe the fulneſſe of time depended vpon the comming of Chriſt.

Our aduerſaries.] This complaint was much more grieuous; namely, that the wicked prophaned that land, which God had conſecrated vnto himſelfe. And the truth is, this went neerer to their hearts, then all the reſt of their miſeries. And good reaſon: for we ought not ſo much to reſpect our ſelues, as Gods ſeruice and religion. And this is the end of deliuerance, to wit, that there might be a people which might praiſe and worſhip the Lord purely.

Verſ.

*Or, a long time.

Verſ. 19. *Wee haue been* * *as they ouer whom thou neuer bareſt rule, and vpon whom thy name was not called.*

THe Prophets ſenſe may admit two expoſitions. For ſome take this place as if the people obiected vnto God, that they were choſen when other nations were reiected, and that this couenant was ratified from the *time of old.* The other expoſition, which I rather follow, is this; that the people complaine and reply vnto God, that there is no difference betweene them and the heathen; in regard they had no ſuccour nor refreſhing at all in their aduerſities: which they hold to be an abſurd and an vncomely thing. This is a notable ſentence, and very worthy of memorie: for heere wee ſee it is lawfull for vs to powre out our complaints vnto God, when afflictions preſſe vs aboue meaſure; and to ſet our calling before him, to mooue him to ſuccour vs; thereby teſtifying what great difference hee makes betweene vs and ſtrangers.

Ouer whom thy name is not called vpon.] This comes all to one ſenſe. For the peoples meaning is, that Gods calling ought not to bee aboliſhed. And indeed it is not the Lords will that wee ſhould call vpon him in vaine: for praiers are vnprofitable, and vaniſh in the aire, vnleſſe the Lord haue reſpect vnto vs. Heere note alſo one marke of the Church; namely, that Gods *name* is there *called vpon.* The wicked cannot call vpon him, becauſe there is no acceſſe vnto him but by his word; of which, they haue no knowledge: and therefore faith is neuer ſeparate from praier. For where faith is, there is alſo praier: and if it be not there, let vs know for a ſuretie that there is no faith nor hope at all.

A note of the Church.

Faith bringeth forth praier.

Oh that thou wouldeſt breake the heauens, and come downe: and that the mountaines might melt at thy preſence!

Maſter Calum makes this part of the 19. verſe.

OH that thou wouldeſt breake!] The Hebrew particle, as I take it, comprehends a wiſh. For though it hath many ſignifications, yet the ſcope of the text ſhewes, that this agrees better to this place then any other. For the faithfull heere enter into a more ardent praier; as often it falles out when in the ſharpeſt afflictiõs, a ſet forme of words would want ſufficient vehemencie to expreſſe our deſires. He ſaith, that God *breakes the heauens,* when hee ſuddenly ſhewes ſome memorable and rare ſigne of his power. And the reaſon of this maner of ſpeech is not onely in regard that men being in great diſtreſſe, are wont to lift vp their eies to heauen, from whence they expect helpe; but becauſe miracles alſo make way for them, by breaking the ordinarie courſe of nature. Now it ſeemes that God is ſhut vp in heauen, whileſt hee neglects to ſuccour vs, and lets all things in the world to goe at ſix and ſeuen. For this cauſe then it is ſaid, that *he opens and breakes the heauens, when he giues vs ſome ſigne of his preſence, at ſuch a time as wee iudge him to be farre remote from vs.* But theſe things are ſpoken according to our naturall reaſon, as is alſo the clauſe, That thou wouldeſt *come downe:* for what neede is there that God ſhould change his place? Hee applies himſelfe thus to our weakeneſſe, that we might the better comprehend that which is ſaid to vs of him.

That the mountaines would melt.] That is to ſay; Oh, cauſe thy Maieſtie and glory to appeare in ſuch wiſe, as the elements being aſtoniſhed at the feeling thereof, might *bow,* to giue way vnto thee: as ſhall bee declared more at large by and by.

THE LXIIII. CHAPTER.

That which in our bookes is made the beginning of this 64. Chapter, is in the Commentarie annexed to the laſt verſe of the 63. Chapter, where you ſhall find it expounded.

Verſ. 2. *As the melting fire burned, as the fire cauſed the waters to boile (that thou mighteſt declare thy name to thy aduerſaries) the people did tremble at thy preſence.*

3. *When thou didſt terrible things which wee looked not for, thou cameſt downe, and the mountaines melted at thy preſence.*

A confirmation of the former wiſh in this and in the verſe following.

WEe may reade all this in the future tence, or in the ſubiunctiue. As if hee ſhould ſay; Lord, if thou wouldeſt come downe, the people would tremble at thy preſence, thine aduerſaries would forthwith melt away. But I thinke it to be more native, as I haue turned it: for it is very ſure that the Prophet alludes heere to *Mount Sinai,* Exod. 19. 20. where the Lord manifeſted himſelfe openly vnto the people. Hence alſo it appeares how vnaduiſedly this Chapter was diſtinguiſhed, ſeeing the contents thereof is recited for the confirmation of the former *wiſh,* which ſhould haue been placed in the beginning. We haue elſewhere ſeene, that when the Prophets mention the reliefes which God hath giuen to his people, they ſtill bring in teſtimonies concerning the deliuerance out of Egypt. And as oft as they ſpeake of this hiſtorie, they therewithall comprehend whatſoeuer benefits God beſtowed vpon his people: not onely when hee deliuered them from vnder *Pharaohs* tyrannie, and appeared vnto them in

Note.

Mount

mount Sinai: but that alſo, when by the ſpace of 40. yeeres he furniſhed them in the deſert with all things neceſſarie; who having ſubdued and waſted their enemies, did put them in quiet poſſeſſion of the land of Canaan. To bee ſhort, they comprehend all the teſtimonies, whereby in times paſt he ſhewed himſelfe gracious to his people; and terrible to their enemies.

The Prophet ſaith, that the *fire made the waters to boile:* in regard that contrarie to their wont, *fires* and lightnings, were mingled with violent raines and tempeſts. As if hee ſhould haue ſaid, This fire (kindled by the Lord) was ſo fierce, that it melted all things, were they neuer ſo hard; and drunke vp euen the very *waters*.

To this appertaines that which is added touching the *melting of the mountaines*, before his face. For hee opened a way for his redeemed, euen thorow the greateſt incumbrances that they met withall. Hee ſaith alſo, that the Iſraelites *ſaw things which they neuer looked for:* in regard, that albeit God had aduertiſed them, and had acquainted them with many experiments of his power; yet this terrible ſpectacle whereof, he ſpeakes, greatly ſurmounted their capacities and vnderſtandings, yea, and all the reaſon of man.

Verſ. 4. *For ſince the beginning of the world, they haue not heard, nor vnderſtand with the eare, neither hath the eie ſeene* another *God beſides thee, which doth ſo to him that waiteth for him.*

THis verſe confirmes that which wee haue ſaid before; namelie, that the faithfull deſire nothing here which is ſtrange and vnheard of: but only that God would but ſhew himſelfe ſuch a one towards them, as in times paſt he had done to their fathers; and that hee would continue foorth his liberalitie.

And withall, ſeeing it hath been his cuſtome to ſuccor his people, and to giue them ſome aſſured teſtimonies of his preſence; that he would not now diſcontinue the ſame for the time to come: that ſo his almightie power might ſtill ſhine more and more. For you muſt note, that he ſo brings in the people praying vnto God, that therewithall they ſhould confirme their hope from the remembrance of the time paſt, and with the more boldneſſe might haue their recourſe to the throne of grace.

The eie hath not ſeene.] Doubtleſſe the Prophets meaning is to magnifie Gods goodneſſe by mentioning theſe ſo many benefits, which God in former times had beſtowed vpon his people. This manner of commendation alſo, is very high and excellent: when being raviſhed with admiration in regard thereof, he cries out, that *there is no God but he.* Likewiſe, that the things which God hath done for his peoples ſake, were *neuer heard of before.*

But this may be read two waies; for the word *God* may be taken in the accuſatiue, or in the vocatiue: O Lord, *none but thou haſt ſeene the things which thou haſt done to thoſe that wait for thee.* But the other reading is more receiued; namely, *They haue neuer heard nor ſeene ſuch a God.* In this laſt reading the particle of ſimilitude muſt be ſupplied; for without that, the ſentence would bee imperfect. No eare then hath heard, neither hath the eie ſeene *ſuch* a God, as doth ſuch things. And thus God is here ſeparated from idols; from which the ſuperſtitious ſort thinke they obtaine all bleſſings: but they are onely the deuices of mans braine, which can neither doe good nor hurt. Contrariwiſe, God deales foorth his benefits of all ſorts liberallie to thoſe that ſerue him.

It ſeemes S. *Paul* expounds this place otherwiſe, 1. Cor. 2. 9. and applies it to another ſenſe. Yea, he cites it in other termes: becauſe hee followed the Greeke tranſlation. The Apoſtles made no ſcruple touching this point, in regard they rather reſpected the ſentences then the words: and thought it ſufficient only to point out this place of Scripture vnto the reader; whither they might reſort to be ſatisfied touching the things which they taught. But where S. *Paul* ſeemes to haue added of his owne, Neither hath it entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them which loue him: this he did, that his ſpeech might be the better vnderſtood. For nothing is added which agrees not very well with the Prophets doctrine. And that wee may the better perceiue this agreement, wee muſt conſider his drift. In that place hee diſputes about the doctrine of the Goſpell, which hee ſhewes doth farre ſurpaſſe all the reach of mans wit. Why ſo? Becauſe it containes ſuch a knowledge, as is contrarie, and wonderfullie farre remote from the wiſdome of the fleſh. In a word, that it is an hidden wiſdome. For which cauſe S. *Paul* worthilie breakes foorth into this *admiration* in weighing and pondering of the ſame. And our Prophet calling to mind theſe rare and famous works of God, as one aſtoniſhed cries out; that there *was neuer ſuch a thing heard of.* So concerning this grace which ſurmounts all the reſt, namely, when Chriſt is offered vs in the Goſpell, we may breake foorth after the ſame manner, and ſay, *O Lord, the mercie which thou ſhewweſt vnto thy people, farre ſurmounts all our reaſon. Neither eie, eare, hart, nor ſpirit,* can attaine to ſuch an height. S. *Paul* then you ſee applies this place fitlie to his diſputation: neither doth he corrupt the Prophets ſentence, when he exalts aboue all things in the world that excellent and peculiar grace which God hath beſtowed vpon his Church.

Obiect.

Anſ.

S. Pauls drift in alleaging this text 1. Cor. 2. 9.

Obiect.

Anſ.

There yet remaines another difficultie, namely, that the Apoſtle transferres that to ſpirituall benefits; which is here ſaid of temporall. But we may affirme, that *Iſaiah* ſimplie reſpected the cauſe from whence theſe benefits of God iſſued, though hee therewithall had an eie to the eſtate of this life preſent. For all the good things which God hath giuen vs here below for the ſuſtaining and

and cheriſhing of our naturall life, are ſo many teſtimonies vnto vs of that fatherly loue which he beares vs. And it is alſo the propertie of faith to aſcend by viſible benefits, to inuiſible graces. Thus then howſoeuer the Prophet ſeemes to meddle onely in matters touching their bodily deliuerance, and other things appertaining to this life preſent: yet aimes he therein at an higher marke, and eſpecially reſpects thoſe benefits which in particular manner belonged to the people of God. For what a ſottiſhneſſe were it, if whileſt we inioy benefits temporall, wee ſhould not by them mount vp to the welſpring from which they flow; namely, from Gods meere loue and mercie? Both good and bad doe indifferently inioy theſe common good things: but that particular fauour wherewith he entertaines vs, appertaines to none but to his houſhold ſeruants. Hence it is that wee not onely conſider that which appeares to our outward ſenſes, but wee forthwith aſcend vp to the very cauſe. Vnto which point, though neither *eye*, nor *eare* can reach; that is, to comprehend therein the grace of adoption, by which the Lord proteſts that hee will be our Father; yet hee reueales this vnto vs by the witnes of his *holy Spirit*.

The propertie of faith.

The inioying of temporall benefits, ſhould carrie vp our minds to the meditation of thoſe that are eternall.

It is alſo very likely that the Prophet hauing ſpoken of a particular benefit of God, takes occaſion thereby to ariſe vnto a generall conſideration. For when the matter concernes the meditation of Gods workes, the faithfull are wont to aſcend from one kind of them, to the conſideration of the whole in generall. And therefore this onely example of ſo wonderfull a goodneſſe of God, might well rauiſh the Prophets mind ſo high, that in his meditatations he conſidered of this infinite abundance of bleſſings laid vp in heauen for the faithfull. Yea, we manifeſtly perceiue that this honourable commendation comprehends vnder it the free couenant, by which the Lord adopted vnto himſelfe *Abrahams* poſteritie, into the hope of eternall life. The ſumme of all comes to this; that ſeeing the goodneſſe and power of God is ſo great, we ought not to diſtruſt him; but our confidence ought ſo to be ſetled thereupon, that we ſhould aſſuredly relie vpon his helpe. And to this belongs theſe excellent benefites which the Prophet heere mentions.

The ſumme of this verſe.

Verſ. 5. *Thou didſt meete him that reioiced in thee, and did iuſtly: they remembred thee in thy waies: behold, thou art angry, *for wee haue ſinned, yet in them is continuance, and wee ſhall bee ſaued.*

*Or, and.

HE proſecutes the ſame argument. For the people bewailes their miſerable condition, in regard they felt no reliefe nor eaſe in their aduerſitie; though God was wont to be ſo good vnto their forefathers. The faithfull then ſpeake vnto God on this ſort; *Thou wert woont to meete our fathers, but thy fauour is now turned away from vs: and it ſeemes thou wilt be no more appeaſed, ſeeing wee gaine nothing by calling vpon thee. For vvhence comes thy aduerſitie, but from this; that as if thou vvert now become changeable, thou ſheweſt thy ſelfe otherwiſe to vs, then thou diddeſt to our fathers in times paſt?*

In this and in the verſe following, the Iewes bewaile their miſeries.

In the next place they confeſſe they were *iuſtly chaſtiſed*, becauſe *they had ſinned*. I haue heretofore ſhewed, that there is nothing better for vs in afflictions, then to remember Gods benefits: and not onely thoſe whereof we haue had experience, but thoſe alſo which are recorded in the Scriptures. For we can not be fenced with a buckler that is more thick nor large then it, againſt all kind of temptations.

The beſt fence againſt afflictions.

Thoſe who thinke theſe words, *him that reioyced, and did iuſtly*, ſhould be read together, as if he ſhould ſay, Thou diddeſt meete them which ſerued thee willinglie, and delighted in well doing; doe ill expound this verſe, as I thinke. I rather thinke that by the *reioycers* thoſe are vnderſtood who are ioyfull in proſperitie, in regard the people were then in ſorrow and heauines. For there is a cloſe oppoſition, thus, Thou wert wont in times paſt to *meete* our fathers, before they were preſſed with any griefe, and diddeſt *giue them as thy comming*: but *now* thou art farre off, and ſuffreſt vs to languiſh with griefe and diſcontentment. To this belongs that which is added, That they *remembred* God, becauſe they enioyed his preſent grace, and felt him both the author and vpholder of their ſaluation. Thus *by the vvaies of God*, he vnderſtands all proſperitie: be it that he was more neere vnto them by handling them tenderly, and cockering of them as his children: or in regard that he naturallie is inclined to doe good. But becauſe he hath ſaid that God was wont to meet him that did iuſtly, the *remembrance* may be referred *to the loue of pietie*. To wit, that they gaue themſelues carefullie to the ſeruice of God: in which ſenſe, theſe words are the expoſition of the former member, which is a thing vſuall with the Prophets, who are wont to confirme their ſpeeches with many words.

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To *remember God*, ſignifies, to be ſo ſweetly allured with thinking on him, that we wiſh for nothing beſides, and place our whole felicitie in him. For there is nothing which more reioyceth vs, then the *remembrance* of his mercie: as on the contrarie, if we feele him angrie, then the remembrance of his name is terrible vnto vs.

And vve haue ſinned.] The Prophet renders a reaſon of that aboue ſaid, for they murmur not againſt God becauſe they felt him otherwiſe to them then he was towards their fathers, but they lay the whole blame vpon themſelues. Hence let vs learne, neuer to thinke of the afflictions wherewith the Lord viſits vs, vnleſſe therwithall we call our ſinnes to remembrance, that ſo wee may both acknowledge our faults, as alſo confeſſe that we are iuſtly chaſtiſed.

The word *perpetuall* may either be referred to *ſinnes*, or to the *vvaies* of the Lord. To *ſinnes* thus: Although we haue bin obſtinate in our ſinnes, and worthie to be an hundred times condemned;

condemned, yet hitherunto we haue bin ſaued through thy mercie. If we referre it to the *waies* of God, he renders the reaſon wherefore the people were not conſumed, to wit, in regard the waies of the Lord are firme and perpetuall, and becauſe there is no end of his mercie. And this ſenſe I thinke agrees beſt to this place.

Some ſupplie, that perpetuitie was founded in the waies of the Lord. But I had rather take the words ſimplie as they ſound, as *Dauid* in the 30. Pſalme ſaith, That the Lords anger indures only for a night, but he is appeaſed, and ſhewes mercie for euer: for he is not prouoked nor violently carried away with anger, as men are; but hee continues conſtant and ſtedfaſt in his fauour and in well-doing.

But yet we haue not attained the Prophets full meaning: for he ſaith, that the people are *ſaued*, who in the meane while were led into captiuitie, as into a ſepulchre, wherein they bewailed their miſerie. And therefore I take the time paſt for the future tence; to wit, *we ſhall be ſaued*, for, Wee haue bin ſaued: for it is rather a wiſh or praier, then an affirmation. The faithful then boaſt not of that they haue obtained, but rather in complaining of their pouertie, they haue their recourſe to Gods perpetuall mercies. They extoll that then which they deſire, and not that which they had already attained.

Verſ. 6. *But wee haue all been as an vncleane thing, and all our righteouſnes* is *as filthie clouts, and we all doe fade like a leafe, and our iniquities like the wind haue taken vs away.*

THe faithfull continue their complaint. For they lament their miſerable eſtate becauſe God regarded them not. Moreouer, the Hebrewes agree not about the expoſition of theſe words, *filthie cloutes* Notwithſtanding it is certaine, that they ſignifie a baſe and vile thing of no price. Yea, ſuch a thing, which in regard of the lothſomneſſe thereof, ſtinkes in mens noſtrils.

1 2 But two things are here to be noted, firſt, that the faithfull confeſſe they haue offended, and are iuſtly puniſhed: Secondly, that they ceaſe not to complaine touching the weight of the blowes which they receiued. Not by way of pleading againſt God; but to mooue him vnto compaſſion. As when a malefactor would endeuour to pacifie his Iudge, he laies foorth all his miſeries and calamities before him. Simile.

Many vexe and wearie themſelues here, becauſe the Prophet ſpeaking of the filthineſſe of ſinnes; comprehends all the Iewes without exception: though there were among them many of the true ſeruants of God. But they haue no reaſon ſo to doe, for he ſpeakes not here of euery one in particular, but of the whole bodie in generall, which hee compares to *filthie cloutes*; in regard it was trampled vnder feete, and extreamelie afflicted.

Some haue been wont to alleage this place to proue that it is ſo farre off from meriting any thing by our workes; that euen our works themſelues are infected and lothſome before God. But this ſeemes, as I thinke, to be farre from the Prophets intention; ſeeing he ſpeakes not here of all mankind in generall; but deſcribes their complaints, who being led captiues, felt Gods wrath heauie vpon them. For which cauſe, they confeſſed, that both themſelues, and their righteouſneſſes, were like *filthie cloutes*. Firſt of all then, he exhorts them to confeſſe their ſinne, and to acknowledge their offence: ſecondlie, to aske pardon. And that the meanes how to obtaine the ſame is, firſt, to acknowledge our miſerable and wofull condition: and therewithall to confeſſe that wee therein receiue the iuſt recompence of our offences. 1 2

Wee all fade. This is a very apt compariſon: which ſhewes that men *wither* and wanze away as ſoone as they feele Gods wrath. Which point is notablie deſcribed in Pſalm. 90. 5. and 103. 15. and in chap. 40. 6. We are rightly compared to *leaues* then; becauſe our *iniquities* are the *winds* which *carrie vs away.*

Verſ. 7. *And there is none that calleth vpon thy name, neither that ſtirreth vp himſelfe to take hold of thee: for thou haſt hid thy ſelfe from vs, and haſt conſumed vs becauſe of our ſinnes.*

THe Prophet confirmes that which was ſaid before. For hee admoniſheth the faithfull to acknowledge that they are worthie of ſuch a reuenging hand of God, how ſharpe and ſeuere ſoeuer it ſeemed. Now he mentions ſome *capitall ſinnes*. And becauſe it had bin too long to haue ſtood deciphering them out one by one, he ſtrikes at the roote it ſelfe, and ſaith, that *Gods ſeruice was contemned.* A confirmation of the former ſentence.

Vnder the word *Inuocation*, hee comprehends the whole ſeruice of God, according to the vſuall phraſe of the Scriptures. For the principall part thereof is, that wee *call vpon God*; thereby teſtifying that our whole truſt is in him. It is very certaine that *prayers* and *vowes* were alwaies in vſe among the Iewes: but becauſe they wanted the affection of the hart; and that it was farre remote from God; therefore he eſteemed none of theſe fained deuotions. Which hee yet better explaines in the particle following; where it is ſaid, that *none ſtirred vp himſelfe* to ſeeke God. But all of them vaniſhed away, and fell to nothing through their owne ſlothfulneſſe.

Firſt hee ſhewes that the thing we ought chiefflie to deſire is, that we may be fully conioyned with God. For when we are eſtranged from him, it muſt needes follow of neceſſitie, that all things ſhould turne to our deſtruction and woe. Now by nature wee are exceeding idle and ſlothfull: for which cauſe we haue need to be quickned vp with the ſpurre. Seeing then that we take pleaſure

ſure in our careleſneſſe; it ſtands vs in hand to hearken aduiſedly to the Prophets counſell, leſt wee become vtterly ſenſeleſſe. Otherwiſe it will come to paſſe in the ende, that the Lord for his part will diſdaine and reiect vs. For the Prophet deſcribes the miſerable eſtate of this people, who had *no deſire* at all to *take hold vpon God:* neither was there any meanes left to awaken them vp to a ſincere deſire of godlineſſe.

And haſt conſumed vs.] They complaine againe that they were ouerwhelmed with the weight of their miſeries, without being any thing at all relieued or eaſed by God. For *Iſaiah propounds theſe things, in the name of the whole people: and intreates the Lord not to ſuffer them to languiſh any longer vnder ſo great calamities.*

Verſ. 8. *But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay,* * *and thou art our* *potter; and we all are the worke of thine hands.*

* Or, thou art, &c.
* Or, former.

After the laying foorth of their miſeries, they crie for pardon in this, and in the verſe following.

AFter they haue bewailed their miſeries, with which they were almoſt ouerwhelmed; now in plainer termes they deſire the Lord to pardon and eaſe them of their ſmart, and withall doe more boldly profeſſe themſelues now to bee his children notwithſtanding. For it was adoption onely that could raiſe vp their hearts vnto a liuely hope: ſo as notwithſtanding the burthen of afflictions wherewith they were preſſed downe, yet they ceaſed not for all that to reſt vpon God as vpon a *father.* This order ought to be well obſerued: for to attaine to a ſound and ſincere humilitie of heart, it is needfull that wee be deiected and laid on all foure, as they ſay. But if deſpaire enſue, let vs haſten to this conſolation: for ſeeing God hath vouchſafed to *chuſe vs for his children,* it is our parts to hope that he will ſaue vs, euen then when things ſhall ſeeme moſt deſperate and confuſed. Thus then, in regard of the free couenant, the Iſraelites proteſt they are Gods children, that they might feele his fatherly good will towards them in ſuch wiſe, that his promiſes might not be in vaine.

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By way of compariſon they amplifie and ſet forth Gods grace, in confeſſing that they were formed of the *clay,* for they ſeeke for no excellent matter in themſelues: only in their originall they extoll Gods mercie, who of *mire and clay,* hath bin pleaſed to create them his children. In the ſecond member, where God is called their *former,* and the people the *worke* of his hands, it comes all to one ſenſe, for they whollie attribute vnto God their *being,* and the author of all they had. And this is a right acknowledgment: for God is robbed of his due honor whileſt men glorie in themſelues, be it neuer ſo little. But *Iſaiah* ſpeakes not heere of the common *creation* of men, but of their *regeneration,* for which reſpect the faithfull are in particular called the workemanſhip of God, Chap. 17. 7. and 19. 25. and 22. 11. and 27. 11. and 37. 26. and 43. 1. 15. Epheſ. 2. 10. They heere acknowledge then a ſingular fauour that God hath done them, firſt, in electing them for his people, and then in inriching them with ſo many and excellent benefits.

God is robbed of his glory, whileſt men glorie in themſelues.

Verſ. 9. *Be not angrie O Lord aboue meaſure, neither remember iniquitie for euer: loe, we beſeech thee, behold, we are all thy people.*

THe people pray that God would mitigate both his *wrath* and their *afflictions.* Not that God euer *exceeds meaſure,* but in regard they ſhould be vtterly ouerwhelmed if he would ſtand to examine thé to the vtmoſt. They pray then that their paines may be moderated. As *Ieremiah* ſaith, Correct me ô Lord, *but in iudgement,* that is to ſay *in meaſure,* Ier. 10. 24. For he oppoſeth *iudgement* to *wrath,* as in 2. Sam. 7. 14. it is ſaid ỳ he chaſtiſeth vs with the *rods of men,* becauſe he wil not come againſt vs himſelfe to vtter all his force in puniſhing vs, leſt we ſhuld be forthwith ground to powder.

The Iewes pray not ſimplie againſt afflictions.

But it is worth the noting, that they do not ſimply deſire to be freed from Gods iudging of them, but ſo offer themſelues to be chaſtiſed, that the blowes may not daſh them to pieces. And this is the cauſe why they deſire that *the memorie of their iniquities may be blotted out:* for if God ſhould not ſhew thé mercie this way, there ſhould be no end of their miſeries.

Behold we are thy people.

The Prophet repeates that which he had ſaid before in verſ. 8. namely, that God had choſen *Abrahams* poſteritie. For the beſt aſſurance they had to obtaine pardon, was, that God being true of his promiſes, could not reiect thoſe whom he had once adopted. In ſpeaking of *all,* he meanes not euery one in particular, but comprehends the whole body of the Church. And howſoeuer the greateſt part of them were cut off by their wicked reuolt, yet this was true, that the Iewes were Gods peculiar people. Neither was this *prayer* made for all indifferentlie, but only for the little flock of the faithfull. Now the people ſet not forth their merits before God, but flee to his *free couenant* by which they were *adopted.* For this indeed is the ſure and only recourſe the faithfull haue: this I ſay is a remedie againſt all miſchiefes, and that is the reaſon why *Moſes* and all the Prophets doe ſo often repeate the ſame, Deut. 32. 13.

Verſ. 10. *Thine holy cities lie waſt: Sion is a wildernes,* and *Ieruſalem a deſert.*

The Church recounts her miſerie againe in this, and in the verſe following.

THe Church here againe recounts her miſeries, that ſhe might thereby bow the Lord to compaſſion and forgiuenes. She ſaith, the *Cities* were waſted; and for an amplification ſhe addes, that *Zion* is become a wildernes; for it was the ſeate royall in which God would be called vpon. Then he addes *Ieruſalem,* wherein Zion was. For it ſeemed ſtrange that the Citie which God had conſecrated to himſelfe, ſhould be laid on heapes and waſted by the enemie.

The Prophet calles them Cities of *holines,* in reſpect that as God had ſanctified the people, ſo was it his will that the *Cities,* yea the whole countrie, ſhuld be *conſecrated* vnto him. Seeing the *Cities* then were dedicated vnto

God, they were rightly called *holy*, because God raigned therein, and was called vpon in them. And thus we may call those Cities of holinesse, in which God is purely worshipped, hauing abandoned all superstitions.

What Cities deserue to be called Gods holinesse.

Vers. 11. *The house of our sanctuarie and of our glory, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt vp with fire, and all our pleasant things are wasted.*

THe *sanctuarie* is otherwise attributed to the people, then to God. For it being a pledge of that holy vnion betweene God and the people, it is often called the *house of God*, because it answered to his holinesse. Heere the faithfull call it *their sanctuarie*, in regard they were thence to draw their sanctitie: which they yet confirme more apparantly by the word *glory*. For they confesse they had *nothing to glory in but the Temple*, wherein God was pleased to bee worshipped and serued.

And yet we see that *this their reioicing*, was often vaine; in so much that *Ieremiah* reproues them for it, saying; Trust not in lying words; to wit, *The Temple of the Lord*, The Temple of the Lord: Ier. 7. 4. But as the boasting of such as made faire shewes, and grew insolent, in regard of some titles was vaine: so on the contrary, they reioiced rightly, who honoured Gods ordinance, & laid it vp in their hearts; and also resting vpon the testimonie of the word, were assured to dwell vnder his protection, who had chosen out a perpetuall habitation for himselfe in the middest of them. For the Temple was built by the commandement of God; so as the Iewes might well boast that they had God for the vpholder of their saluation.

But because his seruice was then marred and corrupted, and that all in a manner ran riot after superstitions and impietie, the Prophet mentions the *time past*, and not the time present. As if he should say; *Albeit we haue not yeelded thee that obedience which we ought to haue done, yet behold it is thy Temple still, wherein our fathers serued thee purely: and wilt thou suffer it to be prophaned, and to lie waste? Will not this reproch redound to thine owne dishonor, seeing this building was erected for thy worshippe?* The Iewes plead not their merits heere, neither dawbe they ouer their sinnes; no, they rather confesse and lay them open; onely they put God in minde of his seruice, that *in remembring his holy couenant*, hee would not permit his promises to bee fruitlesse. And all the faithfull ought to imitate this their example.

The verbe *To praise*, is taken to giue thanks: as if he should say; In this Temple, the lamentable ruine whereof breakes the hearts of the faithfull in sunder, in times past thy praises were wont to sound, when thou diddest entertaine thy people there, in thy mercy and compassion.

Vers. 12. *Wilt thou hold thy selfe still at these things, O Lord? Wilt thou hold thy peace* and *afflict vs aboue measure?*

THe people fortifie themselues in vndoubted hope, that God will not suffer his glorie to be thus trampled vnder foote, though he be prouoked to wrath by mens infinite offences. Hypocrites reape no consolation at all by this, but these things indeed belong onely to such as are touched with a true sense of Gods mercy. Such conclude, and are certainly perswaded, that howsoeuer death doth menace them; yet God hauing regard to his owne glory, will at the least bee mercifull to some; that so the whole seed perish not.

Wilt thou afflict vs?] *Isaiah* shewes that God cannot forget his mercie. Why so? Because he cannot deny himselfe: for his *glory* is ioined with our *saluation*. And this is a thing diligently to be noted: or hauing spoken before of Gods *glory*, now he addes, *wilt thou afflict vs aboue measure?* The Lord then will *moderate his corrections; for his glory requires it*, that wee bee deliuered from death: which glory he can in no wise neglect. Let vs then take vp this praier, as oft as our enemies inuade vs: not after the manner of hypocrites, who make a great craking of Gods glory, whereof they haue neither taste nor feeling. But let vs come vnto it with faith and repentance, that so wee may truly reape the fruit of this glory.

Gods glory ioined with our saluatiõ.

Vs.

THE LXV. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *I haue been sought of them that asked not, I was found of them that sought me not: I said; Behold me, behold me, vnto a nation that called not vpon my name.*

In this verse the Prophet turnes from the Iewes to the Gentiles.

NOw the Prophet passeth ouer to the handling of another point of doctrine. For he shewes that God hath iust cause to reiect and cast off the Iewes, because neither admonitions, nor threatnings would serue the turn to reclaime them from their errors, nor to bring them againe into the right way. But to the end they should not imagin that the couenant of the Lord should therefore be broken; he addes, that *another people*, which then were of *none account*, *should come to him*; and that his name should bee honoured and magnified in the places where he was *vnknowne* before. The Iewes thought this very strange, and iudged thereof altogether contrary to that couenant which God had contracted with *Abraham*, namely,

namely, that such a grace should be communicated to any other nation, then to his posteritie. But the Prophet meant to plucke this vaine confidence away from them, to the end they should not imagin that God was onely tied to the posteritie of *Abraham*. For the Lord bound not himselfe vnto them, but vpon a certaine condition: which if they happened to breake, they were to be held as traitors and disloiall; and so by consequence, depriued of the fruit of this couenant. Besides, the couenant was not onely made with *Abraham* and with his posteritie, according *to the flesh*, but also with all such as should bee ingrafted into the familie of this Patriarke by faith. But it shall be more conuenient for vs to beginne at the second verse, that so wee may the better vnderstand the Prophets meaning: for there the cause of this reiection is expressed.

Vers. 2. *I haue spread out mine hands all the day vnto a rebellious people, which walked in a way that was not good,* euen *after their owne imaginations.*

Heere hee shewes the reason of their reiection.

HEre hee accuseth the Iewes, and complaines of their ingratitude and rebellion; wherein he shewes that they haue no occasion giuen them to affirme, that the Lord offered them any wrong, if he made others partakers of the same grace with them. The Iewes proudly insulted against God, as if their merits had been the cause of their election. But for this their insolencie and vnthankfulnesse the Lord reiects them as vnworthie: and vpbraides them, that hee hath *but lost all his time, in stretching foorth his hand vnto them, to draw and vnite them to himselfe.* For by *stretching foorth of the hands*, he signifies a dailie summoning of them. Now the Lord is said *to stretch foorth his hand* diuers waies. For hee drawes vs to him either by his workes, or word: but he principallie respects the latter in this place. The Lord neuer speakes vnto vs, but hee therewithall stretcheth foorth his hand to vnite vs vnto himselfe, and causeth vs to feele that hee is neere vnto vs. Yea, he so manifests his fatherly loue, & so willingly accepts of vs, that if we yeeld not obedience vnto his voice, we ought iustly to impute the same to our owne frowardnes. Moreouer, the clause, *all the day long*, aggrauates the fault greatly, namely, that God ceased not for the space of many yeeres together, to send his Prophets one after another: yea, as it is said in Ier. 7.13. and 35.14. He *rose early*, and stinted not his care and paines vntill the *euening*.

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First, hee calles them *rebellious*, or disobedient. Next, he shewes what this rebellion was; to wit, the people walked after their *owne imaginations*: for nothing is more displeasing vnto God, then when men are giuen to follow their owne reason: which he will haue vs to renounce, that wee may be fit to comprehend the true doctrine. The Lord heere protests then that he was not to be blamed, for not vpholding the peoples good estate, and that he fauoured them not as he was wont: but that themselues, through their folly, had reuolted, and loued rather to sticke to their owne inuentions, then to follow him.

Nothing displeaseth God more then when wee follow our owne inuentions.

Now hauing spoken of this *reiection*, it remaines that wee come to touch the *calling of the Gentiles*, who succeeded in the roome of the Iewes: for it is not to be doubted but hee speakes thereof in the first place. Now the Lord had long before prophecied of this by *Moses*; so as this was not to seeme any new thing. As they haue prouoked me, saith the Lord, to ielousie, with that which is no God, and haue stirred me vp to wrath by their vanities; so also will I moue them to ielosie by that which is no God, and will prouoke them by *a foolish nation*: Deut. 32.21. In a word, the Prophet now pronounceth the same threatning which Christ thundered forth afterwards, Matth. 21.43. when the time of their blinding drew neere; *The kingdome of God*, saith he, *shall be taken from you, and shall be giuen to a nation that will bring forth the fruits of it.*

The calling of the Gentiles.

Where hee saith in the former verse, that God manifested himselfe to them *that asked not after him*; it is to shew, that the Gentiles were preuented with this grace of God, without giuing him any occasion to receiue them into fauour, either by merit, or yet by any worthinesse at all of theirs. Which manifestly agrees with that place which we haue alleaged out of Deut. 32. where *Moses* calles them *a foolish nation*. Wherefore vnder this generall title, he makes it apparant what men are, before the Lord hath preuented them by his free grace: for they neither *call vpon him, seeke him, no nor so much as thinke vpon him*. This place then ought to bee well noted, to establish the certaintie of our vocation, which is as it were the key which opens vs the doore into Gods kingdome. By this our consciences are quieted and appeased, which otherwise would alwaies hang in doubt, and be in perplexities, were they not vpheld by such testimonies. Wee see then that this was not written at a venture, nor vpon some sudden motion, namely, that wee are called the people of God, and are so accounted, because it was thus foretold long since by many prophecies.

The key that opens vs the doore into Christs kingdome.

Our vocatiō long since prophecied of.

S. *Paul* from this place ingeniouslie disputes to prooue the calling of the Gentiles: and saith, that *Isaiah cries*, and boldly pronounceth, that the Gentiles were called by the Lord, Rom. 10.20. How so? Because our Prophet expressed more here then the circumstance of his times would permit. Thus then by this text we perceiue that wee were called by an eternall decree of God, long before the thing it selfe came to passe.

In that he twice repeates, *Behold me, behold me*: he further confirmes that God will manifest himselfe so familiarlie vnto strange and prophane nations, that they shall be well assured of his dwelling in the middest of them. And questionlesse it was needfull that this so vnlooked for a change should be thus effectuallie confirmed, because it was verie hard to be credited. Although euen in this noueltie; the Prophet meant to magnifie Gods

The ſumme of this text.

vnexpected grace. The ſumme is, that after God ſhall be offered to the Gentiles, and that they ſhall bee receiued into the holy race of *Abraham*: then there ſhall bee a Church in the world, out of which the Iewes ſhall be expelled. Now wee ſee that all theſe things which our Prophet here mentions, were accompliſhed by the Goſpell, wherein the Lord truely manifeſted and offred himſelfe vnto ſtrange nations. As oft then as this voice of the Goſpell ſounds in our eares: or as oft as we reade theſe holy propheſies, let vs know that the Lord is *neere*, and offers himſelfe; that being familiarly knowne wee may with boldneſſe and aſſurance call vpon him.

Vſe.

Verſ. 3. *A people that prouoked mee euer vnto my face: that ſacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incenſe vpon brickes.*

The fruit that came from walking after their owne imaginations, in this and the next verſe.

HE ſhewes and proſecuteth more at large, in what things the Iewes rebelled againſt God: namely, that hauing forſaken his commandement, they defiled themſelues with ſundrie ſuperſtitions. Heretofore he had ſaid that the Iewes had reuolted from God, in regard they wandred after their owne inuentions. Now he ſets forth the fruit of this their wandring: namely, that hauing giuen their thoughts free ſcope, they ouerthrew the pure worſhip of God. And this indeede is the fountaine, from whence al ſuperſtitions proceede: euen when men pleaſe themſelues in their inuentions, chuſing rather to bee wiſe in their owne eies, then to reſtraine their ſenſes within the liſts of Gods law. It is but in vaine then that the ſuperſtitious alleage their deuotions and good intentions, as they call them: for God ſo abhorres and deteſts them, ỹ thoſe who reſt therin are tainted of high treaſon, and are guiltie of the breach of Gods couenant; becauſe we ought to enterpriſe nothing of our owne braine: but to yeeld our obedience to Gods commandement. In a word, the beginning and perfection of his pure ſeruice conſiſts in teachableneſſe.

The ſpring of all ſuperſtitions.

By the verb *to prouoke*, *Iſaiah* ſets foorth the iupudencie of the people, who prouoked the Lord of ſet purpoſe: neither had they any ſuch reuerence of his Maieſtie, as to ſubiect themſelues vnder his gouernement. And this he further amplifies, in adding *vnto my face*. For ſeeing thoſe that are admoniſhed by the word haue him preſent as it were before their eies; they ſinne with an hie hand and are more guiltie of impudencie and rebellion, then ſuch as neuer heard tell of the word.

He alſo mentions the *gardens* which they had dedicated vnto their Idoles; and affirmes that God was prouoked by them. Some think it ſhould be ſpoken of *brickes* here, by way of contempt; and that they are ſecretly oppoſed to the Altar, vpon which God would haue them onely to ſacrifice. And thus they thinke the roofes of the houſes are here meant; where ỹ ſuperſtitious ſort were wont to ſacrifice, in regard they were made of *brickes*. But I rather thinke this word ſimplie ſignifies the Altars, which they had erected to their idols. In the meane while, howſoeuer they had a faire pretence to imitate the forme of that Altar ordained by the Lord: yet he abhorred ſuch an excuſe, becauſe it was contrarie vnto his word.

Verſ. 4. *Which remaine among the graues, and lodge in the deſerts, which eate ſwines fleſh, and the broth of things polluted are in their veſſels.*

HE reckons vp other ſorts of ſuperſtitions. Which albeit by reaſon of the breuitie of the words, it bee ſomewhat obſcure; yet from other places of the Scriptures, it may eaſily bee gathered what they were. For as Necromancy was a thing much in vſe among profane nations, ſo alſo the Iewes went into the ſepulchers and deſerts, to aske counſell of diuels; whereas they ſhould onely haue ſought counſell at the mouth of God. And in ſuppoſing to fetch anſwers from the dead, they deſited to be deciued by the illuſions of wicked ſpirits.

Now by the 18. of Deuteronomie, verſ. 11. and other places, it appeares, how expreſſlie the Lord had forbidden this. And we haue touched it ſomewhat before, in Chap. 8. We are here taught in generall, that the Lord requires nothing more of vs then obedience, which hee accepts aboue all ſacrifices: 1. Sam. 15. 22.

Which eate ſwines fleſh.] He complained before that Gods ſeruice was polluted by their ſuperſtitions. Now he addes, that they reiected all difference of things: ſo as they diſcerned not between *the pure and vncleane*. And he recites one kind: namely, that they abſtained not from *ſwines fleſh*. This ſeemes but a light matter. Yet is it not ſo for all that. For we muſt not iudge how great this ſinne is, by our rule: but according to that which the Lawgiuer hath preſcribed. Neither is that ſinne to be eſteemed light, which God hath forbidden. This appertaines to the externall profeſſion of faith; by which the Iewes ſhould haue ſhewed, how farre off they were from the prophanations of the Gentiles. Wee muſt not recoile then from that rule which God hath giuen vs: no, not the thicknes of our naile.

Verſ. 5. *Which ſay, Stand apart, come not neere to me: For I am holier then thou: theſe are a ſmoke in my wrath, and a fire that burneth all the day.*

HE notes out a groſſe impietie that was among the Iewes; namely, that of an obſtinate mind, and an vntamed rebellion, they oppoſed themſelues againſt ỹ true ſeruants of God: neither would they obey any admonitions. For whileſt we giue eare to admonitions and reprehenſions, there is ſome hope of repentance: but if wee reiect them, then is it

certaine

certaine that we be past cure. Now howsoeuer the Prophets words in appearance seeme to be obscure; yet the summe of them is, *that hypocrites doe disdainfully, and malepartly thrust backe those, who faithfully admonish them, because they attribute vnto themselues, either a shew of holinesse, or, in respect that their pride cannot indure that any should reprooue them*: for hypocrisie is neuer separate from disdainfulnesse & pride. Let vs not meruaile then if those who bee tainted with this vice, doe insolently exalt themselues, bragging of their holinesse, and thinke that they excell therein aboue all others: and if we at this day also doe find the like qualities in the hypocrites of our time, which *Isaiah* hath described to bee in those that then liued. For Satan hath so blinded them, that whilest with a vaine bragging of words, they set their deuotions to sale, they basely esteeme of Gods word.

Hypocrisie neuer separate from disdainfulnesse.

The expositors thinke this should be a generall sentence, which reproues the Iewes for not submitting themselues vnto the Prophets: but me thinks the circumstance of the place should be considered, which they haue not sufficiently respected, namely, that this verse depends still vpon the former: so as the Iewes are sharply reprooued for reuolting from the true religion. And besides, for that they had maliciously followed their owne inuentions, so farre forth, that they *commanded such to bee packing, as soothed them not vp therein*. For this word, *Get backe*, signifies nothing else but *get thee hence*: as if they should say, *We will not meddle with such as shew vnto vs the way to life and saluation*.

Verse 6. *Behold, it is written before me; I will not keepe silence, but will render it and recompence it into their bosome.*

THe Prophet alludes to the custome that is among Iudges, who haue lying by them vpon record, the informations, testimonies, acts, and other pieces of euidences, that when neede requires, the offender may bee easily conuicted: for we vse to leaue those things in *writing*, which we would haue posteritie to remember. The Lord then testifies that these things can neuer bee forgotten, *because they bee written before him*. For howsoeuer hee winkes at things for a time, yet shall not the wicked escape vnpunished, but shall well perceiue in the end that hee is a iust Iudge.

Doctrine.

Hence let vs gather, that wee ought not to abuse Gods patience, if he forbeares vs long, and lifts not vp his hand by and by to inflict his iudgement vpon vs; for he ceaseth not for all that to keepe a register of all our faults; for which we may be sure he will one day punish vs, vnlesse we repent. I grant the Lord hath no neede to *write* for his memories sake: but it pleaseth him to vse this phrase of speech, that wee should not imagin him to be forgetfull of any thing, when he deferres the executiō of his iudgements. Nay, in Ier. 17. 1. he saith yet more expresly, that the sinne of Iudah was *written with an yron pen, and with the point of a diamond*.

Gods patience must not be abused.

To render into their bosome, is a phrase of speech much vsed in the Scriptures, Psal. 79. 12. Ier. 32. 18. because men thinke their sinnes are either couered, or that they shall not come into account. And thus, either they lay the raines of their concupiscences in their owne neckes; or in attributing their faults to others, they become vtterly seareless. This is the cause why God theatens *to recompence their sinne into their bosome*, to the end they may bethinke themselues what Iudge it is with whom they must haue to doe.

Vers. 7. *Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers* shall bee *together (saith the Lord) *which haue burnt incense vpon the mountaines, and blasphemed mee vpon the hilles: therefore will I measure their old worke into their bosome.*

*Or, for they.

HEere he amplifies that which hee said in few words in the former verse. For hee shewes that it was not of yesterday that the Iewes were guiltie of such a disloyaltie; but that it is the example of their *fathers*, whose steps they now followed: euen as heeretofore the Lord complained that he had a long time forborne this people, and was so wearie at last, that hee could beare them no longer. Thus then the Prophet aggrauates their sinne, when he tels the Iewes that they haue followed the example of their fathers. As if he should say, *such birds, such egges*. For if men haue been often and diligently admonished, their obstinacie is so much the more to bee condemned, if they repent not. Heere we see that after they had reiected all admonitions and threatnings, they perseuered *many yeeres* in their corruptions and impieties, which is heere laid to their charges, that they should no longer plead their excuses to couer their faults withall; but that they should rather labour to confesse themselues worthy of most exquisite torments.

The former verse amplified.

Heere also wee may perceiue it to be so far off, that the corruption issuing from the fathers, should any way excuse the children, (as the ignorant are vsually wont to make this a buckler for their defence) that it rather serues as a meanes to pull vpon them a more heauie punishment.

The bad example of our fathers not to be followed.

Are together.] As if the Lord should haue said, that hee gathered and bound vp in one bundle, both the iniquities of the fathers and of the children, that in the end he might reuenge himselfe of them: not that the children are guiltie or punished for the fathers wickednesse, Ezech. 18. 20. but in regard that they followed the wicked course which their fathers liued in. Therefore it is iust with God to wrap them vp with them in the same guiltinesse, and to condemne them according to the same sentence, especially seeing their diseases were growne incurable.

For they haue burnt incense.] The Prophet

heere recites one particular, vnder which he alſo comprehends all other kindes of vices. For hee ſignifies all ſuch reuolts as whereby the people were gone backe from Gods pure worſhip, and had giuen and dedicated themſelues vnto ſtrange gods. See here the height of iniquitie: for when the feare of God is ſtollen out of the heart, then is there no ſoundneſſe nor vprightneſſe left behind. He heere points out vnto vs then, the fountaine of all diſorders: which wee are diligently to obſerue, in regard that men flatter themſelues, thinking themſelues worthy of great praiſe, when they ſerue God after their owne fantaſies; and in the meane while, conſider not that there is nothing more abominable in his ſight, than ſuch a ſeruice as is deuiſed according to the appetites of our carnall imaginations. And no doubt but the people heerein deſired that God ſhould accept them, whileſt they burnt incenſe vpon the mountains. But we muſt not iudge of their worke by their deliberation or good intention, as they call it: Wee muſt hearken to Gods voice, who proteſts that he is this way greatly diſhonoured, rather than to all the men in the world; leſt otherwiſe by ſeeking to reſt vpon our intents, we make our ſelues double guiltie before his Maieſtie.

God reiects our good intentions, if we haue not his word to warrant them.

I will meaſure their vvorke. The word *old* may be diuerſlie expounded, either, I will meaſure againe with their oldneſſe: or, In the firſt place; or, In times paſt; or, from the beginning. But the circumſtance of the place muſt be conſidered. For by that we ſhall the better attaine to the Prophets meaning. You know he ſpake ere-while touching the works of their fathers: there is no doubt thē but he here derides the children, who placed their defence in them. For it is but a ſilly and vaine ſhift to oppoſe againſt God the cuſtomes of our fathers, that is to ſay, a corruption of great antiquitie. Why ſo? Becauſe in thus doing, we pull downe a more heauie iudgement vpon our owne heades. And yet many are ſo bewitched with this excuſe, as they thinke a man ought not at all to reiect the ſame: neither can you get them an inch further. Truely, antiquitie is honourable: But no man is ſo to prize it, that he ſhould therefore in the leaſt thing diminiſh any of that honour which is due vnto God. See here an excellent place to conuince ſuch as will needes maintaine ſuperſtitions by ſucceſſion of yeeres; as if an old error were to be held for a law.

Note.

Verſ. 8. *Thus ſaith the Lord, As the wine is found in the cluſter, and one ſaith, Deſtroy it not, for a bleſſing is in it, ſo will I doe for my ſeruants ſakes, that I may not deſtroy them whole.*

God neuer threatnes ſo ſeuerely, but he leaues ſome hope of pardon for the faithfull.

THe Prophet here moderates his former ſentence. For otherwiſe it had been a thing too ſeuere, ỹ the iniquities of ỹ fathers ſhould thus be called to mind, to the end the Lord might deſtroy their children with them. Yea, this might ſo haue affrighted the faithfull, that it had been enough to haue driuen them from all hope of ſaluation. We ought then you ſee, to ſtand carefullie vpon our watch, and to conſider for what cauſe the Lord is diſpleaſed with vs. For his meaning is ſo to aſtoniſh vs, as that therewithall hee would draw vs to himſelfe: and not thereby to threw vs headlong into deſpaire. Hee leaues ſome hope for the faithfull here then, leſt they ſhould waxe fainthearted: and in proffering them *refreſhing*, hee allures them to repentance, of which he reaped neither pleaſure nor profit.

He confirmes this by a ſimilitude. As if a man minding to plucke vp a vine, yet finding ſome fruitfull branch thereon, *he ſpares, and reſerues it*: euen ſo will the Lord take heed how he pulles vp thoſe, in whom he finds any ſap or vigor. In the fifth Chapter he complained, that the people was vnprofitable: yea, worſe than that; for they brought forth ſower fruits. *Eſaiah* retaines the ſame ſimilitude: but he applies it otherwiſe. For howſoeuer the people were like vnto a baſtard and barren vine; yet there remained ſome fruitfull branches, which the Lord would not ſuffer to periſh. Simile.

But this may be taken two waies: either that the Lord will preſerue his people for the elects ſake: or, that hauing rooted out the reprobates, he will ſaue the faithfull. There is great difference betweene theſe two interpretations. As touching the firſt, wee know that the wicked are ſometimes ſpared for the godlies ſake, whom the Lord will neither deſtroy nor wrappe vp in one common calamitie with them. And this is manifeſt enough by diuers examples in the holy Scriptures. The Lord would haue *ſpared* Sodom and Gomorah, had there been found but ten righteous perſons there: Gen. 18.32. All thoſe which were in the ſhip with S. *Paul*, to the number of 276. perſons, were giuen him of God, and ſaued from ſhipwracke; that ſo the power which he ſhewed in his ſeruant, might be the more euident: Act. 27.32. The Lord bleſſed the houſe of *Potiphar*, and made him to proſper in all things for *Joſephs* ſake, who dwelt in his familie: Gen. 39.5. Many like examples there be which euery one may collect by himſelfe. But I rather approue of the other expoſition; namely, that the Lord ſo puniſheth the ſinnes of his people, that yet notwithſtanding he hath reſpect to his beloued ones; and wrappes them not vp all in one and the ſame ruine. Neither is it his meaning onlie that the faithfull ſhall bee ſaued, but that there ſhall be a remnant leſt, in the middeſt of whom God will haue his name called vpon. And this is worth the noting. For he ſhewes that the remnant ſhall be very ſmall, in compariſon of that great multitude which was then in the land: as wee haue ſeene in Chap. 1.9. 1 2

God ſometimes ſpares the wicked for the elects ſake.

Now whereas the faithfull are often puniſhed with the wicked, let vs not thinke God doth them any wrong: For the Lord will eaſilie find faults ſufficient in euery one of vs to afflict and puniſh vs. Beſides, his meaning is to inſtruct and awaken vs by his rods: for being

The faithfull muſt not murmur, if God ſometimes wrap them vp in the ſame iudgement with the wicked.

ing knit, and as it were grafted into the body of a people, it is no wonder if we be ſmitten with the ſame blowes, in regard we are members that haue drawne infection from the ſame. In the meane while, God moderates theſe chaſtiſements, leſt hee ſhould vtterlie teare vp the choſen plants.

Verſ. 9. *But I will bring a ſeed out of Iacob, and out of Iudah that ſhall inherit my mountaine: and mine elect ſhall inherit it, and my ſeruants ſhall dwell there.*

An explanation of the former ſentence.

THe Prophet explanes the former verſe in other words, and ſhewes that the Lord will reſerue *a ſeede* vnto himſelfe, which ſhall call vpon his name. For he hath been wont ſo to chaſtiſe his people, that hee hath ſtill continued a Church, in which his truth and pure religion might bee kept. For which cauſe alſo S. *Paul* calles her the pillar and ground of truth; 1. Tim. 3. 15. Wee are not to iudge of the Church then, by the eſtate of things here below (ſeeing there is nothing ſtedfaſt in this world) but by the counſell of God, who cannot endure to ſee her either ouerthrowne or deſtroyed. Let vs carefullie remember this then, that ſo no calamities, ruines, nor deſolations of the Church may aſtoniſh vs.

We muſt not iudge of the Churches eſtate by outward appearance.

He calles thoſe *inheritors of the mountaines*, who being ſet free from vnder their captiuitie, ſhould returne home againe into their countrie. Iudeah was full of *mountaines*, as we know. Againe, hee expounds that which might ſeeme obſcure: for hee ſignifies that the Iewes ſhould returne vnto their firſt eſtate, and that by right of inheritance they ſhould inioy that land out of which they had been exiled. For ſoone after, Iudeah was exceedingly waſted: but the Lord proteſts that it ſhall not continue ſo long. For the greater confirmation whereof, he briefly mentions the *couenant*, by which this land was ordained for them to poſſeſſe as their *heritage*.

Thus albeit they were a long time retained as priſoners, yet this word *heritage* ſerued to put ſome life into them, that they might come to an aſſured cõfidence touching their being repoſſeſſed thereof. But it is to be noted that this grace is reſtrained to *the elect* and true *ſeruants* of God, leſt all indifferentlie ſhould preſume to applie the ſame vnto themſelues.

Verſ. 10. *And Sharon ſhall bee a ſheepfold: and the vallie of Achor ſhall be a reſting place for the cattell* of my people that haue ſought me.*

* Or, ſtocke.

BY theſe figures he meanes nothing elſe but that the land which was waſte, ſhal be againe inhabited. For we haue here a ſecret compariſon thus: howſoeuer after the baniſhment of her inhabitants into a farre countrie, ſhee ſhould remaine ſolitarie and empty: yet ſhall ſhee againe be inhabited, and that in ſuch wiſe, as there ſhall be *abundance of ſtockes, and heards*: of *fruiteſull paſtures, and commons*: and ſhould alſo furniſh them in plentifull manner with all things neceſſarie for the ſuſtentation of men.

Godlineſſe hath the promiſe of things belonging to this life, as well as of thoſe to come.

Sharon and *Achor* were places for paſtures: but the one was apt for ſmall beaſts, and the other for great. And here we ſee that Gods promiſes not onely containe in them the things belonging to the life to come, but alſo to that which is preſent; to the end wee might taſte his bountie and liberalitie to the full. For by earthly benefits, we are inuited to ſeeke for greater and more excellent things touching the heauenlie life.

If God take care of beaſts, much more to vs.

Whereas the Lord extends his liberalitie euen to the *brute beaſts*, which were created for our vſe: thence are wee to conceiue a more ſure and confident hope touching his fatherly kindnes towards vs. For if hee bee pleaſed to take care of beaſts which are ordained to ſerue vs, much more will hee furniſh vs with all things conuenient both for this life, and for that to come. And yet wee muſt keep in mind that doctrine (whereupon we haue inſiſted heretofore) which brings vs from temporall bleſſings, to the ſpirituall kingdome of Chriſt: Which the Prophets are wont to deſcribe out vnder figures.

For my people.] Here he excludes the reprobates, who with braſen faces, will ſtand to bragge of Gods name falſely and vainely. But howſoeuer they dare malepertly bragge of Gods promiſes and ſacraments, yet are they neuer the neerer for getting any part with Gods children therein, but are depriued of all hope of Gods bleſſings, that ſo they may bee fitted to receiue the recompence of their iniquities.

A note how to diſcerne Chriſts ſheepe from goates.

In adding, *who haue ſought mee*, hee ſhewes yet more plainely who they bee that haue their part in theſe benefits: that ſo hee might ſtop the mouthes of all reprobates and hypocrites, as wee haue ſaid. See here then the true marke which ſeparates the ſheepe from the goates; and the lawfull heires from baſtards: namely, *in ſeeking* the Lord. For it is not enough to ſhroude our ſelues vnder ſome name or title; but wee muſt *ſeeke* the Lord in puritie of conſcience, that ſo wee may cleaue vnto him with our whole hearts.

Verſ. 11. *But yee are they that haue forſaken the Lord, and forgotten mine holie mountaines, and haue prepared a table for the* multitude, and furniſh the drinke offring to the number.*

* Or, armie.

A preuention.

LEſt hypocrites ſhould beguile themſelues with theſe promiſes, or, leſt they ſhould imagine that this which is ſpoken touching the reſtauration, belonged vnto them; hee once againe directs his ſpeech vnto them. He calles them Apoſtataes, becauſe they had *forgotten the mountaine* of Zion: that is to ſay, had reuolted from Gods pure worſhip. For by the mountaine *of holineſſe*, he ſignifies the rule of holineſſe contained in the *word*

of the Lord. For the Temple was built by his commandement, that in it he might be called vpon: with the altar also, whereupon hee inioined them to offer sacrifices. Thus all sacrifices and oblations were abominable, were they offered in any other place then that; or, to other gods; or otherwise then that which the law prescribed. For it is vnlawfull for men to doe any thing in this behalfe, after their owne fantasies; because the Lord requires nothing but obedience, 1. Sam. 15. 22. which cannot bee done without faith, neither can faith be separated from the word, Rom. 10. 17. out of which it is not permitted vs either to seeke or aske of God.

No seeking of God without the word and faith.

In saying, *who haue prepared a table*, he recites their superstitions. The word *Gad* is diuersly expounded: for some thinke he meanes Iupiter, or his starre: others, fortune. Saint *Ierom* translates; Who prepared the table to fortune: thinking that this word notes out happy euents. But it seemes more probable to me, that this word is taken for a band or multitude; yea, euen for an armie: and the etymologie of the word sutes well enough with the scope of the text. There is one notable place amongst the rest in Gen. 30. 20. which serues for the vnderstanding of this word, where *Leah* reioiceth for the increase of her childrē: for it seemes her speech should be thus expoūded; *into a band*. As if she should say; I haue now a great number of children: for she had many before; in so much that she called *Gad*, her fift sonne. So in this place, I thinke *Gad*, should bee taken for a band, troope, or armie: the reason is, because they had so many gods, that they were scarsly able to count them for their multitudes.

Iupiters star. Fortune.

To furnish, may be taken heere two waies; namely, that they *furnished* all things for the seruice of their Idols, liberally and magnificently: for superstition can keepe neither end nor measure. And those, who when the matter concernes Gods worship, will not spare a penny; will freely bestow all they haue to set vp their Idols: or that there is not the meanest of their puppets, to which they haue not offered somewhat: and I rather content my selfe with this second exposition. For Idolaters thinke they haue neuer done enough, vnlesse they honour euery Saint: yea, and the more they serue them, the better they thinke to prosper in their businesses. And of this, we haue but too much experience at this day in the Papacie.

By the *number*, hee signifies that which hee meant by Armie: and this repetition is much vsed in our Prophets language. Thus his meaning is then, that the *Table was set vp*: that is to say, they sacrificed not to one Idoll alone, but to an infinit number: that by this hee might shew, what sore punishments these Idolaters were worthy of.

Vers. 12. *Therefore will I number you to the sword, and all you shall bow downe to the slaughter, because I called, and yee did not answere; I spake, and yee heard not, but did euill in my sight, and did chuse that thing that I would not.*

*Or, before mine eies.

THe Prophet alludes to the *number* of gods, whereof hee spake in the former verse: and shewes, that the Lord will easilie comprehend their great numbers; for he will *number them to the sword*. By this it is euident, that hee spake not in the former verse of the two planets, Iupiter and Mercurie, as some imagin; but in not satisfying themselues with one God onely, they gathered together an armie of Idols.

Iupiter and Mercurie.

Their coniecture is friuolous, who by the word *Meni*, which we haue translated, Number, vnderstand Mercurie, because *Mena* signifies to number; and that Mercurie was the god of the Merchants, who haue their bookes of accounts. For the Prophets meaning is plaine enough, in that he shewes the people shall be numbred to the sword, because they reioiced in an heape of gods, and refused to rest vpon the onely true God.

Mercurie, god of the Merchants.

Because I haue called. He amplifies the greatnesse and hainousnesse of this reuolt, in regard the Iewes sinned of a set malice, and rather against knowledge, then of ignorance. For they had been often taught and instructed, but they insolently reiected all admonitions. In which respect, they were much lesse excusable then those to whom the Prophets were not sent. For as no man aliue can pretend any cause of ignorance; so yet the Iewes much lesse, and those to whom the word of the Lord hath been published: who for this cause shall haue a sharper sentence of condemnation pronounced against them then, and shall be more seuerely punished then any other.

No man can pretend ignorance,

Hee sets downe the meanes of this *call*; namely, that hee had exhorted them by his Prophets. For by the clause, *I spake*; hee repeates one and the same thing twice, according to the custome of the Hebrewes, as wee noted before.

To hearken to the Lord, is to obey his word: for it were to little purpose to lend *an eare*, vnlesse *vves follow* that which the word propounds vnto vs. For otherwise, what difference is betweene vs and the Asse, who wags his eares? God will be heard with the heart, Prou. 23. 26. As for a fained *audience*, he vtterly reiects it. Now he shewes the cause why they would not come at his call; surely they stopped their eares against wholsome doctrine. For the beginning of obedience, is to bring with vs a desire to learne.

Before mine eies, is as much to say, as before my face: which phrase of speech, he vsed a little before. Euery man sinnes before the eies of the Lord, neither can any auoid his presence. But it is properly said that we sinne *before his eies*, when being called by him, wee stand not in awe of his sacred presence: for he is neerest to those whom he calles by his Prophets: yea, to such it may be said, that *he shewes himselfe visibly*. Therefore so much the more detestable is their impietie, and worthy

Who is said to sinne in Gods eies.

thy of the more ſtripes, who as it were with whoriſh foreheads deſpiſe God, who in ſuch familiar manner ſummons and calles them vnto him.

Now by the latter end of the verſe it appeares that the Iewes are not condemned for any enormous ſinnes; but chieflie in reſpect of their new found deuotions, by which they corrupted the ſeruice of God. For albeit they were forward enough in hunting after their forged ſacrifices, thinking thereby to obtaine Gods fauour; yet himſelfe pronounceth that he abhorres all ſuch endeuours; becauſe there is nothing but pollution therin. It is not permitted to euery one then to follow that which ſeemes good in his owne eies; but we muſt haue an eie to that which God approues of, and not turne therfrom, no not an haires breadth. Well, we ſee that this vice hath not raigned in one age onely, namely, that men haue followed their fond appetites; and haue worſhipped their owne inuentions in ſtead of God: when the queſtion hath been touching his pure ſeruice. But how great delight ſoeuer men take herein, ſure it is the Lord proteſts that hee contemnes and abhorres it.

We muſt not follow that in Gods ſeruice which ſeemes good in our eies.

Verſ. 13. *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold, my ſeruants ſhall eate, and yee ſhall bee hungrie: Behold, my ſeruants ſhall drinke, and yee ſhall be thirſtie: Behold, my ſeruants ſoall reioyce, and yee ſhall be aſhamed.*

14. *Behold, my ſeruants ſhall ſing for ioy of heart, and yee ſhall crie for ſorrow of heart, and ſhall houle for vexation of mind.*

Hypocrites diſtinguiſhed from the faithfull.

THe Prophet here diſtinguiſheth (yet more clearely) hypocrites which hold a place in the Church only, from his true and lawfull children. For though all will needs take vnto them the title of Gods children, yet he ſhewes that many were to be chaſed out of the houſe; & that thoſe who proudlie inſulted ouer Gods people, ſhould be fruſtrated of their hope, becauſe it was vaine & falſe. And we are to note well the remarkable *oppoſition*, which is here put betweene *Gods ſeruants*, and thoſe that *falſely glorie* in his name. For he ſhewes that their vaine titles, their boaſting, and falſe perſwaſions ſhould ſtand them in no ſtead. Theſe words, *they ſhal eate and drink*, ſignifie felicitie, and a proſperous eſtate in this preſent life. For it is as if he had promiſed to haue ſuch care ouer the faithfull, that they ſhould want nothing.

Obiect. But it ſeemes the Lord here promiſeth his ſeruants more in words, then he performes in deedes. For are they not often *hungrie, and thirſtie*, whileſt the wicked ouerflow in all ſorts of good things, and abuſe them to exceſſe and riot?

Anſ. I anſwere, that Chriſts kingdome is here noted out vnto vs vnder theſe figures: for otherwiſe we cannot comprehend it. For which cauſe the Prophets are wont to borrow ſimilitudes from earthly kingdoms, in which when the ſubiects flow in wealth and in the inioying of all bleſſings, there Gods liberalitie is to be eſpied; by which alſo wee ordinarily iudge of his fatherly loue towards vs. But becauſe it is not expedient that the faithfull ſhould fixe their hopes vpon earthly commodities, it is enough for them that they take onely ſome little taſte of them, the better to vphold their faith. And if it ſo fall out, that they bee now and then preſſed with wants, yet by feeling the benefit of contentation with a little, they ceaſe not for all that ſtill to acknowledge God for their father, and to taſte of his liberalitie. Nay, ſhall I ſay more; euen in their very pouertie they are oftentimes richer indeede then Kings, and great Lords of the earth.

Note.

The faithfull richer in their pouertie, then the greateſt Kings in their ſuperfluitie.

But although the wicked enioy neuer ſo much, yet are they the only miſerable people in the world; becauſe they cannot enioy their wealth with a good conſcience. The Prophet therfore hath reſpect to the right vſe of Gods gifts. For ſuch as ſerue him purely, receiue from him as children from the hand of their father, all things needfull for this life preſent. But the reſt as vſurpers and theeues take whatſoeuer they poſſeſſe by ſtealth and robberie. No riches nor abundance can ſatiſfie the wicked: they are alwaies in diſtruſt, and trembling: their conſciences will neuer giue them reſt. The Lord you ſee then promiſeth no more here then hee truely performes; neither muſt we iudge of this felicitie by outward appearances.

No riches can ſatisfie a wicked man.

This wil be better perceiued by the words following, where hee ſpeakes of *reioycing and giuing thankes*. For no doubt the Prophets meaning is to ſay, that contentment conſiſts not in the inioying of abundance, but in tranquillitie, peace and gladneſſe of mind, becauſe all things are vnſauorie to the vnfaithfull. But the godly take more pleaſure in the ſeeling of Gods fatherly loue, then in all the pleaſures of the world. In the meane while wee are to note, that wee muſt wait for all felicitie from God only, who will not permit any of his to want any thing that appertaines to the bleſſed life.

Contentment conſiſts not in abundance.

Our chiefe felicitie.

Verſ. 15. *And yee ſhall leaue your names as a curſe vnto my choſen: for the Lord God ſhall ſlay you, and call his ſeruants by another name.*

HE proſecuteth the ſame doctrine; and ſhewes that God in the end, will *ſeparate* the hypocrites from his true ſeruants. Truely, we are not to maruell that the Prophet inſiſts thus long vpon this point: for there is nothing more difficult to be beaten into the heads of hypocrites, who being puffed vp with pride, deceiue and beguile themſelues.

He proſecutes the ſame matter ſtill.

Now he ſaith, they ſhall leaue their *name as a curſe*, in regard that they held themſelues to be the holy poſteritie: and that there was none vnder heauen but they, worthie of that title. To that alſo appertaines the verb, *To leaue*: as if he ſhould ſay, that their vaine

arrogancie

arrogancie, to which they were ſo much addicted, ſhould bee violently plucked away from them. And therefore to the end they ſhould beware how they pleaſed themſelues in a temporall and tranſitory reioicing, the Lord blunts the edge of this their ouerweening, and ſaith, they ſhall leaue their names as a curſe to other ſeruants that he ſhall haue. So as this example ſhould be ſolemnly taken vp as a common prouerb; *God ſo curſe thee, as he hath done the Iewes.*

A fearefull prouerbe.

Shall call by another name.] He refels the ouerweening of this nation, who thought God ſhould haue no more people remaining, if the children of *Abraham* were gone. For he proteſts that hee will adopt vnto himſelfe *a new people*, and that hee is not ſo tied to the Iewes, but hee will eaſilie finde out others, whom hee will adorne with the name of his people.

Whereas ſome by the word *other*, vnderſtand the name of Chriſtian, it is too much conſtrained: and it appeares by the circumſtance of the place, that the Prophet had another drift. For, in as much as the Iewes proudly bragged of the *antiquitie* of their *name*, and thereupon grew inſolent, becauſe God had of old elected them; as if forſooth hee could not bee without them; therefore hee promiſeth *that the Lord vvill chuſe and adopt another people.* And yet ſhould they haue no cauſe giuen them thereby to accuſe him either of inconſtancie, or variableneſſe; as if he had changed counſell. Nay, he will rather execute his decrees and iuſt iudgements againſt all thoſe, who vnder a falſe pretence of his name, doe darken his glorie, and corrupt all pietie.

Verſ. 16. *Hee that ſhall bleſſe himſelfe in the earth, ſhall bleſſe himſelfe in the true God; and he that ſweareth in the earth, ſhall ſweare by the true God: for the former troubles are forgotten, and ſhall ſurely hide themſelues.*

The whole world oppoſed to Iudeah.

THe whole world is heere oppoſed to this little corner of Iudeah, where Gods ſeruice was in a manner included and ſhut vp. But ſince God hath manifeſted himſelfe vnto all: he is not now ſerued in any particular region, but in euery place alike. Which Chriſt alſo himſelfe teacheth, in Iohn 4.21. ſaying; The houre is come, and now is, when ye ſhall neither in this mountaine, nor in Ieruſalem, worſhip the Father. And Saint *Paul* wils that men *in euery place* doe lift vp pure hands vnto heauen, without wrath or doubting: 1. Tim. 2. 8. He oppoſeth the word, Earth, heere then, which ſignifies all the world, vnto the land of *Iudeah*.

To *bleſſe* and *ſweare*, is taken for the whole ſeruice of God. Sweating is one branch of this ſeruice, as we haue ſeene in Chap. 19. 18. and 48. 1. For thereby we leaue all iudgement vnto God, and acknowledge him the true witneſſe of whatſoeuer is done or ſpoken. We are ſaid *to bleſſe*, when we looke for all proſperitie frō his hand, & *giue him thankes* after we haue receiued the ſame. In a word, when we acknowledge that all benefits flow in vnto vs from his meere liberalitie.

By the true God.] That is to ſay, by him *who is faithfull in his promiſes*, and ſtedfaſt in his counſell. Though I denie not but there may bee a cloſe oppoſition vnderſtood betweene the *true God*, and the falſe gods of the Gentiles.

The troubles are forgotten and paſt.] This promiſe appertaines onely to the faithfull. Gods meaning is, that he will put an end to the anguiſhes & afflictions, that the Church might know *her calamities* ſhould not indure for euer. Now this promiſe began to take effect, when the people returned from Babylon: for howſoeuer they were *troubled* as well in the way, as in their Country, yet their *afflictions* were neuer ſo ſharp, but God kept a meaſure in them, becauſe at their returne home, the reedifying of the Temple, and the reſtoring of the politike eſtate, aſſwaged the ſorrow, and cheered vp their hearts in good hope, vntill the comming of Chriſt.

Verſ. 17. *For loe, I will create new heauens, and a new earth: and the former ſhall not bee remembred, nor come into minde.*

A notable change promiſed.

BY theſe ſimilitudes he promiſeth a notable change. As if God ſhould haue ſaid; I haue both will and power to reſtore my Church; yea, & that in ſuch wiſe, that ſhe ſhall ſeeme to haue recouered *new forces*, and haue an habiration in *a new vvorld*. Theſe are exceſſiue maners of ſpeeches. But the excellencie of this benefit, which ſhould be offered at *the comming of Chriſt*, could not otherwiſe bee expreſſed. Neither doth the Prophet meane this alone of Chriſts *firſt comming, but of the vvhole courſe of his kingdome, vntill his laſt appearing:* as we haue often ſaid in other places.

The world created anew by the comming of Chriſt.

The world therefore you ſee, is created anew (as you would ſay) by Chriſt: for which cauſe alſo the Apoſtle calles it the *new vvorld*: Heb. 2. 5. Neither is it to bee doubted but hee alludes to this text. Notwithſtanding the Prophet ſpeakes heere of the reſtauration of the Church, after their returne out of Babylon. This I grant to bee true: but yet this reſtauration is imperfect, vnleſſe it bee extended vnto Chriſt: wee are but in our courſe thitherward as yet; neither ſhall theſe things be fully accompliſhed, vntill the laſt reſurrection, which is as it were the vtmoſt bounds and limits of this courſe.

Where he ſaith, that the *former things ſhall be no more called to mind*: ſome refere it to heauen and earth. As if he ſhould ſay; Heereafter there ſhall be no more newes of theſe creatures. But I had rather referre it to the former time: for his meaning is, that the ioy of being reſtored, ſhall bee ſo great, that they ſhall vtterly forget their miſeries. Vnleſſe any had rather referre it to thoſe benefits which were worthy of memorie, and yet were forgotten when Gods grace appeared. And in this ſenſe the Prophet ſaith, in Chap. 43. 18.

Remember

Remember yee not the former things? Not that God would haue the faithfull to forget their deliuerance; but in regard that the one compared with the other, did darken it, as the Sunne doth the brightneſſe of the ſtarres.

Simile.

Let vs remember then that theſe things are fulfilled in vs, as oft as we be regenerated: but we are regenerated onely in part, and therefore as yet we cannot attaine the ſight of this *new heauen and new earth*. What meruaile is it then if wee ſigh and mourne, ſeeing wee haue not yet vtterly put off the old man, but many remainders of ſinne doe ſtill ſticke faſt in vs? *This renoument muſt begin at vs*, who hold the firſt ranke: for the creatures in regard of our offences, grone, and are ſubiect to vanitie, as Saint *Paul* ſpeakes, Rom. 8.20. *But after wee ſhall bee perfectly renued, heauen and earth ſhall be renued alſo, and ſhall recouer their firſt eſtate.* Hence we may gather that which wee haue often mentioned, namely, that the Prophet hath an eye to the *whole kingdome of Chriſt, euen vnto the end thereof*: which for this effects ſake, is called the day of reſtauration and refreſhing. Act. 3.19.21.

Our regeneration onely in part.

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Verſ. 18. *But bee you glad, and reioice for euer in the thing that I ſhall create: for behold, I will create Ieruſalem as a reioicing, and her people as a ioy.*

An exhortation to reioice, added by way of amplificatiō.

HEe exhorts the faithfull to reioice with condigne ioy, for ſo excellent a benefit of God. And this was added for amplifications ſake; becauſe men neuer eſteeme of the graces of God, according to their worth, amongſt the which, this heere mentioned is the chiefe and moſt excellent; for they prize them at a very low rate. It is needfull therefore that the faithfull ſhould be rouzed and quickened vp by ſuch exhortations as theſe, to the end they ſhould ſhew themſelues neither vnthankfull, nor forgetfull: as alſo that they ſhould not lightly paſſe ouer this benefit; namely, *that being redeemed by the hand of Chriſt, they might beare the remembrance thereof in their hearts, as the earneſt pennie of eternall life.* This is the cauſe why *Iſaiah* teacheth that the deliuerance is not acknowledged with ſuch thankfulneſſe as is meete, vnleſſe the faithfull continue on their ioy the whole courſe of their liues, exerciſing themſelues in ſinging the praiſes of God.

Whereas *Ieruſalem* is called *gladneſſe*, and the people thereof *reioicing*; it may ſeeme ſomewhat harſh at the firſt bluſh: yet we may thence gather a good expoſition, namely, that in the deliuerance of the Church, there ſhall be ſuch cauſe of ioy, that it ſhall aboliſh all matter of ſorrow. And ſurely when our miſeries themſelues doe tend to our ſaluation, wee haue therein no ſmall occaſion giuen vs of reioicing.

Verſ. 19. *And I will reioice in Ieruſalem, and ioy in my people, and the voice of weeping ſhall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.*

THe Prophet expreſſeth ſomewhat more then in the former verſe. For in this his meaning is to ſay, that the Lord will not onely giue matter of reioicing, but alſo that *himſelfe* ſhall bee partaker with them in this *ioy*. For ſo great is his loue to vs, that he takes no leſſe pleaſure in our *proſperitie*, then if he himſelfe inioied the ſame with vs. By which, our faith ought to be much confirmed, namely, when wee heare that God beares vs ſuch an ardent loue. Are we afflicted or ſcattered? He ſaith, that this grieues & troubles him. Contrariwiſe, doe we floriſh and proſper? He profeſſeth that he takes great pleaſure therein. Aceording as wee haue ſeene in Chap. 63.10. that the Spirit of God was vexed, when that order which he requires and approues, is ouerthrowne and confounded. As alſo in Chap. 62.5. he takes vnto him the perſon of a bridegroome, who findes no other contentment then in his wife.

A liuely deſcription of that great loue which God beares vs.

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Verſ. 20. *There ſhall bee no more there a childe of yeeres, nor an old man, that hath not filled his daies: for hee that ſhall bee an hundred yeeres old, ſhall die as a young man: but the ſinner being an hundred yeeres olde, ſhall bee accurſed.*

SOme thinke the difference betweene the Law and the Goſpell, is heere noted out, becauſe the Law is as a ſchoolemaſter, who held his ſchollers vnder the firſt rudiments; but the Goſpell brings vs to a perfect age. Others vnderſtand it, that there ſhould bee no more any difference of age: for where eternall life is, there needes no diſpute about youth or age. But thus I expound the Prophets words; *Be they young or old, they ſhall come to a perfect age, ſo as they ſhall euermore be ſtrong, euen as in the flower of youth: yea, they ſhall bee alwaies luſtie and ſtrong*: for wee wax old and feeble by reaſon of our ſinnes. *When thou art angry, ſaith Moſes*, Pſal. 90.9,10. *all our daies are gone as a tale that is told. The time of our life is threeſcore yeeres and ten: and if they bee of more ſtrength, fourſcore yeeres; yet is their ſtrength but labour and ſorrow: for it paſſeth away ſuddenly, and wee flee away.* But Chriſt is come to ſtrengthen vs, and to vphold vs in a perfect eſtate.

What bleſſings belong to them that are in the kingdome of Chriſt, in this and in the reſt of the verſes following.

Our life paſſeth like the ſhadow, but in Chriſt we haue ſtabilitie.

Yet we muſt diſtinguiſh betweene the two members. For after he hath ſaid, that *the Citizens of the Church ſhall liue long, ſo as none of them ſhall be taken out of the world, till they be full of daies, nor till they haue finiſhed their perfect courſe*: he therewithall addes, *they ſhall be ſtrong euen in age it ſelfe*. Now howſoeuer the greater part of the faithfull are hardly able to indure in reſpect of their weakeneſſe, and that others of them grow feeble before the time; yet is this no vaine promiſe. For if Chriſt *doe truly and fully raigne in vs*; it is certaine that

his

his strength would flourish in vs, and would *fortifie both our bodies and soules*. Let vs then thanke our owne corruptions, that wee are subiect to so many *sicknesses, sorrowes*, to *age* and other incumbrances. Why so? Because we will not suffer Christ quietly to raigne in vs. As also for that we haue not so fructified in newnesse of life, as vtterly to haue put off the old man.

The cause of languishing sicknesse, and vntimely death in our selues.

From this place also let vs note, that corporall and spirituall *blessings* are onely to bee found in the kingdome of Christ: that is to say, in the Church. For out of it, there is nothing but *accursednesse*. Whence it followes that all such as are out of this kingdome, are most miserable. And albeit, they seeme *lustie and strong*: yet are they nothing in Gods account but *rotten and lothsome carions*.

Corporall and spirituall blessings onlie found in Christs Church.

Nothing but accursednesse out of the Church.

Vers. 21. *And they shall build houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, and eate the fruite of them.*

22. *They shall not build, and another inhabit: they shall not plant, and another eate: for as the daies of the tree are the daies of my people, and mine elect shall * in old age enioy the worke of their hands.*

* Or, shall continue the worke, &c.

IN these two verses hee puts them in mind of the blessings contained in the law; namely, that such as serued God should *inhabit the houses they had built, and should eate the fruites of their trees*: Leuit. 20. 10. As on the contrarie, the rebellious should bee driuen out of their houses to giue place vnto strangers: neither should they gather the fruite which they had planted: Deut. 28. 30. From this curse (saith *Isaiah*) shall the Lord deliuer you, to the end you may enioy your substance. Now the Prophet sets before them the things appertaining to this life present: and from thence borrowes similitudes, thereby teaching vs how to ascend vp higher, and to apprehend and lay hold of the blessed and endles life. For we must not sticke fast glued to these transitorie things: but rather vse them as steppes and staires to scale the heauens, that being rapt vp thither, wee may possesse the eternall and immortall benefits. It is also good reason that the enioying of these blessings, whereof the vnbeleeuers depriued themselues, should bee promised to the regenerated Church; which rested wholly vpon the only free fauour and good pleasure of her God.

Temporall blessings ought to bee as ladders, by which wee may ascend to the enioying of eternall benefits.

Where it is added, According to the *daies of a tree*; some thinke eternall life should be here promised: as if men should then enioy the tree of life. But this deuice is vtterly friuolous and too farre remote from the Prophets meaning. Neither can I sufficiently maruell at the expositors, who vexe themselues so much about the interpretation of this place; seeing our Prophet speakes not onely of life, but of the quiet estate thereof also. As if hee should say; *You shall plant vines, and liue of the fruite of them; neither shal you depart out of this world, till you haue enioyed them; both you and your childrens children.*

He takes a similitude from a *tree*, in respect that before hee had spoken of *planting of vines*. Therefore hee now promiseth, they shall peaceablie enioy their *houses* and *vines*, without being any more annoied, either by enemies or theeues. So as this tranquillitie should bee no lesse *durable, then the life of a tree*.

The worke is *continued*, or is made perpetuall, when it hath good successe; otherwise, men should trauell a long time for nothing, if God did not blesse their labour; because the enemie would rob or spoile that which men haue begun: so as they should not be able to enioy the fruits of their hands. The worke is *continued* therefore, not onelie when it hath some good progresse; but when it is come to perfection. Hence let vs note, that we cannot so much as enioy our goods nor haue any true rest, vnlesse we be in the kingdome of Christ (who is the only heire of the world) and stand ingrafted (by faith) in his bodie. I grant, the wicked may enioy the benefits of this life present: but therewithall they shall be *in continuall anguish*, and the worme of an euill conscience shall continually gnaw them: so as euen their very abundance shall bee their bane and destruction. For onely faith causeth vs to apprehend the things which belong to the blessed life: those then that are destitute of faith, can bee no members of Christ.

No true rest to them that are out of Christs kingdome.

Those that are destitute of faith, no members of Christ.

Vers. 23. *They shall not labour in vaine, nor bring foorth in feare: for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their * buds with them.*

* Or, offspring.

THe Prophet reckons vp here other kinds of blessings which God promiseth to the Kingdome of Christ. For albeit, God had continued to blesse his people alwaies, yet were those blessings after a sort withheld till Christs comming, in whom there was to be seene full and perfect felicitie. The sum is, that both Iewes and Gentiles should bee euery way happie vnder the kingdome of Christ. Now as it is a signe of Gods wrath and curse when we receiue no fruit at all of our labour: so on the contrarie, it is a testimonie of his blessing when wee enioy the fruites of our trauels. For this cause hee shewes how the Iewes being returned home from their captiuitie, to enioy a true and full deliuerance, *shall not labour in vaine*; neither shall their works be fruitlesse. The law threatnes the death of friends, warres, losse of goods, and anguish of minde: Leuit. 26. 22. Deut. 28. 65. But God here on the contrary promiseth tranquillitie, fertilitie, peace, and the fruit of our labours. These blessings are well to be noted: for there are few to be found, who in taking paines, fixe their eies vpon Gods blessing, so as to attribute all things vnto him: or to bee perswaded that they doe *but labour in vaine*, vnlesse the Lord

Few fixe their eies (whilest they labour) vpon Gods blessing.

Lord giue good ſucceſſe thereunto: Pſalm. 127.1. Euen as then we are to expect all bleſſing from God onely: ſo to him alone ought we to render the whole praiſe after wee haue receiued the ſame.

Some expound that which followes, That the women ſhall not *bring forth in feare*: and that they were not to feare bearing of children; in regard they ſhould feele no paines therein. We know this puniſhment was inflicted vpon the woman, becauſe of her ſinne: namely, that ſhee ſhould *bring forth in ſorrow*, and ſhould be in danger of death: Gen. 3.16. Children are alſo begotten with feare and trembling, when there are any rumors of warres: and it is more likely that the Prophet alluded to this, to wit, that there ſhould be ſuch tranquillitie, that men and women ſhould haue no cauſe of feare at all. For theſe words muſt be referred to *fathers and mothers*; who are *feareleſſe*, in reſpect of their children in time of peace; which they cannot but *feare*, when any calamitie threatens vs.

Whence feares and terrors ariſe.

The reaſon that is added, *That they ſhall be the ſeed vvhich the Lord hath bleſſed*, agrees very well. For whence ariſe feares, terrors, and diſquietnes of men, but from Gods curſe? when this curſe then ſhall bee removed, the Prophet hath good cauſe to affirme that the *fathers, with their of-ſpring*, ſhall bee freed from feares and diſtractions; becauſe being in Gods fauour, they ſhall bee alwaies ſo ſecured from feares and dangers, that they ſhall dwell in ſafetie.

And their of-ſpring with them.] This is contrarie to the *priuation of children*, which is reckoned vp amongſt the curſes of God, in Leuit. 26.22. And it is as much as if hee had ſaid, I will no more bereaue them of the children they haue begotten; but will cauſe them (with the reſt of other benefits which I will beſtow vpon them) to enioy their children alſo.

Verſ. 24. *Yea before they call I will anſwer, and whiles they ſpeake I will heare.*

A pretious promiſe.

SEe heere a (moſt) precious promiſe. For what thing is more deſirable then to haue God fauourable vnto vs, and that wee may with boldnes haue acceſſe vnto him? Surely, it is not poſſible wee ſhould be any way miſerable, as long as it is free for vs to haue our recourſe vnto the Lord, though we ſhould be inuironed with infinite thouſands of miſeries and calamities. The Lord heere promiſeth vs then, *that euer ſhall not put vp our ſuites to him in vaine*. But what? The Fathers vnder the Law had the ſame promiſe; for from the beginning of the world they were heard as oft as they called vpon him. And indeede prayer is one of the chiefeſt fruites of faith. But yet our Prophet *confirmes* this point more and more. For, in regard the Iewes were to endure a tedious and long captiuitie, the Lord proteſts hee will not ſuffer them to languiſh any longer in exile, neither will hee any longer deferre his help, but will *heare them*: yea, *before they crie*. This promiſe principally belongs to Chriſts kingdome, *by vvhom we are heard*, & haue acceſſe vnto God the Father, as S. *Paul* cleerely teacheth in Eph. 3.12. I grant the Prophets had the ſame acceſſe: neither could their prayers haue any entrance, but for Chriſts ſake. But the gate which is now made large, and ſet wide open vnto vs, was then narrow, and in a manner cloſed vp. For vnder the law, the people were wont to *ſtay vvithout in the court*: Luk. 1 10. Nothing now hinders vs from entring into the Sanctuarie; *becauſe the vaile of the temple is rent in twaine*. By Chriſt then wee haue entrance into heauen; and may boldly, and with aſſurance draw neere to the throne of grace to obtaine mercie and helpe in time of need. Heb 4.16.

Mat. 27.51.

But ſome may aske here, whether there be any faithfull in the world at this day, or any kingdome of Chriſt? for it appeares not that God is *thus readie to grant his ſuccours*, neither doe we perceiue any fruit of our prayers. I anſwere, that howſoeuer it then onelie appeares that our petitions haue been heard, when the effects manifeſt the ſame; yet notwithſtanding it is true that the Lord reiects not our prayers; becauſe he ſuffers vs not to faint, but ſuſtaines vs inwardly by the vertue of his holy ſpirit, to wait for the euent and iſſue with patience. Neither deferres he, as if he wanted time or leiſure, as men often doe: but rather thereby to exerciſe our faith, and prooue our patience. In a word, God may be ſaid to heare two waies: Firſt, when hee giues vs helpe manifeſtlie: Secondlie, when hee aſſiſts vs inwardly by the ſecret power of his Spirit: ſo as we continue ſtedfaſt and vnmoueable, euen in the middeſt of our afflictions. Were this doctrine deeplie ſetled and grounded in our mindes, then ſhould we with more boldneſſe and alacritie haue our recourſe to our God: neither would wee ſtand diſputing the caſe touching the inuocation of Saints, with ſo great headſtrongneſſe and obſtinacie. For whence is it that men haue forged ſo many patrons vnto themſelues, to whom they had rather go then to Chriſt; but becauſe they haue not receiued this doctrine, and haue reiected theſe noble and excellent promiſes?

Queſt.

Anſ.

Noſa.

The reaſon why God deferres to heare our prayers.

Verſ. 25. *The woolfe and the lambe ſhall feede together; and the lyon ſhall eate ſtraw like the bullocke: and to the ſerpent duſt ſhall be his meate. They ſhall no more hurt nor deſtroy in all mine holy mountaine, ſaith the Lord.*

HIs meaning is, that all things ſhall be ſet in their perfect order, when Chriſt ſhall raigne; and as it ſeemes here is a cloſe oppoſition betwixt *Adam* and *Chriſt*. For we know that all the miſeries of this life preſent, haue flowed into vs from the ſinne of the firſt man: for then were wee depriued of the rule and authoritie which God had giuen man ouer all the creatures, which before willingly ſubmitted themſelues vnto man, and obeied his

Queſt.

Prayer, the moſt principall fruit of faith.

Anſ.

commandements: Gen. 1. 28. But now the greater part of them *rise vp* against him; yea, and assaile him with open force. When wee see *woolues, beares, lions,* and other wild beasts to hurt men; and other beasts which serue him, and that those also which should bring him in profit, harmes him, this wee must impute to our owne sinne, who by our disobedience haue ouerthrowne the order of these things.

It belongs to Christ to restore all things to their right order, which by our sinnes are now out of order.

But seeing it is Christs office to bring all things into their right order and perfect estate againe, therefore the Prophet shewes that the confusion or scattering which is now to be perceiued in the things of this world, shall be taken away at his comming; because all corruptions shall then be abolished, and the world shall returne to his *first shape*. The *lion* shall liue *without doing harme*, & shall not rore after his pray. The *serpent* shall content it selfe with the dust; and shall couch close within the earth; without annoying any by his venomous sting. To be short, whatsoeuer is out of course and disordered, shall then be set into a right frame.

And it is not to be doubted, but our Prophet alludes vnto cruell & *blood thirstie men*, whose wild and furious natures shall bee tamed, when they shall bow downe their necks to beare the yoke of Christ But first of all we are well to consider what confusion is happened to all creatures, by the sinne of man. For if we haue not an eie to that, we cannot rightly iudge as we ought of the excellencie of this restauration. Wee are also to call to mind that which wee haue said before in the eleuenth Chapter, touching these allegorics.

What men are, being not conuerted.

Heere wee see then *what men are before the Lord hath conuerted and changed their hearts, and receiued them into his fold*, euen *wilde and furious beasts*; who then, and not before, *abstaine from doing euill, when the Lord by the power of his Spirit, hath subdued their cruell and beastiall natures*. He addes, in his *holy mountaine*; because all things *that offend, being purged away*, the Lord will gather vnto himselfe a Church, *without spot or wrinckle*, Eph. 5. For vnder the word *All*, he signifies *a generall purgation*: yet wee are not to wonder if so many doe still remaine cruell and vntractable; because there are but a very few that are true inhabitats of Gods *holy mountaine*: very few that be faithfull and sincere, no nor amongst those that make profession of Christianitie. For seeing the old man still rules and raignes in them, it must needes be that *strifes* and *dissensions* should also haue their full sway there.

Few that rightly inhabit Gods holy mountaine.

THE LXVI. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Thus saith the Lord; The heauen is my throne, and the earth is my footestoole: where is that house that yee will build vnto mee? And where is that place of my rest?*

In the first foure verses he directs his speech to the hypocrites.

THis sermon is different from the former. For the Prophet inueighs here vehemently against the Iewes, who being puffed vp with a vaine confidence of their *sacrifices, and of the Temple*, were iocund and merrie: and vnder this pretence pleased themselues in their sinnes. But he shewes that this securitie of theirs was not onely vaine and foolish, but execrable and diuelish. Why so? Because such as indeuour to serue God, and to appease him with outward ceremonies, doe grosly flout him to his face. He therefore reprocheth them that they went about to forge vnto themselues an Idol in stead of God, when they fixed him thus to his Temple. Afterwards he discourseth of the Churches renuing, and of the spreading thereof thorowout the whole world.

Besides, minding to gall such to the quicke, as serued God by halues, and in hypocrisie; hee begins at the description of his *nature*. For in assigning vnto God the *heauens* for his dwelling place, his meaning is to say, that his Maiestie fils all things, and is present euery where; neither can he be shut vp, nor circumscribed within any place whatsoeuer: so far is it off, that they can include him within the Temple. The Scriptures often affirme that *God is in heauen*, not that he should be shut vp there, but to raise vp our mindes farre aboue the world, lest wee should imagin ought of him that were cõtemptible or earthly: for the onely aspect of the heauens ought to raise vp our mindes higher, and to rauish vs into an admiration. And yet he testifies in infinite places, that hee is *present with vs*: that his power is manifested euery where, to the end wee should not thinke it to bee inclosed within the heauens. It seemes this was no hard matter to bee beleeued; and that all then confessed as much. For who among them was ignorant, that Gods Maiestie filled both heauen and earth? Thus they might obiect then, who goes about to plucke God out of heauen? Therefore *Isaiah*, thou art angry, and inueighest against vs without cause. Neither is it to be doubted but the people insolently reiected this doctrine of the Prophet, and were sharply incensed against him, as if hee had offered them great wrong. But the answer was readie; namely, that whilest they indeuored to pacifie God, according to their owne fantasies, they did as much as in them lay, thereby forge an Idoll, quite contrarie to his Maiestie. These superstitious ones trusted in their bare & naked ceremonies, thinking they had quit themselues wondrous well, if they had been once at the Temple, and offered

A preamble.

Obiect.

Ans.

fered vp their praiers and ſacrifices there. The Prophet ſhewes that we muſt not meaſure Gods Maieſtie by ſuch an elle; as alſo, that whatſoeuer wee offer him without the puritie of the heart, is nothing elſe but vanitie. For ſeeing by Gods *dwelling* in the *heauens*, it is euident that he is of a ſpirituall nature; if his ſeruice bee not anſwerable thereunto, it muſt needes bee corrupt and wicked.

Whatſoeuer is offered to God, without the puritie of the heart, meere vanitie.

Vnder the word *houſe*, he comprehends all the ceremonies wherein they thought Gods ſeruice conſiſted. And for as much as they iudged of God and of his ſeruice, according to the outward face of the Temple, the Prophet ſhewes, that it was vnworthy the Maieſtie of ſo great a Lord, to fix him to a viſible and periſhable building. He diſputes not here ſimply about *the eſſence of God*, but therewithall of his true worſhippe, ſhewing that it is *ſpirituall*; that ſo it may be anſwerable to Gods *nature*, who is a Spirit: Iohn 4.24. For if men did ſeriouſly conſider *what God is*, then would they not forge vnto themſelues ſo many baſtard kindes of religion; neither would they meaſure his infinit greatneſſe according to their ſhallow capacities. This common and known ſentence therefore hath more weight and efficacie in it, then if the Prophet had ſpoken vnto them of ſome new matter. For thus he ſhewes that they were ſo ſottiſh and ſenſleſſe, that they were ignorant of that which was familiarly knowne to the ſimpleſt idiot. As alſo, that they rather reſembled beaſts then men, in imagining that God was ſet, or ſhould repoſe himſelfe in the Temple. By way of contempt, then he askes, *where is this place?* For it is not fit that God ſhould dwell vpō earth; or be ſhut vp as within a priſon. The Temple alſo was built vpon a little hill, which little ſpace was vnable to comprehend Gods glory: 1. King. 8. 27.

Gods worſhip muſt be anſwerable to Gods nature.

That place of my reſt.] And yet the Lord had ſaid of the Temple, in Pſ. 132. 8. Behold this is my *reſt*, heere will I dwell, for I haue a delight therein. And in 2. Chron. 6. 41. Ariſe O Lord, and enter into *thy reſt*. Moreouer, wee haue ſeene before, in Chap. 11. 10. that Gods *reſt* in the Temple ſhould be glorious. In a word, the very name of the Temple was honourable. Why then doth the Prophet now reiect it? I anſwere, that the Temple is called *Gods reſt*, becauſe hee there ſhewed teſtimonies of his preſence. For he had choſen this place to be called vpon therein, in which alſo he manifeſted euident ſignes of his power & might. But hee cauſed it not to bee built, that men ſhould therefore beleeue touching his Maieſtie, whatſoeuer ſeemed good in their eies: but rather, that being admoniſhed of Gods *preſence*, by the viſible ceremonies, they might from thence lift vp their hearts into heauen, acknowledging the Lord to be greater and more excellent then all the world. And yet men being of their owne natures inclined to ſuperſtitions; the meanes which were giuen the Iewes for their helpe, prooued lets and hinderances vnto them by their owne fault. So farre were they off then from mounting vp to heauen by them through faith, that they kept their mindes groueling heere below, and made themſelues beleeue that God was bound and tied vnto them: for which cauſe they ſerued him by halfes, yea, they toied with him at their pleaſure.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Saint *Stephen* alleadgeth this place to verie good purpoſe, in Act. 7. 48. And the Apoſtle *Paul* cloſly applies it to the ſenſe that we haue touched, Act. 17. 24. For both of them ſhew, that ſuch groſly deceiue themſelues, who bring carnall rites vnto God; as if his ſeruice and true religion conſiſted therein: as alſo thoſe who wickedly deface his glory, by ſetting vp Idols and Images. For Saint *Stephen* directs his ſpeech to the *Iewes*, who being fixed to the *ſhadowes of the Law*, neglected true godlineſſe. And Saint *Paul* ſpeaking to the *Gentiles*, denies that God dwels in *Temples* made with hands.

S. Stephen. Saint Paul. 1 2

Verſ. 2. *For all theſe things hath mine hand made, and all theſe things haue* *been, ſaith the Lord: and to him will I looke, euen to him that is poore, and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my word.*

*Or, had a beginning.

THe Prophet refutes the falſe opinion which men conceiued of Gods ſeruice, in regard they thought that ſacrifices and externall ceremonies auailed very much of themſelues. For this is the ſtate of the queſtion, namely, that God contents not himſelfe with bare and naked ceremonies; that he holds them vaine and idle diſguiſings, when men thinke to ſatisfie him with them. 1 2

Where he ſaith, that *he hath made all things*; it muſt not onely be referred to the *Temple*, but to whatſoeuer was there *offered* vnto God. Now hee ſpeakes expreſly of his *making* of them, to teach men that he hath no need of this externall ſeruice. As in Pſal. 50. 10. he proteſts that *all beaſts are his creatures*, and by right belong to him; and yet (forſooth) the Iewes would needs pacifie him by ſacrificing of them. But ſee heere the diſeaſe which is rooted in the hearts of the ſuperſtitious ſort, namely, that they transforme God into what Image they liſt, though himſelfe hath ordained an outward worſhippe; not for his owne profit, but for ours, that ſo we might be exerciſed therein, according to the reach of our capacities.

God ordaines his worſhip not for his owne profit, but for ours.

The word *beginning*, is as much as if he had ſaid; You ought not to compare nee vnto thoſe things which heeretofore haue *begunne* to be. ſeeing I am *eternall*, and without any beginning. I haue little need then of your ſacrifices, ſaith the Lord, who *was before them*. What good, I pray you, then can they do me? In a word, hee contends, that ceremonies are nothing worth in themſelues, but belong to another end. *Iſaiah* alſo holds it for a thing out of queſtion, that God can receiue no increaſes: whence it followes, that he only contents himſelfe with himſelfe, ſeeing from all eternitie *hee neuer ſtood in need* of the worlds helpe.

A true definition of Gods seruice.

In the next place the definition of the true worship is added. For in saying that God *regardes the humble*, I doubt not but the Prophet here priuilie opposeth the *humble, and contrite in spirit*, to that pompe, brauerie and glistering shew of ceremonies, which are wont to dazle mens eies, and to rauish them out of themselues. The Lord testifies then, that hee rather requires *humble and broken hearts, which tremble at his commandement*. Vnder which words, hee notes out *the inward puritie of the heart*, and a true hunger and thirst after righteousnesse: and therewithall also teacheth vs how wee ought to be prepared to become acceptable vnto God.

Obiect.

As touching the word *trembling*, it might seeme strange at the first, that the Prophet should require this of the faithfull; seeing nothing is more sweete and acceptable, then the *word* of the Lord: neither any thing more contrarie vnto it then *trembling*. I an-

Ans. Two sorts of trembling.

swere, that there are two sorts of trembling. With one of them those are smitten *who flee* and hate the Lord: with the other they are touched and *made obedient*, who reuerence and feare him. I am not ignorant that some referre this member to the law, which threatens, terrifies and denounceth the horrible iudgements of God against sinners. But I take it more generally, in regard that the faithfull themselues *tremble at the promises*, when they receiue them in humility. Hence let vs gather, that true pietie consists in hauing all our senses framed according to the obedience of God, without attributiug any thing to our selues through pride or vaine glorie. For it is the nature of faith to yeeld obedience to God: and to heare him speake, attentiuelie and patiently. But no sooner doth any vaine opinion of our owne worth puffe vs vp with pride and lofttinesse of mind: but wee are foorthwith destitute of all godlinesse and feare of God; because if we attribute vnto our selues neuer so little; so much the more doe we contemne and despise him.

A trembling at the promises.

Wherein true pietie consists.

The nature of faith.

And it is diligently to be obserued that he saith, that *tremble* at my *word*: for many will brag of their honouring and fearing of God; who yet shew themselues *contemners* of his Maiestie, in that they set light by his *word*. All our reuerence which wee professe to owe vnto God, must be manifested by trébling at his *word*: in which hee will bee acknowledged, as in his *liuely image*. The sum is, that God preferres this sacrifice before all others; namely, when the faithfull are so humbled in the true deniall of themselues, that they think themselues nothing, yea and are content to be brought to nothing also in Gods sight. In which sense it is said: Psal. 51.17. That *a contrite spirit is an acceptable sacrifice vnto God. A broken and a contrite heart O God* (saith the Prophet) *thou wilt not despise*. Now because this modestie of faith, brings forth teachableneesse in vs; therefore the studie of godlinesse is also added: that hauing cast down al our pride and rebellion, we may begin to tremble at ỹ word of God.

A singular consolation.

From these words we haue to gather a singular consolation; namely, that albeit wee seeme to be miserable in this our humilitie and low estate; yea, and that we be thought vnworthie the looking on: yet cease we not for all that to be happie; because it pleaseth the Lord to *behold vs* with a gracious aspect. When we are solicited then to despaire, let vs thinke: surely the Lord is wont euen *by this meanes to raise vp his children vnto heaven*, howsoeuer being here for a time brought euen to ỹ gates of hell, they seeme to be ouerwhelmed vnder the waight of the burthen.

Vers. 3. *Hee that killeth a bullocke, is as if he slew a man: hee that sacrificeth a sheepe, as if he cut off a dogges necke: he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swines blood: he that remembreth incense, as if he blessed an Idoll: yea, they haue chosen their owne waies, and their soule deliteth in their abominations.*

THis present verse containes two members. In the first, *Isaiah* plainelie manifests, that God *reiects* all the sacrifices of his nation, yea, which more is, that he *abhorred* them. In the second, he notes out an horrible abuse, wherein they had mingled *the ceremonies of the Gentiles*, among the sacrifices of the law: and by this meanes had peruerted and corrupted all. Many thinke that by these words, the sacrifices ordained in the law are abolished. But they deceiue themselues; because *Isaiah* handleth that doctrine now, which he touched before in the first, and in the fiftie eight chapters. But *Isaiah* doth not precisely condemne the sacrifices, but rather the vices & corruptions which were mingled with them; namely, in that the Iewes thought that God contented himselfe with vaine appearances: and themselues in the meane while neglected his *feare*, and the hauing of a good conscience. Hee speakes not of the thing it selfe then, but taxeth the *persons* who abused the sacrifices. For in thus doing, they offered him no better then *the emptie shels*. His meaning briefflie is to say, *That God approoues of none other sacrifices, but such as procede from a pure heart and a sincere affection.*

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God condemnes not the sacrifices, but the corruptions mingled therewith.

In the meane while it is very likely the Prophet alludes to those horrible and monstrous sacrifices of the Gentiles. For they sacrificed men aliue: or buried them quicke in the earth. And the Romanes, who thought themselues more deuout then others; yea, and the Iewes also, abstained not from so horrible and execrable a crime. Nay, which more is, these men in their inconsiderate zeale defiled themselues with the murthering of many children: thinking therin forsooth to imitate their father *Abraham*: Gen. 22.10. And *Isaiah* therfore saith, that in sacrificing *an axe*, it was al one, as if they had *cut a mans throate*. And thus he shewes that albeit the Iewes had a religiō apart by themselues, and such a one as was ordained by God; yet were they esteemed no better *then the prophane heathen*, among whom all things were filthie and vncleane. Also, that God approued no more of

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Gods name no leſſe prophaned by hypocriſie, then by ſuperſtition.

the one, then of the other, in regard his name was no leſſe profaned by their *hypocriſie*, then by the *ſuperſtitions* of the Gentiles. But in another place we haue ſhewed how needfull this admonition was. For though the Iewes were ſufficiently conuinced of all manner of abominations, yet they iudged themſelues in good caſe as long as they might lie lurking vnder this couerture. The Prophet therefore meets with them in their turnings, and affirmes that they ſhall gaine no more by thinking thus to pacifie God, then if they offered vp vnto him the *ſacrilegious abominations of the heathen*.

When in the end of the verſe he ſaith, *yea*, or, in truth; the place may be tranſlated two waies: becauſe ẏ relatiue may agree as well to the Gentiles, as to the Iewes, namely, that the Iewes had mingled & intangled themſelues in the idolatries of the Gentiles: or that they followed their owne inuentions. The firſt expoſition is not much amiſſe, were it not conſtrained; for he ſpake not of the Gentiles before. And the height of the Iewes impietie conſiſted in this, that beſides the abuſe of Gods pure worſhip, and contempt of the law, they had prophaned the Temple, and all other places with wicked and curſed ſuperſtitions. They ſet vp Altars, they planted groues, they ſet foorth plaies, and ſights: ſo as they walked after euery thing that was *ſet vp* to corrupt their minds. Thus there was *a mingle mangle* of all ſuperſtions betweene *them* and *the heathen*: ſuch as is at this day to bee ſeene in the papacie: Where wee behold many fragments patched together of all ſorts of ſuperſtitions, not only *Iewiſh* and *heathineſſe*, but alſo newly inuented by the diuell himſelfe: that by meanes thereof they might vnder ſuch goodlie ſhewes, the more eaſily coſen and deceiue the world.

Popiſh ſuperſtitions, Iewiſh, Heathenſh, and diueliſh.

The Prophet then meant to ſay, that both themſelues and their companions deſerued double condemnation; becauſe whileſt they gloried in the name of God, and made profeſſion of his ſeruice, they were not aſhamed to pollute the ſame with the ſacrileges of *idolatrous nations*.

The other expoſition is not obſcure: and it alſo ſutes well; namely, that the Iewes were addicted to follow the vanitie of their owne *inuentions*; and ſo followed their *abominations*. And thus he affirmes, that ſuch ſerue not God with a pure affection, who at their pleaſure deſpiſe him. Not onely in reſpect that they are ſtuffed full of auarice, hatred, ambition, guile, crueltie and robberies: but in regard that by their inuentions, they had corrupted Gods ſeruice. And albeit the relatiue ought to bee vnderſtood of the Iewes: yet the Prophet therewithall condemnes all the ſuperſtitions which they had borrowed from prophane nations. Thus there is no great difference in reſpect of the thing it ſelfe. For he only teacheth that whatſoeuer proceeded from them was filthie and abominable, becauſe they had malepertly, and rebelliouſly ſhaken off Gods yoke: ſo as impiety raigned among them in euery place. For how can thoſe riuers be pure and cleane, which receiue nothing but mier and durt from an impure fountaine?

Simile.

Their *choice* and deſire did more manifeſtly diſcouer their obſtinacie; for hauing wittingly caſt Gods commandements behind their backes, they applied their minds vnto things vtterly contrarie thereunto: as if of ſet purpoſe they had determined to reiect whatſoeuer proceeded from God, that they might yeeld obedience to their owne peruerſe luſts.

Verſ. 4. *Therefore will I chuſe out their deluſions, and I wil bring their feare vpon them, becauſe I called, and none would anſwere: I ſpake, and they would not heare: but they did euill in my ſight, and choſe the things that I would not.*

THe Prophet meant to ſay that the Iewes ſhould gaine nothing by ſeeking out goodly pretences, and ſtarting holes; becauſe God cannot bee deluded by the fained and coloured words of men. For what reaſon is it indeede, that wee ſhould meaſure God according to our blind reaſon? neither is it meete he ſhould ſtand to mans arbitrement: but wee muſt iudge of his workes by his word.

Gods works muſt be iudged of by his word.

I will chuſe out.] That is to ſay, I will ſo diſperſe the fogges and miſts which they labour to ſpread abroad, that all ſhall be able to diſcerne of the illuſions. They ſeeme now to ſteale away in their darke, but a time will come, wherein they ſhall bee laid open as at noone day. The ſumme is, that in regard the Iewes were addicted to ſuch a licentiouſneſſe, that they preferred whatſoeuer pleaſed them before Gods commandements: it ſhould alſo come to paſſe, that God would alſo take his turne at his pleaſure, to diſcouer all their iuglings.

The ſumme. 1 2

Vnder the word *feare*, he repeates one and the ſame thing according to ẏ cuſtome of the Hebrues, thus; I will cauſe them to know that they haue erred in ſuch wiſe, that that which they *feared*, ſhall fall vpon their owne heads. Whereby you ſee that their turnings and windings ſhould ſtand them in no ſtead, in confounding the truth with lies; or to cloake their ſuperſtitions: and all becauſe the Lord hath skill enough to ſeparate the one from the other.

For I haue called.] The Prophet doth againe condemne the obſtinacie of the Iewes: who could not abide that the Lord ſhould correct them. There is but on onely remedy left to tame our vices; that is, to *hearken* vnto God ſpeaking, when hee labours to bring vs into the right way. But if we harden our hearts (againſt this remedie) then are we paſt cure. Are men ſo audacious then as to prize their inuentions aboue the commandements of God? Surely, then doe they openly ſcorne him, to whoſe will they ought to bee ſubiect. But this yet is more damnable, namely, when there was ſo great hardneſſe of heart, that the gate was ſhut vp againſt al holy admonitions.

But one remedie left to tame our vices.

In vaine therefore did they boast, that their new found deuotions were of any value, to make their seruice acceptable vnto God; because he reiects and abhorres all that, which men chuse and follow, when they haue cast his word behind their backes.

Isaiah also repeates that which he had said before; namely, that the Iewes had sinned in Gods *presence*: as if they had wittingly determined to prouoke the eies of his glory to wrath. But withall hee addes the meanes wherby they effected it; to wit, in respect that of a peruerse desire, they chose to imbrace that which God had *forbidden them*. Neither is it for nothing that hee thus oft taxeth the vnmeasurable insolencie of men, who defrauding God of his right, care not a buttun for any thing he approues of.

Vers. 5. *Heare the word of the Lord, all yee that tremble at his word. Your brethren that hated you, and* *cast you out for my names sake, said; Let the Lord be glorified: but hee shall appeare to your ioy, and they shall be ashamed.*

*Or, draue you behind them.

Now hee directs his speech *to the true seruants of God*, and promiseth them a thing which they could hardly expect in these so sharpe afflictions. And he speakes in particular vnto them, in regard many at that time bragged fasly of Gods name. Yea, turning himselfe from the multitude, he preacheth to a small handfull: as hath bin shewed in Chap. 8. *Seale vp the Law, and bind vp the testimonie among my Disciples.* Now by this marke hee shewes, that Gods true and lawfull children are those that *tremble at Gods vvord*: which is a rare vertue indeed. He therefore opposeth it to their fained profession, who after they were *circumcised*, would needes bee held for Gods people, & outwardly made great shewes of holinesse; that we might vnderstand, that such onely feare and reuerence God, who honour and *reuerence* his *vvord*: that is to say, who being touched to the quicke with Gods voice, doe subiect all their senses vnder his obedience: for this is no small testimonie of pietie and godlinesse.

Heere hee turnes him againe to the godly.

Such onely feare God, as reuerence his word.

Besides, in as much as hypocrites are wont to cast a wonderful goodly varnish ouer their glorious ceremonies, the Prophets intent is, to arme and fortifie the faithfull, that they might be able to beare such assaults, lest they should faint when they should bee mocked and abused. As if he should say; You haue not onely to fight against *strange nations*, but also against *home enemies*, who hold a place in the Church, and who are your *brethren*, in respect of that couenant, which is *common to you all*. If they scorne your *simplicitie*, in the same sort as they haue proudly despised the Lord himselfe, you must constantly and couragiously resist this temptation.

Brethren, enemies both to the word, and to the godly that professe it.

He calles them *brethren* then, who notwithstanding were *enemies*, both to the *faithfull*, and to *the vvord of the Lord*. For he attributes this name vnto them by way of yeelding or granting it vnto them; who yet vsurped this title fasly. Whence wee gather, that it is no new plague wherewith the Church hath bin pestered; namely, that *the enemies*, who beare the name of *brethren*, should be nourished vp in her lap. *Hence ariseth that perpetuall conflict vvhich vvee must needes haue vvith hypocrites, vvho cannot indure that vve should serue God in puritie and sinceritie of conscience.*

VVho cast you out.] Word for word it is; Who draue you behind them. As wee see how the Pope thunders against vs horribly, as if wee were most abominable and wretched people. And thus the hypocrites reiect the little flock of the faithfull. For when they once get a head, and see themselues the stronger in multitude, authoritie, and power, then doe they exercise such tyrannie, that all things are allowed or disallowed, as they list, and cause the faithfull not onely to bee disgraced and despised, but they ouerwhelme them with their great multitude, as the chaffe doth the good corne, yea, they proudly trample them vnder their feete.

Popes thunderings.

The multitude reiecteth the little flocke.

Let the Lord bee glorified.] Some translate; The Lord is seuere: but let vs examine whether of the two expositions sutes best. Those who turne it, He is seuere; thinke that the wicked complaine, as if God dealt too seuerely in that he spared not his people, and handled them ouer rigorously. They therefore thinke that by this language the people were solicited to despaire: for when the wicked goe about to turne vs from God, they labour to plucke from vs all hope and assurance of our saluation. But I rather rest in the second exposition, which also is most receiued and approued of; to wit, that the wicked doe heere scorne both the *promises and prophecies*, because this *glory* which the Prophets do so oftē mentiō, did not appeare. As if they should say; Let the Lord shew *some signe of his glory*, that wee may boldly rest vpon it. And therefore the Prophet meant to arme the faithfull against such a blasphemie, that they should not suffer their faith to bee shaken by the flouts and mockes of the wicked.

This place also may be taken in this sense, namely, that the wicked promised themselues wonders and mountaines, as if by their good deedes they had merited Gods fauour. Which *Amos*, in Chap. 5. 18. reprocheth the Iewes withall; to wit, that they perswaded themselues God would bee mercifull vnto them, whilest they obstinately prouoked the Lord. In as much then as vnder pretext of their sacrifices, they despised all threatnings, and yet made their brags, as if God would aide them; the Prophet answers, that they shall *see the glory of God*, but after another maner then they expected. In a word, it is all one as if he had said; The Lord at his comming will cause the faithfull to know, that their hope was not vaine. For hee would appeare with *fauour* to the good: but to their *shame* and destruction, who affirmed that hee would come to maintaine their impietie, whereof hee is the enemie and auenger. The one sort should inioy *gladnesse* of heart and consolation: but the others, *shame* and confusion. For they should speedilie

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ſpeedilie taſte of Gods vengeance, at which they now ieſt.

Verſ. 6. *A voice ſounds from the Citie, euen a voice from the Temple, the voice of the Lord that recompenceth his enemies fully.*

A confirmation of the former ſentence.

HEe confirmes the former ſentence, namely, that God hath not threatned in vaine, that he wil quickly come to puniſh the hypocrites, that the faithfull may with the more cheerfulneſſe of heart, wait for this promiſed ioy. But all the difficultie is, to know of what *enemies* he ſpeakes: for wee may vnderſtand this place of the Babylonians, by whoſe ruine God deliuered his Church. It may alſo bee applied to the other enemies, who were entertained in the boſome of the Church. And I rather incline to this latter ſenſe, though I denie not but it may be vnderſtood of all ſorts of enemies. But hee reſpects the home enemies, of whom he hath hitherunto ſpoken, who reiected the voice of God, ſounding continually by the miniſtry of the Prophets. Well, ſaith hee, It ſhall come to paſſe that you ſhall *heare a more horrible voice*. And yet hee forthwith mitigates his ſpeech, leſt this terror ſhould diſcourage the ſeruants of God.

The ſumme.

The ſumme is, that the wicked reioice in vaine, when they oppoſe their rebellions againſt Gods iudgements. Why ſo? Becauſe they ſhall not eſcape his hand. Nay, which more is, *his voice ſhall ſound* from that Temple, wherein they put ſuch carnall confidence; and that the faithfull ſhall then receiue the fruit of their patience. Would to God that we at this day did not perceiue the like contempt among the rout of hypocrites, who care neither for admonitiõs nor threatnings at all: neither beare they any reuerence to Gods word. In ſtead of that ſweete and *ſtill voice* which they now heare, we are conſtrained to preach *the voice of feare* and tumult, which one day ſhall ring in their eares; but it ſhal be frõ ỹ mouthes of ſuch maſters, as ſhall be of a clean contrary diſpoſition. For ſeeing the world is ſo audacious, as with a ſacrilegious contempt to reiect Gods word, it ſhall bee conſtrained not onely to heare, but alſo to feele an *armed voice*: that is to ſay, fire and blood.

Verſ. 7. *Before ſhee trauailed, ſhee brought forth: and before her paine came, ſhee was deliuered of a man child.*

God prouides for the ſafetie of his children, whileſt he chaſtiieth the wicked.

THe Prophet hauing before comforted the faithfull, to the end the arrogancie and pride of their enemies (with which they ſhould be afflicted) might not aſtoniſh them: and after that hauing commanded them to wait conſtantly till the comming of the Lord; now he addes therewithall, that the wicked ſhall bee ſo puniſhed, that yet God in the meane while will prouide for the ſafetie of his choſen. Neither ſpeakes he onely of ſome one or two men, but of the *vvhole Church*, which he compares to a *vvoman*: which ſimilitude hee hath vſed heeretofore. For the Lords ſpeciall meaning is, to gather vs into a body, wherein wee may haue the teſtimonie of our adoption: as alſo to acknowledge him for our *father*, and that we may be nouriſhed vp in the Church, as in the lap of our *mother*. This ſimilitude therefore of a *mother* is very apt: for it ſignifies that the Church ſhall bee ſo reſtored, that ſhee ſhall haue a large and ample of-ſpring, though for a time ſhe was reputed for a widow and barren. And hee repeates the ſentence againe, which hee vſed heeretofore: but now hee expreſſeth ſomewhat more, namely, that this worke of God ſhall be ſudden and vnexpected. For he withdrawes the faithfull from all carnall conceits, that they ſhould not iudge of the reſtauration of the Church according to humane reaſon.

Women are wont to beare their children the ſpace of nine moneths in their wombes: then at laſt they bring them forth with great paine: but the Lord hath another way in begetting of his children. It ſhall come to paſſe, ſaith hee, that the fruit ſhall come into the world, before it can be either perceiued, or felt by any paine. And that is the cauſe alſo why hee attributes the whole praiſe thereof vnto himſelfe, in regard that ſuch a miracle farre ſurpaſſeth all the induſtrie of man.

Now hee ſpeakes eſpecially of a *man child*, to ſet forth the courage and agilitie of theſe children. For his meaning heereby is, that ſuch a race ſhall be of a noble kind, and not delicate or effeminate. As we alſo know that the faithfull are ſo regenerated by the Spirit of Chriſt, that they finiſh their courſe with an inuincible courage. And in this ſenſe Saint *Paul* ſaith, that they haue not receiued the ſpirit of bondage to feare againe, &c. Rom. 8. 15.

Verſ. 8. *Who hath heard ſuch a thing? Who hath ſeene ſuch things? Shall the earth be brought forth in one day? Or ſhall a nation bee borne at once? For as ſoone as Zion trauailed, ſhe brought forth children.*

HE extols the greatnes of this work, whereof he ſpake in the former verſe. For his meaning is, that the reſtauration of the Church ſhall be admirable, and extraordinarie, in ſuch wiſe that the faithfull ſhall confeſſe the whole worke hath proceeded from Gods meere grace, and not from the order or courſe of nature. For when men thinke of this, they are like to them that dreame, as it is ſaid in Pſalm. 126. 1. Moreouer, his meaning is not that the reſtauration of the Church, ſhall be perfected by and by. For the aduancements thereof are tedious and diuers, yea very ſlow in the iudgement of our fleſh; but he ſhews that the beginning it ſelfe

ſurmounts ẏ reach of al mens capacities. And yet he ſpeakes not exceſſiuely neither. For we often ſee that the Church brings foorth, when ſhe was not iudged to be with child before. Nay, which more is, whileſt ſhee is thought to be barren, ſhee is made fruitfull by the preaching of the Goſpell; in ſuch wiſe, that we admire at the thing after it is come to paſſe, in reſpect it ſeemed incredible to vs before.

Theſe things were in part accompliſhed when the people returned out of Babylon. But we haue a much more euident proofe of it in the Goſpell; after the publiſhing whereof, what an *infinite number of children hath there been borne in the Church?* And haue not we in our times ſeene the accompliſhment of this propheſie? For ſince thirtie yeeres paſt that the Goſpell hath been preached, how many children hath the Church borne? Hath not the Lord now troupes of them diſperſed throughout the world? Nothing was here foretold then, which we ſee not at this day fulfilled euen with our eies.

Now he ſets foorth the glorie of this miracle by a ſimilitude. For what people or nation came there euer into the world all at an inſtant? For men are gathered and increaſed by little and little. But it is farre otherwiſe with the Church; who *foorthwith* brings foorth and repleniſheth many places with great numbers of her children. The ſumme is, that God will work ſo powerfully, ẏ by an extraordinary manner, the Church ſhal haue an infinite number of children *in an inſtant*. The word *earth*, may be taken for any countrie, or for the inhabitants of it.

The ſumme.

Verſ. 9. *Shall I cauſe to trauell, and not bring foorth? ſhall I cauſe to bring foorth, and ſhall bee barren, ſaith thy God.*

Gods power ought not to be called into queſtion.

EVen as in the former verſe the Prophet hath highly magnified the worke of God: ſo now hee alſo ſhewes that it is not to bee thought impoſſible; neither ought any to call his power into queſtion, ſeeing it farre ſurmounts all the whole order of nature. For if we conſider *who* it is that ſpeakes, and how eaſie a matter it is for him to performe that which he hath promiſed, we ſhall not bee ſo incredulous; but that wee ſhall foorthwith remember that the reſtauration of the whole world is in his hands, who in a moment can create a hundred worlds, if it pleaſe him. A little before by intermingling an *admiration*, he meant to extoll *the greatneſſe of the worke*: but now to the end the hearts of the faithful ſhould not be hindred nor depreſſed, he exhorts them to thinke well of his *power*. And that he might the better perſwade them that nothing is ſo impoſſible with man, but it is eaſie with him, and by and by obeyes his commandement; hee propounds and ſets before them the things which wee ſee euery day by experience. For who perceiues not euidently his admirable power *in women bearing of children?* But will not the Lord trow yee ſhew himſelfe, much more wonderfull in the increaſing and multiplying of his Church, which is the moſt excellent theater of his glorie? What a peruerſneſſe of mind is it then to limit and reſtraine his power, or to thinke that hee is leſſe able when it pleaſeth him by himſelfe alone to worke without meaees, and as it were with an out-ſtretched arme, then when he vſeth naturall meanes?

Verſ. 10. *Reioice ye with Ieruſalem, and be glad with her, all yee that loue her: reioyce for ioy with her, al ye that mourne for her.*

Who are fit to reioyce for the churches deliuerance.

ISaiah promiſeth an happie eſtate to thoſe who wept and lamented before: for he reſpects not his owne time, in which hee liued, but the captiuitie, during which the faithfull being oppreſſed and beaten downe with ſorrow, had almoſt fainted. He therefore exhorts and prouokes all thoſe who intirely *loue* the Church, and hold nothing more deare vnto them then her ſaluation, *to reioyce*. Hereby ſhewing that no man hath any part or portion in this ſo great a benefit, vnleſſe ſuch only as beare *an holy loue* vnto the Church, and are thorowly affected with a feruent deſire of her deliuerance: Yea, euen then when ſhee is contemptible in the ſight of the world, as it is ſaid in Pſal. 102. namely, That the Saints *delite* in the ſcattered ſtones of the Church, and that they *haue pitie* on the duſt thereof.

For this cauſe he addes, *you that mourne for her*. For in regard there was a lamentable and an horrible ſcattering in the captiuitie, ſo as there was no recouerie at all to bee expected; hee rouzeth vp the faithfull, and commands them to bee of good courage; or at leaſt, to prepare themſelues to *ioy*.

This exhortation containes alſo a promiſe & ſomething more then that too: For a bare promiſe would not haue been of ſuch efficacie: But, theſe things muſt not bee reſtrained to one time alone. We are rather to call to minde our generall rule, whereof wee haue ſo often ſpoken in this propheſie; namely, that theſe promiſes muſt be extended from the returne of the people, to the comming of Chriſt; and ſo to the full accompliſhment of all promiſes at his laſt appearing.

Verſ. 11. *That you may ſucke and be ſatisfied with the breaſts of her conſolation: that you may milke out, and bee delighted with the brightneſſe of her glory.*

The occaſion of the former ioy.

THis verſe muſt bee ioyned with the former. Becauſe the Prophet ſhewes what the occaſion of this ioy ſhall be; namelie, that the miſerable and ſcattered eſtate of the Church, ſhall in time turne to be happie and flouriſhing. By the word *to ſucke*, hee alludes to the actions of little infants. As if he ſhould ſay, *Ioiey your mother, with all her good things, and hang continually at her breaſts*. Note here that

The oldeſt in the church muſt reſemble a little child.

that he compares all the faithfull of what age ſoeuer vnto *little children*: to put them in mind of their infirmitie and weakneſſe, that ſo they might be confirmed by the power of the Lord. This ſimilitude therefore of *milking* and *ſucking*, is diligently to bee obſerued.

Some take the word *conſolations*, in the actiue ſignification, and others in the paſſiue. But I incline to them of the latter ſort. For the Prophet meanes ſuch conſolations, as the Church receiues: and which ſhe imparts vnto her children. And indeed what *conſolation* is comparable vnto this? For in what can we find matter of more excellent or full contentment? which better appeares in the member following, where the delectation in the *brightneſſe of her glorie* is added.

Verſ. 12. *For thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace ouer her like a flood, and the glorie of the Gentiles like a flowing ſtreame: then ſhall yee ſucke. Ye ſhall be borne vpon* her *ſides, and be ioyfull vpon* her *knees.*

The former ſimilitude proſecuted.

HE proſecutes the ſame ſimilitude ſtill, and compares Gods children vnto *little babes* which are carried *in armes*, whom the mothers cheriſh *in their boſomes*: with whom alſo they vſe to ſport and play. Now that the Lord might the better expreſſe to the full the great loue he beares vs, hee compares himſelfe to mothers, who are wont to ſurpaſſe all others in kindneſſe to their children, as wee noted in Chap. 49.15. The Lord then will needes be *our mother*, as it were, that he may ſhew himſelfe to be tender ouer vs, (as if hee dandled vs in his lap: in ſtead of thoſe troubles, outrages, miſeries, and anguiſhes which we haue ſuſtained.

In verſ.13.

By *peace*, he meanes felicitie: and in the word *glorie*, there is a repetition, vnder which is comprehended all ſorts of riches: ſo as they ſhould want nothing appertaining to a full and perfect *peace*. For in as much as the Gentiles liued ſumptuouſlie before, and had all things at will; he affirmes that the faithfull alſo ſhall enioy whatſoeuer belongs to an happie life; euen in as great abundance, as the *floods* which flow into the ſea.

Vſe.

By the continuall courſe, is meant a perpetuitie. For God being in himſelfe a *fountaine* that can neuer be drawne drie: his *peace* muſt needs differ very much from that of the world; which is in a moment dried vp, and vaniſheth away. As oft then as wee behold the wofull and lamentable eſtate of the Church, let vs call to mind theſe ſweete promiſes; and remember that they belong no leſſe vnto vs then they did vnto that people. And ſeeing God hath *floods of peace* in ſtore, which he wil powre foorth vpon his Church: let vs not bee diſcomforted, no, not in the middeſt of the greateſt and ſharpeſt aſſaults. But rather let vs ſing, and be glad; when miſeries and anguiſhes doe moſt preſſe vs.

And whereas he delightes in vs as in *children*; and not as in men of a ripe age, let vs willingly acknowledge our condition to bee ſuch; that ſo we may gladly accept of theſe conſolations. For doubtleſſe it is a ſigne of Gods infinite goodneſſe towards vs, when he is thus pleaſed to ſupport our infirmities.

Verſ.13. *As one whom his mother comforts, ſo will I comfort you, and yee ſhall bee comforted in Ieruſalem:*

14. *And when ye ſee this, your heart ſhall reioyce, and your bones ſhall floriſh like an Hearbe: and the hand of the Lord ſhall be knowne among his ſeruants, and his indignation againſt his enemies.*

The firſt member of this verſe is expounded before in verſ.12.

IT is wonderfull to ſee how long the Prophet inſiſts vpon this renouation: for it might ſeeme that he had ſpoken fully of it before. But for as much as hee could not ſufficiently expreſſe the great loue and affection which God beares vs, nor content himſelfe to haue ſpoken of it, therefore it is that hee redoubles and repeates one and the ſame thing ſo often.

When he ſaith, they ſhall be *comforted in Ieruſalem*: it may be expounded two waies. For the meaning may bee, that the faithfull ſhall be glad, when they ſhall ſee the Church reſtord: or, the Church being reſtored, that ſhee will endeuour to comfort her children. The firſt expoſition ſeemes more copious: but we ought to haue an eie to the Prophets meaning, and not to that which carries a faire ſhew only. In the firſt place he makes 1
God the author of this conſolation. And hath 2
he not good cauſe? yet notwithſtanding ads in the ſecond place, that it ſhall be in Ieruſalem, by whom it was to be adminiſtred. You ſee then that this *comfort* is not offered nor giuen to the prophane contemners, who care not what becomes of the Church, but to thoſe who out of a true affection of godlines doe manifeſt themſelus to be her children.

The verbe *to ſee*, expreſſeth a ſure experience; that the faithfull ſhould not doubt of the euent: but fully imbracing this propheſie, they might patiently endure for a time their mothers barrenneſſe.

He illuſtrates this by a ſimilitude, when he ſaith, that their *bones* ſhuld receiue new force and vigor, euen as dead hearbs waxe greene, after winter. Now hee ſpeakes of *the bones*, which become withered with *ſorrow*, as *Salomon* ſaith: Prou.17.22. as on the contrarie, *Ioy* is wont to *repleniſh and reuiue them*. Thus he notes out a vehement, and an incomparable ioy: and it ſeemes he alludes to that ſorrow which had almoſt dried vp the bones of the faithfull in captiuitie; in ſo much that they were become withered, and like dead men. The Lord therefore comforts them, and promiſeth that his Church ſhall *flouriſh* and abound in all bleſſings. Afterwards, that he might giue them better aſſurance, hee commands them to lift vp their minds vnto *God*, who will then manifeſt his ſuccour.

It is added afterward, that the *hand* of the Lord

Lord was not alwaies reuealed, but remained couered for a time, as if he had been vtterly careleſſe of his choſen. For in appearance, it ſeemed hee had reiected them, ſeeing *Daniel* and other good men were carried away captiues, no leſſe then *Zedekiah*. When the Sunne ſhould ſhine againe vpon them then, there ſhould bee manifeſted ſuch a difference betweene the godly and the wicked, that his *hand* which before was as it were *hidden*, ſhould now euidently appeare, becauſe hee will no more diſſemble the matter, nor ſuffer the wicked any longer to take their full ſwinge, but will openly ſhew what great care he hath ouer his Church. Haue our enemies gotten the ſtart of vs then, & haue they made their part the ſtronger, ſo as wee ſeeme for a time to be forſaken, and left deſtitute of all helpe? Yet let vs not faint nor be diſcouraged, for *a day vvill come*, wherein the Lord will *reueale* himſelfe, and will ſet vs *free* from vnder the tyrannie and violence of the *enemies*.

Vſe.

Verſ. 15. *For behold the Lord will come with fire, and his charets like a whirlewind, that he may recompence anger with wrath, and his indignation with a flame of fire.*

THe end of this deſcription is, that when the faithfull ſhould ſee their miſeries to ſerue in ſtead of a may game to the wicked, whereat they would laugh their fill: yet they ſhould not therefore turne from the right way, nor be diſcouraged. For the Prophet meant not onely to gall the wicked, who are wont to be daunted with no threatnings whatſoeuer, but ſcorne all that is told them: but he therewithall comforts the faithfull, to aſſure them that they ſhould be in good caſe, being vnder Gods protection: as alſo that they ſhould not ioine in league with the wicked, though all things fell out according to their deſires. Thus then it is to the faithfull eſpecially, to whom the Prophet hath reſpect, to the end they ſhould content themſelues with Gods grace and protection. But it cannot well be affirmed, whether he heere comprehends the laſt iudgement, with thoſe temporall iudgements wherewith the wicked begin heere to be puniſhed withall. For mine owne part, I nothing doubt, but this iudgement is comprehended with thoſe puniſhments which are onely forerunners of eternall death.

1 *The Lord vvill come.*] This beganne to take effect at that time, in which the people being carried into Babylon, God ſhewed his vengeance vpon the domeſtike enemies of his
2 Church. Afterward, when the time of their deliuerance was accompliſhed, then hee incountred with an outſtretched arme, with the prophane nations, and neuer ceaſed to giue them diuers ſignes of his *comming*; by which he ſhewed himſelfe preſent to his peo-
3 ple, and came in *fire* to iudge his enemies. Laſtly, wee know *that he vvill come in flaming fire at the laſt day*, to reuenge himſelfe vpon all the wicked: 2. Theſ. 1. 8. 2. Pet. 3. 7. But this place muſt not bee reſtrained to the laſt iudgement, vnleſſe we alſo comprehend the reſt therewithall. Not withſtanding hee oppoſeth theſe threatnings eſpecially againſt the hypocrites, (as wee ſhall ſee heereafter) which were among the Iewes.

Now theſe metaphors are much vſed in the Scriptures: for we cannot otherwiſe comprehend this horrible iudgement of God, vnleſſe the Prophet ſhould vſe theſe ſimilitudes, taken from things in common vſe amongſt vs. The Prophets labour thereby to touch our ſences to the quicke, that ſo being mooued with the true feare of God, wee ſhould not enuie the eſtate of the wicked, for whom ſo horrible and fearefull a vengeance is prepared.

Fond ſpeculations of Sophiſters.

By this we may ſee how fond and vnfruitfull the ſpeculations of the Sophiſters are, who ſtand to diſpute about the qualitie and ſharpneſſe of this fire: ſeeing the drift of the holy Ghoſt is vnder theſe borrowed ſpeeches, to ſet forth the horrible iudgement of God: becauſe otherwiſe wee are not able to imagin, nor comprehend the ſame. And this appeares yet better by the word *ſword*, (which he vſeth in the next verſe) for there is the ſame reaſon to be giuen of it.

Verſ. 16. *For the Lord will iudge with fire and with his ſword, all fleſh: and the ſlaine of the Lord ſhall be many.*

A confirmation of the former denunciation.

HEe addes nothing different from the former, but onely confirmes the former ſentence; and ſhewes, that this iudgement ſhall be *terrible*, leſt any ſhould thinke the matter hee ſpeakes of were of ſmall conſequence. Thus then he amplifies this horror, the more to terrifie the wicked, as alſo to cauſe the godly to keepe themſelues in all puritie and integritie, by withdrawing themſelues from the ſocietie of the godleſſe. And that therewithall they ſhould alſo patiently beare the iniuries and cruell aſſaults of the enemies, vntill God ſhewed himſelfe with his reuenging hand from heauē, to execute his vengeance. Now he threatens the deſtruction of all men, in ſuch wiſe, that there ſhould be *great heapes of dead bodies*. And this hee added expreſly, in regard that impietie raigned in euery place; and the faithfull were ſharplie aſſailed, in reſpect of the wickeds proſperitie. For as our mindes are variable, ſo wee ſuffer our ſelues to bee carried away with bad examples, and the multitude puts many toies in our heads, as if the ſame were of ſufficient force to withſtand the hand of God. The Prophet corrects this peruerſe feare of ours; for by how much the more impietie, and the great troopes of the wicked beares the ſway, ſo much the more will Gods wrath be inflamed to burne the hotter: ſo as the numbers and plots of the wicked, ſhall not hinder the Lord from wrapping them alſo vp in the ſame ruine.

Verſ. 17. *They that ſanctifie themſelues,*

*ſelues, and puriſie themſelues in gardens, *behind one tree, in the middeſt, eating ſwines fleſh, and ſuch abominations: *euen the meaſe ſhall bee conſumed together, ſaith the Lord.*

*Or, in a fountaine which is in the midſt. *Or, and.

NOw he notes out theſe enemies (as with his finger) againſt whom he ſaid, Gods ire ſhould be inflamed. For it was hard to diſcerne whether hee ſpake of forraine and open enemies; or whether hee directed his ſpeech to the contemners of God; who notwithſtanding were mingled among the godly. And therefore he taxeth the falſe hearted Iewes, which had reuolted. And I doubt not but in the firſt place hee gauls the hypocrites: and next of all, the wicked: that is to ſay, thoſe who ouerflowed in their inordinate luſts: which is meant *by eating of ſwines fleſh.*

The persons noted, to whom this vengeance belonged.

1 2

The hypocrites *ſanctified themſelues:* that is, they ſmoothed ouer things vnder the pretext of holineſſe: by which meanes they beguiled many.

1

They *puriſied themſelues in gardens.*] That is, they polluted themſelues with diuers ſuperſtitions. And yet by ſuch inuentions, they thought to make themſelues the purer in Gods ſight. Others, without any diſſimulatiõ, deſpiſed God and all godlineſſe. It is a generall ſentence then, vnder which he comprehends all idolatries, as well ſuch as manifeſted their wickednes in all mens ſight, as the others, who couered and cloaked the ſame vnder diuers ſhadowes.

2

When hee addes; *by a garden vvhich is in the midſt*: ſome expoſitors ſupply a pond or fiſh poole, as if in the midſt of the garden, there had beene ſome holy water put to waſh in. But the other ſenſe agrees alſo well, in regard y as euery one had his god apart, ſo did he alſo *thoſe one* ſome one tree among others.

Verſ. 18. *For I will viſit their workes and their imaginations: for it ſhall come to paſſe, that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they ſhall come and ſee my glory.*

A confirmation of the former ſentence.

HEe confirmes that which hee ſaid in the former verſe; namely, that all the wicked ſhould be puniſhed, to the end that howſoeuer the Lord was content to let them alone for a while to worke their wils; yet ſhould the faithfull be well aſſured to behold the day of their vengeance, and that this ſhould be as it were a preſeruatiue to let them from being carried away with the ſtreame of the multitude. The Lord teſtifies heere, that he ſo ſees and notes their *workes*, that it ſhall bee manifeſted by the effects one day, that none could flee from the regard of his eies.

Some take it as if the wicked were able to doe nothing without Gods permiſſion: which ſentẽce is true in it ſelfe; but yet it ſutes not with this place. And euery one may ſee it to be farre ſerched, and wide from the Prophets meaning: for he onely confirmes that which he ſaid before; to wit, that *the hypocrites and notorious offendors*, ſhould bee puniſhed at the laſt; becauſe God kept a *regiſter* of all their *imaginations*, deliberations, and wicked *actions*. So as they ſhould gaine nothing in the end by their ſhifts; as if it were vnpoſſible to bring them to iudgement.

Becauſe *the time is come.*] We haue heere the confirmation of that which hath been ſaid: for hee ſhewes that *the time* drawes neere, in which hee will *call all nations together*, and adopt them as one people vnto himſelfe, *after he hath reiected the hypocrites, and the open vvicked ones.* The Iewes were proudly conceited of themſelues, and contemned all nations beſides, as vile and prophane. But the Lord proteſts heere that hee will adopt *them*, that they may partake of his glory, whereof the Iewes had made themſelues vnworthy.

Truly this is an excellent place, in which we are taught that God is bound to no people in the world, but that it reſts in his will, freely to chuſe whom it pleaſeth him; and to reiect the vnbeleeuers, whom in times paſt hee had called to himſelfe. Which doctrine, Saint *Paul* diſcourſeth of at large, in Rom. 10.19. and 11.25. where hee ſhewes how wee are grafted as into an emptie ſtocke, after the Iewes by their infidelitie had been reiected. *Iſaiah* threatens them now with it: (as if he ſhould ſay;) I would not haue you ſo ſimple as to thinke that God can want a people, ſeeing you forſake him, and thereby make your ſelues vnworthy of his grace. For there are others in the world beſides you: and in the meane while he will ſhew himſelfe to be your Iudge, and will make you feele at length that he cannot alwaies ſuffer his patience to be abuſed.

Doctrine.

And they ſhall come.] For being grafted in by faith, *they ſhall come* together into the Church, with the true Iewes, who had not forſaken the true adoption. For the Iewes being neere vnto God, it was needfull that the Gentiles ſhould be made one with them, that ſo the diſcord being remoued, they might be ioined into one body.

To ſee the glory of the Lord, is nothing elſe but to inioy the grace which hee had ſhewed vnto the Iewes. For this was one ſpeciall priuiledge the Iewes had, namely, that they beheld *Gods glory*, and had with them the ſignes of his preſence. Now he ſaith, that the nations which were depriued of ſuch benefits, ſhould ſee and behold this glory, in regard the Lord was minded to manifeſt himſelfe vnto all without exception.

Verſ. 19. *And I will ſet vp a ſigne among them, and will ſend thoſe that eſcape of them, vnto the riuers of Tarſhiſh, Pul, and Lud; and to them that draw the bow, to Tubal and Iauan, Iles a farre off that haue not heard my fame, neither haue ſeene my glory: and they ſhall declare my glory among the Gentiles.*

An amplification of the former ſentence.

THis may be taken two waies; namely, either that God giues a ſigne; or, that hee markes

markes his with ſome priuy token, to the end they might eſcape ſafe and ſound. The firſt expoſition is moſt receiued. But ſome childiſhly deſcant heere vpon the ſigne of the Croſſe: others referre it to the preaching of the Goſpell: and both of them, as I take it, are wide from the marke. For hee rather ſeemes to allude to that which was done at the going forth and deliuerance of the people: as *Moſes* deſcribes it in Exod.12. 22. And to that which is ſaid in Reuel. 7.4. namely, that the Lord marked all ſuch as ſhould be ſaued, when his wrath ſhould bee powred out vpon the whole world: as thoſe in Egypt eſcaped, whoſe doore poſts were *marked* with the blood of the Paſſeouer. Thus he ſhewes that none but the elect can eſcape the wrath of God, vpon whom this marke is ſtamped. In a word, the Prophet amplifies that which hath been already ſaid, touching the fearefull and horrible iudgement of God, which ſhould light vpon the wicked: for it ſhould conſume all, if he marked not ſome. He promiſeth then to *reſerue* a ſmall number out of this generall ruine of the whole people. This I take to bee the true meaning of our Prophet: according to which hee ſaid in Chap.1.9. and 10.22. that the Lord would *reſerue* out of this generall deuouring flame, *a little remnant*.

The ſigne of the Croſſe.

He addes, that ſome of theſe ſhall bee his *heraulds*, to magnifie his name among the Gentiles. And we know that the doctrine of ſaluation was publiſhed farre and wide, by the Miniſterie of a few ſillie men.

By *Tarſhiſh*, he meanes Cilicia; and vnder that, comprehends all the coaſt of the Mediterraneum ſea, which lay oppoſite to the lād of Iewrie. Others thinke that this word ſignifies Africa, and Cappadocia: but I rather reſt in the former expoſition. Some by *Lud*, vnderſtand Lybia: and others, Aſia. And by thoſe that *draw the bow*, the Parthians; becauſe they were good archers.

Vnder *Tubal* and *Iauan*, ſome vnderſtand Italy and Grecia: and by the *Iles*, hee ſignifies vnknowne regions. For vnder this word, the Iewes comprehend all the nations that lay beyond the ſea: as we haue noted before.

Which haue not heard.] He meanes that the knowledge of God ſhall bee ſpread through the whole world: for the Greekes, Italians, Parthians, they of Cilicia, and other nations *knew nothing* of the pure religion, nor of Gods true worſhip. To bee ſhort, the whole world was wrapped in deepe dungeons of darkneſſe: and therefore the Lord promiſeth *that his glory ſhall be knowne euery where*. But there is great weight in the word *Gentiles*: for at that time the Lord was onely knowne of the *Iewes*; but now hee hath manifeſted himſelfe vnto *all*.

Verſ. 20. *And they ſhall bring all your brethren for an offering vnto the Lord, out of all nations vpon horſes, and in chariots, and in horſelitters, and vpon mules, and ſwift beaſts, to Ieruſalem mine holy mountaine, ſaith the Lord, as the children of Iſrael offer in a cleane veſſell in the houſe of the Lord.*

HEere hee cleerely expounds that which was ſaid before; namely, that all thoſe which ſhall eſcape and ſuruiue the reſt, ſhall bee (notwithſtanding their ſmall number) *Prieſts vnto God*, and ſhall bring *ſacrifices* vnto him from all parts. Now he alludes to the ancient ceremony of the Law, though he therewithall ſhewes the difference which ſhould be betweene theſe oblations, and the ſacrifices ordained by the Law: for heere he inſtitutes *new ſacrifices, and a new prieſthood*. And as he affirmed that all nations ſhould be gathered, verſ.18. ſo now he ſhewes, that the Prieſts by him eſtabliſhed, ſhall not trauaile in vaine, becauſe the Lord will adde a gracious iſſue vnto their labours. An expoſition of the amplification.

He calles them *brethren*, who were ſtrangers before: wherein hee hath reſpect to that new coniunction which is made by faith. Others draw another ſenſe from this place, which I doe not altogether reiect; namely, that when God ſhall gather a new people from among the Gentiles, then the Iewes, who were ſcattered here & there, ſhould be gathered together againe: which alſo came to paſſe. But yet this ſeemes to agree better, if we referre it to the vocation of the Gentiles, in regard that the differēce being thē taken away, *a brotherly coniunction* beganne to be betweene all thoſe whom the Lord had purpoſed to adopt vnto himſelfe for his children.

Abraham was the father of *one nation*, and yet all that deſcended from him after the fleſh, were not reputed his children: for the *Iſhmaelites* and the *Idumeans* were reiected. He was then a father of *many nations*, Gen.17. 5. *when God adopted and ioined vnto him by couenant the Gentiles*; to the end they ſhould follow the faith of *Abraham*. Thus we ſee wherefore the Lord calles vs thē *brethren of the Iewes*; whereas before we were ſtrangers and farre remote from the Church of God: for before hee did *caſt out* the falſe brethren and reprobates from their place. Gentiles become brethren of the Iewes.

We are to note this fruit which iſſueth from the labours of ſuch as indeuour to ſerue the Lord faithfully; namely, that they thereby reclaime their brethren from all pernicious errors, to bring them to God, who is the fountaine of life. And this conſolation ought to cheere them vp, and to fortifie them euen in the midſt of all the calamities and afflictions which are incident vnto them. The Lord will not ſuffer one of his to periſh. Happy is our condition then, when after a ſort he makes vs *ſauiours* of our brethren.

From all nations.] His meaning is, that there ſhall bee no more difference betweene Iew and Gentile: becauſe God will breake downe the partition wall, and will ſet vp his Church in all nations. Thus was that ſaying of *Dauid* in Pſalm.2.8. touching Chriſt, accompliſhed: Aske of me, and I will giue thee *the Heathen* for thine inheritance, and the *vttmoſt bounds* of the earth for thy poſſeſſion.

In

In that hee mentions the *holy mountaine:* he applies himſelfe to the cuſtome of thoſe times. For God was worſhipped in ẏ Temple at *Ieruſalem.* But the Temple hath now ſpread
1. *Tim.* 2. 8. it ſelfe over all the world, in reſpect that it is lawfull for all men in al places to lift vp pure hands vnto God: ſo as all difference of place and perſons is now remooued and taken away. He ſpeakes alſo of *the oblations, and ſacrifices* which were offered in the temple: though the ſacrifices which wee are now to offer bee much different from thoſe of that time. But it was requiſit that ẏ Prophets ſhould borrow ſimilitudes from things then commonly in vſe; as we haue often ſaid. Vnder the Law, they offered *brute beaſts:* but the Apoſtles and other Prieſts of Chriſt haue *ſacrificed reaſonable men:* and haue offered them *liuing*
Rom. 15, 16. *ſacrifices* by the preaching of the Goſpell: Rom. 15. 16. The Apoſtle teſtifies that hee performed this office by offering vp the Gentiles, through the ſword of the Goſpell: that they might be an acceptable oblation vnto God ſanctified by the holy Ghoſt. It is *no legall Prieſthood* then: *nor like to that of the Papiſts,* which [illegible] touching the offering vp of Chriſt. But it is the Goſpell, by which men are mortified; that being renued by the holy ſpirit, they may be offered vp vnto God. Beſides, euery one offers vp himſelfe in vowing and dedicating themſelues to Gods ſeruice: and in yeelding him ſincere obedience, which is that reaſonable ſeruice whereof S. *Paul* ſpeakes in Rom. 12. 1. Thus the end of our vocation is here ſet before vs: namely, that all filthineſſes being purged away, and being dead to our ſelues, we may in the next place learne to loue and follow holineſſe.

The end of our vocation.

Some ſeeke out allegories vpon theſe words *charets,* and *horſes;* and they thinke the Prophet hath vſed the verb *ſhall bring,* in regard the Goſpel neither conſtraines nor terrifies men, but rather allures them ſweetlie; ſo as they come willingly vnto God, and haſten vnto him with ioyfull and glad hearts.

Obiect.

But I willingly expound this place without ſuch curioſitie: for in regard this ſcruple might come in the minds of many; How is it poſſible for ſtrangers ſo farre remote to come vnto vs? He anſwers, that *horſes, charets,* and *litters,* ſhould not be wanting vnto them. For the Lord hath many meanes at hand, to furniſh his ſeruants withall, and to bring them to his purpoſed end. Furthermore, I denie not, but the Goſpell may be called *a chariot,* in regard it brings vs to the hope of eternall life: but yet me thinkes the Prophet meant ſimplie to ſay, That no impediment ſhould be able to withhold the Lord from gathering in his Church. Alſo that he ſhall haue meanes readie, that not one of the elect which hee was pleaſed to cal, ſhuld faint in the mid way.

Anſ.

Verſ. 21. *And I will take of them for Prieſts, and for Leuits, ſaith the Lord.*

THe Prophet amplifies that which he hath alreadie ſaid touching this extraordinary grace of God. He hath already ſhewed that the Church of God ſhould be gathered out of all nations: ſo as in deſpite of all impediments and difficulties that might be oppoſed, yet the nations farre off ſhuld be brought to the holy mountaine. Now he paſſeth on further, and teacheth that the Gentiles ſhould be aduanced to a ſoueraigne degree of honour, beſides their adoption. It was much that they had attained vnto alreadie; to wit, that prophane people ſhould be receiued in among the holy people: but now behold here a thing more admirable, to ſee them exalted into ſo ſupreme a degree of dignitie. Hence we may perceiue that the Prieſthood vnder Chriſt, differs much from that which was vnder the Law. For vnder it only *one tribe* was admitted to offer ſacrifices: Exod. 28. 1. The Gentiles were reiected as vncleane, neither durſt they once enter into the Temple: ſo farre was it off that they might bee permitted to be *Prieſts.* But now all are indifferently receiued.

Great difference betweene the Prieſthood vnder Chriſt, and that vnder the law.

Some expound this place generally, That the Gentiles ſhall be Prieſts: that is to ſay, ſhall offer themſelues to God; for ſo the ſcriptures in many places calles all by the name of a *royall Prieſthood:* Exod. 19. 6. 1. Pet. 2. 9. Reu. 1. 6. and 5. 10. Yet it ſeemes hee ſhould eſpecially note out the Miniſters and teachers here, whom God ſhould choſe out from among the Gentiles; and ordaine them to execute that noble and excellent office: namely to preach the Goſpell. As for example, *Luke, Timothie,* and the reſt, who offered vnto God by the Goſpell ſpirituall ſacrifices.

Verſ. 22. *For as the new heauens, and the new earth which I will make, ſhall remaine before mee, ſaith the Lord, ſo ſhall your ſeed and your name continue.*

HEere hee promiſeth that the Church ſhal be ſo reſtored, that it ſhall indure for euer: for many might feare that ſhe would be laid waſte the ſecond time. Her eſtate then ſhall be *perpetuall,* after God ſhall haue once againe reſtored her: for which cauſe, he mentions two excellent benefits; to wit, *reſtauration,* and *eternitie.*

When hee ſpeakes of the *new heauens,* and *new earth,* hee hath reſpect vnto Chriſts kingdome, by whom all things are renued: as the Apoſtle ſhewes in Heb. 9. 8. 13. Now this renuēt hath this end; namely, that the church might continue alwaies in her happy and floriſhing eſtate: for that which is *old,* tends to ruine; but things which are *new* made and renued, are to laſt long.

God had promiſed that as long as the Sun and Moone ſhould remaine in the heauens, they ſhould be witneſſes of the eternall ſucceſſion of *Dauids* poſteritie, which ſhould neuer faile: Pſal. 89. 36, 37. But in reſpect that by the diſloyaltie and vnthankfulneſſe of this people which came betweene, there was ſome interruption: the reſtauration wrought by Chriſt hath really confirmed this propheſie.

The promiſe recorded in Pſal. 89. 36. 37. really confirmed by Chriſt.

fie. *Iſaiah* therfore rightly affirmes that their *ſonnes, and their ſonnes ſonnes* ſhould ſucceed. And as God hath eſtabliſhed the world, that it ſhould neuer periſh: ſo ſhall the ſucceſſion of the Church be perpetuall, that it ſhall endure from age to age. In a word, he explanes that which he had ſaid before touching the renuing of the world: leſt any man ſhould thinke he referres this to *trees, beaſts* or to the courſe of the ſtarres: for it ought rather to be applied to the renuement of the inward man. The ancient fathers haue miſſed the marke, whileſt they imagined that theſe things appertained precisely to the laſt iudgement, and haue neither weighed the ſcope of the text, nor the Apoſtles authoritie. And yet I denie not but we may extend theſe things to the laſt day, becauſe we cannot expect the *perfect reſtauration of all things, vntill Chriſt, who is the life of the world, ſhall appeare.* But we muſt begin higher, namely, at this deliuerance, by which Chriſt regenerates his, that they may bee new creatures: as it is in 2. Cor. 7. 1.

To what this renument ought chiefly to be referred.

Verſ. 23. *And from moneth to moneth, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, ſhall all fleſh come to worſhip before mee, ſaith the Lord.*

THe Prophet ſhewes againe what difference there ſhould bee betweene Gods *ſpirituall* worſhippe, ſuch as it ſhould be vnder the kingdome of Chriſt; and the *carnall*, which was vnder the Law. *Euery moneth* in the new Moone they ſacrificed; then there were Sabbaths, and other feaſts, and ſolemne daies appointed, which they carefully kept. But vnder the kingdome of Chriſt, there ſhall be *a perpetuall* and continuall ſolemnitie. For there is no more any certaine daies aſſigned to ſacrifice this or that in Ieruſalem, verſ. 19. But our feaſts, offerings, and daies of reioicing, haue a continuall courſe from day to day. In the meane while, hee alludes to the ancient cuſtome of the ſacrifices: and we haue ſeene in many places heeretofore, that theſe phraſes of ſpeech are very familiar with the Prophets. Thus then God would haue vs to offer him ſacrifices in righteouſneſſe daily: not at ſet times onely, nor ſuch as were offered vnder the Law, or according to theirs among the Papiſts, who now fondly reſt in their ceremonies, as if their ſinnes were aboliſhed by ſuch baggage; where with a deſperate ſhameleſneſſe, they dare brag that they ſacrifice Chriſt himſelfe. But of vs God requires ſpirituall ſacrifices: that is to ſay, that we honor and worſhip him with a pure and ſincere worſhip.

What ſacrifices God requires of vs.

Whereas ſome would prooue from this place, that the Law and ancient ceremonies are aboliſhed; mee thinks it hath but little ground. I grant that theſe legall ceremonies are aboliſhed, and it may bee ſo collected frō this place: but were I to proue this point, I would chuſe out other teſtimonies of greater weight. For he makes heere an oppoſition onely betweene the *Sabbaths*, and feaſt daies, which they ſolemnized vnder the Law, and *that perpetuall Sabbath* which is now celebrated.

Verſ. 24. *And they ſhall goe forth, and looke vpon the carkaſes of men that haue tranſgreſſed againſt mee: for their worme ſhall not die, neither ſhall their fire be quenched, and they ſhall be an abhorring to all fleſh.*

WEe neede not ſeeke out heere any far fetched interpretations. For in plaine termes hee admoniſheth thoſe which ſhould be gathered into the Church, that *round about them, they ſhall behold the ſtarefull vengeance of God.* His meaning is not that theſe calamities ſhall breake in among the troope of the faithfull; for it ſhould much leſſen the felicitie of the Church: vpon which God manifeſts all ſorts of teſtimonies of ioy and gladneſſe. But, as formerly he hath ſpoken of that perpetuall *glory* wherewith God will beautifie his choſen; ſo now he ſhewes what *puniſhments* the wicked ſhall indure, that the faithfull might bee the more carefull to hold themſelues in the feare of God.

Whereas he threatens them to be *tormented with fire*; I haue told you heeretofore, that this is a figuratiue kind of ſpeech, which alſo cleerely appeares by the other part of this verſe: for there ſhall come no *wormes* out of the earth, *to gnaw* the hearts of the vnbeleeuers. The plaine meaning is then, that mens euill conſciences ſhall play the tormentors to vex them continually, and that a more fearefull torment is prepared for them, then all torments (in the world) beſides. In a word, that they ſhall be affrighted, and cruelly diſquieted, after an horrible maner: as if a *worme* ſhould lie gnawing at the heart of a man: or as if a *fire* ſhould euer burne him, and yet they ſhould neuer die. Now in reſpect that the wicked are heere aduanced to great honours, from whence they ſcorne the godly, and *trample them* vnder their feete: therefore the Prophet denounceth againſt them, *a terrible change*, namely, that they ſhall bee inwrapped with *extreame ignominie*, with vnſpeakable torments. For it is good reaſon that ſuch as haue contemned and ſcorned Gods glory, ſhould be couered ouer with all reproches, and made abominable both to Angels, and to all the world.

Now vnto God onely wiſe, be honour, and glory, for euer and euer, Amen.

FINIS.

A Table of such places as are alleaged in this Commentarie, out of the old and new Testament.

The first numbers direct to the places alleaged: the second, to the Chapter and Verse in the Prophecie, where they are to be found.

Genesis.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
1	1	43	13
		45	12
	2	45	18
		41	29
		48	13
	7	45	12
	26	6	8
	27	17	7
		30	23
	28	65	25
2	9	38	7
	15	45	12
		51	3
	19	34	16
3	5	14	14
	6	43	27
	16	65	23
	17	24	6
	18	*Ibid.*	
	22	16	3
	23	51	3
4	7	59	12
	11	26	21
	13	26	11
	26	43	22
6	5	22	13
		42	25
7	12	24	17
	15	34	16
9	9	45	18
	11	55	9
	13	38	7
			21
10	11	23	13
11	5	63	19
	7	*Ibid.*	
	29	19	21
	31	37	12
		41	2
		44	7
12	3	14	30
		49	24
	7	41	2
	17	14	27
		29	22
		34	16
		41	2
			4
13	18	41	2
14	6	21	2
	15	41	2
	16	29	22
		41	4
	17	41	5
15	1	25	9
	1	37	23
	5	45	25
		51	1
		55	3
		56	3
	13	48	3
	14	45	4
16	2	51	1
17	1	23	18
		58	2
	5	51	1
		66	20
	7	14	32
		37	23
		41	
		45	25
		55	3
	8	63	18
18	21	34	5
		3	9
	20	6	8
		63	19
	23	65	8
19	24	1	9
		13	19
		26	11
		34	9
	37	15	1
20	2	22	21
	3	14	17
		34	16
		38	4
		41	2
	14	29	22
	16	4	1
	18	41	4
21	10	4	1
22	1	6	8
	2	57	5
	10	37	38
		66	3
	12	57	5
	16	57	5
	17	10	22
		48	19
		56	3
		51	1
		61	9
	18	42	6
		60	3
			23

THE TABLE.

Genesis.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
23	6	41	2
25	1	19	21
	13	21	11
	22	4	1
	25	44	2
27	30	26	11
		28	19
30	20	65	11
32	10	26	12
30	28	1	3
		48	1
36	8	11	14
		34	5
		6	31
37	13	6	8
39	5	65	8
46	6	52	4
47	30	38	16
48	4	8	21
		63	18
	16	4	1

Exod.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
1	11	45	7
	14	10	24
2	11	51	8
	23	45	7
3	6	8	14
		38	10
	8	32	13
	12	37	30
	14	47	8
	15	55	3
	17	32	13
4	22	14	2
		43	4
5	3	52	12

Exodvs.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
7	13	26	10
	20	43	19
8	15	2	17
		28	16
	27	52	12
9	21	2	17
	34	2	17
10	22	43	19
		50	3
12	3	38	7
	13	66	19
	29	73	36
		43	16
	23	4	5
	31	52	12
	51	11	11
		42	24
		48	8
13	9	43	16
	21	4	5
		16	3
		38	7
		49	10
14	4	33	21
	4	43	21
	21	11	15
		23	11
		43	16
		50	2
		51	15
	22	55	12
	27	52	4
	28	10	26
		43	1
	29	17	16
		44	27
		63	13
15	1	51	
16	35	49	10
17	2	63	10
	6	48	21
		49	10
18	21	32	1
19	6	1	9

Exodvs.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
			11
		17	7
		1	21
		41	8
			14
		43	14
		61	1
		66	21
19	20	2	3
20	1	25	9
	2	43	18
	4	36	10
	5	10	15
		42	8
	5	14	21
	8	58	13
	24	45	13
		37	26
		56	7
22	22	1	17
	27	10	2
23	8	1	23
		5	23
25	17	6	2
		38	15
27	1	17	8
28	1	66	21
29	13	53	10
	24	60	6
30	25	43	24
31	12	56	2
	15	56	2
32	13	64	8
	32	4	3
33	1	55	3
	9	6	4
34	6	9	19
		28	21
		30	13
	7	14	21
	30	29	12

Levit.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	Vers.	Chap.	Vers.
4	4	53	10
6	13	2	7
8	29	60	6
10	1	6	7
11	7	65	4
18	5	53	11
19	17	1	11
23	39	54	2
25	20	61	2
26	3	30	23
		34	16
	8	17	9
	10	65	22
	11	66	1
	12	24	5
	16	24	6
	22	65	23
	26	3	1
	36	*In the preface.*	

Numb.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	Vers.	Chap.	Vers.
11	1	63	10
12	6	1	1
14	14	16	3
15	38	57	8
20	3	63	10
	12	43	27
21	8	38	7
	9	11	10
23	10	38	10
	19	26	19
	23	3	2
24	23	29	19
33	55	14	28

Devt.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	Vers.	Chap.	Vers.
2	33	17	2
4	7	5	13
	12	40	18
	33	50	2
	37	41	8
5	32	30	21
5	9	14	21
6	3	32	13
	5	1	11
		65	10
	8	49	16
	9	57	8
	13	19	18
3	7	41	9
	8	63	9
9	5	41	9
10	12	1	4
11	11	30	20
	20	57	8
12	13	1	29
	18	9	3
		62	9
13	3	57	11
14	8	65	4
16	19	1	23
		5	23
17	16	2	7
		19	17
		30	1
	20	30	21
18	10	30	21
	11	8	19
		44	25
		65	4
	15	41	27
	17	*In the preface.*	
24	1	50	1
28	11	1	19
	15	24	6

Devt.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	Vers.	Chap.	Vers.
	25	3	12
	28	18	22
		22	2
		43	28
	30	65	22
	39	17	10
	33	62	8
	37	19	17
		43	28
	48	65	23
	62	30	17
	64	16	4
	65	65	23
	66	*In the preface.*	
	67	21	12
29	4	63	17
30	3	43	5
	4	*In the pref.*	
		11	12
	12	30	16
		48	17
		55	10
	19	48	17
		53	11
32	1	1	2
		5	1
		34	1
	4	24	16
		26	7
	9	19	24
	11	31	5
		46	3
		63	9
	13	49	11
	15	5	2
		44	2
		63	8
	21	55	6
	27	48	11
	29	27	11
		48	18
	30	17	9
		42	24

Ioshv.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	Vers.	Chap.	Vers.
3	16	11	16
		43	16
		50	2
		55	12
			10

THE TABLE.

Ioshv.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
10	10	28	21
	13	30	26
23	2	29	22
		43	27

Ivdges.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
6	17	7	12
		38	7
	36	38	7
	37	7	12
7	16	9	4
	19	9	4
	22	49	26
	25	10	26
13	22	6	5

1. Sam.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
4	1	1	1
3	15	1	1
4	11	26	2
9	9	1	1
		21	6
10	10	48	14
25	12	1	12
			29
		38	3
		65	4
			11
16	11	11	1
24	4	7	20

2. Sam.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
5	20	28	21
	25	28	21
7	12	9	7
		10	27
		22	22
		55	3
		62	12
	13	29	1
	14	9	6
		37	35
		64	8
24	14	27	7

1. King.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
1	2	22	15
2	10	38	10
4	25	62	8
5	1	23	12
8	27	42	22
	30	6	1
	33	56	7
10	21	61	9
	27	61	9
11	7	15	2
		16	12
	11	9	1
	14	45	7
	36	7	2
12	28	22	23
17	1	38	7
19	11	2	22
	18	45	23
20	23	14	25
22	21	19	14
		41	13

2. King.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
3	5	16	1
	6	16	1
10	27	30	40
15	5	6	1
16	2	32	1
	5	7	1
	9	7	16
	11	8	2
17	1	7	16
18	4	36	1
			10
	11	9	1
		37	12
	14	33	7
		36	2
	17	7	3
		20	1
	27	7	3
		20	1
	37	22	15
19	2	22	15
	12	37	12
	28	43	3
	35	14	25
		22	3
		30	25
		31	8
20	8	38	7
			22
	11	30	26
21	13	28	17
		34	11
23	10	30	33

1. Chro.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
14	11	28	21

2. Chro.		*Chap.* *Vers.*	
Chap.	*Vers.*	Isaiah.	
26	21	6	1
30	5	36	1
32	31	39	1

Ezra.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
3	8	58	12
6	8	45	14

Nehem.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
2	8	45	14

Hester.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
4	3	6	3
7	10	22	17

Ioe.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	Verſ.	Chap.	Verſ.
1	1	59	15
5	13	31	2
		47	10
7	1	16	14
	14	38	15
9	15	38	15
12	18	11	5
		22	21
		45	1
13	15	26	8
	24	38	15
14	5	38	5
	6	16	14
26	12	51	15
29	37	38	15

Psalme.		Isaiah.	
	Verſ.	Chap.	Verſ.
1	5	37	7
		41	16
2	1	54	15
	7	42	7
	7	9	6
	8	42	7
		66	20
	9	42	3
	10	49	23
		60	16
	11	49	23
		60	16
5	9	45	13
6	4	38	13
		24	16
	7	38	3
7	9	38	3
	10	24	6
	15	10	1
	16	33	11
		59	5
	18	45	8
9	16	59	5

Psalme.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	Verſ.	Chap.	Verſ.
11	7	14	5
		24	16
12	7	45	19
14	1	40	27
	3	53	6
15	1	11	9
	2	48	2
	5	57	6
17	3	38	3
18	2	38	9
	8	48	21
	10	63	19
	26	24	4
	27	13	9
		14	29
19	5	28	10
	9	6	10
	11	66	2
22	10	44	24
	11	46	3.4
	18	38	13
	19	50	4
	27	45	13
23	4	26	8
24	3	11	9
	4	48	2
25	3	54	4
27	1	38	9
	8	38	11
30	6	64	4
	7	38	17
	10	38	10
31	20	30	26
		55	1
32	6	55	6
	9	30	28
33	3	42	10
	9	48	13
	11	14	27

Psalme.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	Verſ.	Chap.	Verſ.
	10	22	9
	22	33	2
34	11	33	16
	17	14	20
36	7	30	23
37	1	26	14
		45	16
	3	44	20
	5	26	7
		63	16
	15	33	11
38	4	38	13
39	2	3	10
	10	38	2
			15
40	7	50	5
41	2	16	4
42	3	38	11
45	8	11	2
	13	1	8
46	5	8	7
		45	13
	6	33	21
		45.	13,13
	10	32	18
47	3	48	13
48	2	14	13
49	15	50	9
50	10	66	2
	13	1	11
	14	34	7
	15	38	4
		43	22
		56	15
	23	12	2
		56	7
51	17	35	5
	19	66	2
53	4	53	6

THE TABLE.

Psalme.	Verf.	Isaiah. Chap.	Verf.
55	22	11	8
56	7	60	9
57	7	33	11
58	11	41	15
59	11	40	6
62	10	40	17
63	2	55	2
63	4	26	1
65	2	29	23
	4	45	24
66	12	43	2
68	19	53	12
69	10	22	4
71	9	46	4
72	3	45	8
73	1	60	21
	3	38	10
	13	13	13
	17	24	16
		26	14
74	1	14	1
	9	40	15
77	2	25	6
		26	10
		42	1
		45	14
		48	13
		54	5
78	28	57	16
	39	2	22
		57	16
	70	11	1
79	2	14	18
	12	65	6
80	9	3	13
		5	1
			7
81	6	33	19
82	1	3	13
			14
	6	14	10
83	14	9	18
		10	3
84	11	45	8
	12	4	2
86	4	51	9
87	7	44	5
89	5	12	27
		19	1
	26	11	14
	37	29	1
		38	5
		66	22
	38	38	5
		66	22
90	4	43	19
	5	46	5
	9	65	20
	10	23	15
		65	20
91	11	26	7
		37	36
		62	6
93	1	54	10
94	17	6	5
95	8	30	8
96	1	42	10
	4	36	18
			19
97	2	6	4
99	5	60	13
101	5	2	11
102	15	66	10
	19	29	23
		51	18
	24	53	18
	27	51	6
			8
	29	37	26
		51	8
		54	10
103	5	40	31
	11	55	8
	12	38	17
	13	57	16
	14	57	16
	15	40	6
		57	16
		64	5
	17	51	8
104	2	40	22
	3	19	1
	23	5	11
	29	2	22
	30	32	15
		40	7
		44	3
			4
105	14	41	2
			4
107	33	45	18
110	3	1	7
	6	42	3
112	6	14	20
	9	32	8
114	3	43	20
	4	43	20
		55	12
115	3	66	1
	8	41	29
	17	38	18
116	10	26	19
	12	24	15
	15	26	21
	16	4	1
118	8	31	3
	18	21	17
			22

THE TABLE.

Psalme.		Isaiah.	
	Verſ.	Chap.	Verſ.
	22	8	14
119	103	66	2
	105	6	10
	24	39	3
120	5	63	18
121	4	5	27
	6	4	6
123	2	7	1
125	3	63	17
126	1	49	7
		66	8
	5	25	8
		30	19
127	2	71	11
		47	13
		57	9
	5	3	4
		48	19
128	2	17	11
		62	9
129	3	51	23
	6	37	27
	8	37	27
130	3	33	16
132	1	63	17
	7	60	13
	8	66	1
	11	22	22
	14	11	10
		29	1
		30	4
		37	10
		26	35
		45	13
		66	1
137	4	26	1
	5	33	20
	6	52	1
	8	1	8
	9	13	18
138	6	57	15

Psalme.		Isaiah.	
	Verſ.	Chap.	Verſ.
	8	22	11
		16	12
		46	4
139	7	24	21
141	2	37	4
142	6	12	3
		44	3
		55	2
144	15	51	21
145	8	9	10
	10	1	15
146	3	31	3
	4	31	3
147	2	56	8
		60	4
	4	40	16
	9	26	7
	20	19	24

Prov.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	Verſ.	Chap.	Verſ.
1	7	19	11
		27	11
		33	6
9	10	33	6
10	1	29	22
	7	14	20
14	13	51	11
	16	59	15
16	1	26	7
	12	22	23
17	22	76	13
21	30	8	9
25	5	22	23
29	18	3	4
30	19	9	14

Eccles.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	Verſ.	Chap.	Verſ.
8	11	2	11
		24	16
		28	24
10	12	5	11

Ierem.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	Verſ.	Chap.	Verſ.
1	5	49	1
	6	6	11
	10	47	1
	18	50	7
2	11	44	14
	21	3	13
		5	1
3	1	30	1
	2	57	5
4	31	22	4
7	4	1	11
		8	18
		22	3
		29	1
		64	10
	11	56	7
	13	65	2
	21	1	11
	21	22	4
10	8	40	18
	14	2	8
	23	26	7
	24	27	8
		30	18
		64	8
11	7	65	2
	21	30	10
17	1	30	8
		65	6
	5	2	22
		9	6
		31	3
		36	6
			10
		57	13
18	12	57	10
19	6	30	33
			22

THE TABLE.

Ierem.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
22	19	14	18
23	7	43	18
	24	66	1
	36	13	1
24	6	49	16
	9	18	2
25	15	51	17
27	10	2	4
30	11	30	18
31	25	29	22
	34	11	9
32	18	14	21
		65	6
35	14	65	2
43	2	30	10
48	2	25	10
	7	15	2
	13	15	2
	14	16	6
	32	16	8
			9
	34	15	5

Lament.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
1	4	32	10
	7	30	10
	20	41	27
2	5	29	2
	7	32	10
3	22	1	9
	29	29	22
		52	8
	38	41	23

Ezek.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
3	8	50	7
8	3	48	5
16	3	1	4
		57	3
	26	30	1
18	2	50	1
	20	14	21
		43	27
		65	7
	21	31	6
20	21	26	13
	22	56	2
	24	26	13
	29	57	6
26	2	23	1
33	31	48	1
34	4	56	11
	23	2	4
	24	2	4
36	22	37	35
		43	25
	25	1	16
		44	3
37	12	9	2
	24	2	4
		9	7
		37	35
		45	1
	25	2	4
43	15	29	1
45	22	53	10
47	1	2	3

Daniel.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
1	6	66	13
2	14	46	11
5	2	45	9
	28	21	7
	30	13	12
		47	11
		21	4
7	27	9	7

Daniel.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
		16	5
9	2	40	1
	24	10	23
			27

Hosea.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
1	7	27	12
	10	9	2
		56	3
		57	19
2	2	44	9
		57	5
	5	2	20
	18	11	6
		35	9
	19	1	21
	20	56	6
		61	10
		62	4
3	4	3	2
	5	37	35
		45	1
4	15	57	5
6	6	1	18
		58	9
		61	8
12	1	55	2
13	11	3	4

Ioel.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
1	14	20	2
		58	5
2	13	22	12
	28	19	19
	31	13	13
	32	4	3
		14	22

Amos.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
1	3	17	3
3	6	41	22
			7

THE TABLE.

Amos.	Isaiah.
Chap. Vers.	Chap. Vers.
1 7	41 23
11	7 8
4 1	17 4
	28 1
5 10	21 21
11	5 9
18	66 5
19	24 17
6 11	51 9
8 11	30 21
9 11	9 7

Ionah.	Isaiah.
Chap. Vers.	Chap. Vers.
1 2	14 27
	34 16
	38 4
3 4	38 4
10	14 27

Miche.	Isaiah.
Chap. Vers.	Chap. Vers.
1 11	10 2
2 11	30 10
5 10	2 13
6 7	1 11
7 9	26 20
16	29 22
18	38 17

Nahvm.	Isaiah.
Chap. Vers.	Chap. Vers.
3 8	19 13
15	34 4

Habac.	Isaiah.
Chap. Vers.	Chap. Vers.
1 16	10 10
	45 3
	36 18
2 1	18 4
	26 20
2 8	1

Habac.	Chap. Vers.
Chap. Vers.	Isaiah.
11	34 14
18	40 18
3 2	36 18
	19
	47 6
	60 10
	64 11
14	40 3
	45 1

Soph.	Isaiah.
Chap. Vers.	Chap. Vers.
1 5	8 21

Haggai.	Isaiah.
Chap. Vers.	Chap. Vers.
1 4	44 28
2 4	9 3
7	43 19
10	54 2
	1
14	1 16

Zacha.	Isaiah.
Chap. Vers.	Chap. Vers.
1 12	62 7
15	47 6
2 5	54 2
8	14 14
	16 4
12	4 2
13 4	20 2

Mala.	Isaiah.
Chap. Vers.	Chap. Vers.
1 4	34 11
4	23 17
4	34 10
6	46 3
11	19 19
2 7	42 19
4 2	25 7
	54 2
	60 3
14	40 1

Mat.	Isaiah.
Chap. Vers.	Chap. Vers.
1 15	16 1

Matth.	Isaiah.
Chap. Vers.	Chap. Vers.
2 24	7 14
2 11	60 6
4 14	19 1
3 2	6 10
3	40 3
12	26 2
	66 21
12	18 6
16	6 1
	42 3
4 14	9 2
5 10	16 5
11	16 5
13	28 7
44	41 15
45	5 2
	13 10
	30 26
6 8	37 14
23	28 7
	29 14
21	12 6
24	39 8
7 2	16 3
	2 12
	30 31
	41 15
7	55 6
11	49 15
23	43 1
8 4	42 2
16	53 4
	1 18
9 13	58 9
	61 8
38	49 17
10 1	60 10
5	6 1
27	22 1
28	2 22
29	45 12
11 5	11 4
5	35 5
19	41 26
	27

THE TABLE.

Matth. Chap.	Matth. Vers.	Isaiah. Chap.	Isaiah. Vers.
	27	2	5
	28	11	4
		28	12
		50	4
		61	1
11	30	30	6
		42	3
12	7	50	9
		61	8
		1	18
	17	42	1
	29	49	24
	39	42	3
13	25	11	18
15	7	29	13
	9	29	13
	13	60	21
	14	8	20
16	18	49	16
	19	22	22
17	21	58	5
19	7	50	1
	11	19	21
	12	19	21
20	13	56	7
21	23	29	21
	43	65	2
	44	8	15
22	2	25	6
	17	29	21
	18	43	3
	23	26	19
	37	26	9
23	13	42	3
	23	1	18
	37	31	05
25	1	43	1
26	66	53	9
27	12	53	7
	14	53	7
	31	50	4

Matth. Chap.	Matth. Vers.	Isaiah. Chap.	Isaiah. Vers.
	51	56	7
		65	24
28	18	14	2
		61	6

Marke. Chap.	Marke. Vers.	Isaiah. Chap.	Isaiah. Vers.
1	3	40	3
4	32	11	1
5	43	42	2
11	17	56	7
12	10	8	14
15	14	53	9
	28	33	12
16	15	2	3
		56	3
		65	2
	20	10	22
		60	8

Luke. Chap.	Luke. Vers.	Isaiah. Chap.	Isaiah. Vers.
1	34	9	7
		16	5
	35	53	2
	75	9	7
		32	16
		43	21
2	7	1	3
	46	2	3
	50	7	15
3	4	40	3
	17	18	6
	18	61	1
6	25	12	2
7	35	41	26
10	16	7	13
11	17	11	3
	22	49	24
12	32	1	9
		44	2

Luke. Chap.	Luke. Vers.	Isaiah. Chap.	Isaiah. Vers.
13	17	1	21
16	15	45	20
		55	8
	29	8	20
17	27	22	13
18	7	26	21
21	18	47	6
	19	38	10
22	25	13	2
	37	2	4
23	30	12	21
24	47	2	3
		45	14

John. Chap.	John. Vers.	Isaiah. Chap.	Isaiah. Vers.
1	13	49	21
	14	25	9
	16	11	2
		12	3
		55	1
	18	9	6
		25	9
	23	40	3
	29	40	3
		53	7
	32	6	1
		42	3
2	22	43	10
3	14	11	10
	16	12	5
		45	22
	29	5	1
4	10	55	1
	12	5	16
	22	25	9
		45	14
	23	46	2
		56	7
		66	23
	24	6	1
		66	1
5	29	26	19
	33	50	11

THE TABLE.

IOHN.		ISAIAH.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
6	27	49	5
	44	6	10
		8	18
	45	50	5
		54	13
7	12	50	6
8	6	29	21
	36	35	10
		42	22
		43	8
		53	6
		61	1
	44	41	22
10	3	45	3
	16	42	4
		49	17
		59	20
	27	11	12
	28	8	18
	29	40	12
12	35	55	6
	37	53	1
	38	53	1
	39	6	10
	41	6	1,10
	48	55	11
13	3	42	1
14	6	22	22
		49	6
14	17	11	2
15	1	5	7
	2	5	7
	8	49	4
	15	9	6
		41	8
		43	4
16	8	2	4
	21	26	17
17	1	49	3
	3	9	11
	6	8	18
	10	42	1
	19	53	11
	20	53	17

IOHN.		ISAIAH.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
18	36	60	10
	38	53	4
19	16	53	9
	17	9	6
	24	50	4
	38	53	9
20	8	43	10
	22	6	1
	23	43	25
		63	12

ACTS.		ISAIAH.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
2	3	4	5
		6	1
	16	19	19
	41	43	8
3	12	48	5
	21	26	19
		35	1
		65	17
	22	*In the preface.*	
4	11	28	16
5	41	35	10
		51	8
7	2	37	12
		44	7
	4	37	12
	48	66	1
	51	43	27
8	22	37	4
10	24	56	3
	26	49	23
	27	1	1
13	5	1	1
	47	49	6
	48	8	18
		54	13
14	1	1	1
	14	49	23
	17	40	21
15	20	50	6

ACTS.		ISAIAH.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
17	2	1	1
	10	1	1
	24	66	1
	25	46	5
	28	10	5
		40	17
	29	40	18
18	4	1	1
	19	1	1
20	35	6	16
21	4	23	18
	28	56	5
23	8	29	12
		30	33
24	15	26	19
27	24	65	24
28	25	6	10
	27	6	10

ROMANS.		ISAIAH.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
1	5	55	5
	8	37	4
	17	10	22
	19	42	18
	20	38	11
		63	17
2	5	22	14
	15	58	1
	26	52	1
	27	50	8
3	2	61	9
	3	46	13
	12	35	6
	17	59	8
	20	53	11
	24	42	6
	26	45	25
	29	54	5
4	2	45	25
	15	53	11
	17	66	20
	18	36	15
		40	12
		43	14
			19

THE TABLE.

Romans.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
	19	40	12
		51	1
		56	3
	20	40	12
		56	3
	24	51	3
5	1	9	6
		28	16
		32	18
		45	24
		53	5
		56	7
		57	2
	2	45	24
	3	35	10
	10	53	11
	19	53	7,13
6	9	9	7
		53	8
7	14	10	1
8	3	53	10,11
	15	50	7
		66	7
	12	61	1
	22	38	10
	23	35	7
		45	15
	24	9	6
		36	15
	25	26	16
		38	2
			4
			14
	27	16	5
		26	19
		55	13
	29	8	18
	30	8	9
	31	51	12
	32	55	10
	33	50	8
	38	37	36
9	3	17	12
	4	41	8
		56	7
	6	1	9
		43	6
	7	66	20
	18	63	17

Romans.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
	21	49	9
	22	13	5
		27	7
	25	9	2
		57	19
	28	10	23
	29	1	9
	33	8	14
		26	16
10	5	53	11
	8	55	6
			10
		53	11
	10	45	23
	12	49	6
	14	19	21
			22
		33	2
	15	62	7
		52	7
	16	53	1
	17	55	3
		65	11
	19	65	2
		66	18
	20	65	2
11	1	59	20
	4	45	23
	12	6	3
	17	5	7
	24	65	5
	25	66	18
	26	59	20
	29	19	25
		41	9
		59	20
	34	40	13
12	1	19	21
		60	6
		61	6
		66	20
	8	23	18
	20	11	14
13	1	16	5
		22	20
			23
	12	56	1
14	10	45	23
	11	19	18
		45	23

Romans.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
	17	1	11
		35	10
		56	7
15	6	12	1
	8	42	6
	16	11	4
		18	7
		61	6
		66	20
	21	52	15
16	9	53	8
	20	27	1
	27	55	5
		61	2

1. Cor.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Verſ.*	*Chap.*	*Verſ.*
1	20	33	18
2	9	64	3
3	2	54	13
	6	52	11
	7	55	10
		61	3
	10	54	12
	11	28	16
	12	54	12
	13	54	12
	16	61	1
	19	31	2
4	4	49	4
		50	8
	9	25	8
	11	65	13
	13	51	8
6	11	41	8
	19	52	11
7	7	19	21
	9	19	21
	29	38	16
8	4	41	24
9	16	40	6
10	11	2	2
	13	27	8
		45	11
11	3	4	1

THE TABLE.

1. Cor.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
	30	38	16
12	3	35	5
		48	16
	4	48	16
		61	1
	12	49	3
13	3	58	10
14	20	28	9
	21	28	13
15	32	22	13
	36	6	13
		26	19
		28	23

2. Cor.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
1	20	7	14
		9	6
	42	1	9
		63	17
2		16	11	4
		14	29
		49	5
		62	7
3	5	45	4
		49	17
	6	44	22
	7	55	3
	16	29	12
	18	2	2
4	3	49	19
	6	25	1
	8	40	31
	13	26	10
	17	26	20
		54	7
		61	7
5	15	18	7
	17	61	3
		66	22
	18	2	4
	20	53	11
		57	19
	21	53	10
6	2	49	8

2. Cor.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
	2	49	8
		61	2
	8	50	6
	16	44	28
	17	52	11
7	1	52	11
	10	22	13
9	7	23	18
		43	22
		56	5
	9	32	8
10	4	62	6
	6	11	4
11	2	5	1
	2	62	5
	14	36	10
12	7	39	5
	9	40	29
			31
	9	14	18
	10	14	18
13	4	53	12

Galat.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
1	8	8	20
	15	49	1
2	8	1	1
3	12	53	11
	13	53	10
	16	49	3
	24	65	20
4	4	49	8
		61	2
	6	56	57
	28	60	21
5	6	52	1
	22	58	6
6	1	11	2
	6	32	8
	10	28	13
	14	14	18
	16	45	25

Ephes.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
1	3	32	3
	4	24	1
		37	26
		41	8
		43	21
		49	1
		60	21
		61	3
	5	7	14
	6	46	13
	8	42	1
		54	10
	10	11	6
		49	5
		51	16
	12	60	21
	17	9	6
	21	37	36
	23	37	26
		45	14
2	2	10	6
	10	19	25
		27	11
		37	26
		43	1
			15
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		56	3
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		49	8
		66	22
		26	6
		45	20
	17	42	6
		46	8
		57	19
	18	65	24
	19	63	7
	21	6	13
3	9	49	6
	10	49	6
	12	45	24
		65	24
	17	45	24
	20	2	7
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	8	53	12
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	28	23	18
	30	63	10
5	14	9	2
	29	9	16
6	9	24	2
	12	9	6
	17	8	20

Philip.		Isaiah.	
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		26	12
		35	9
		40	31
2	6	42	1
		52	14
	8	53	7
			12
	9	53	8
	15	44	21
4	1	49	5
	4	22	13
	5	35	4
		55	6
	6	35	4
	7	32	18
		33	20
		61	7

Colos.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
1	13	6	1
		37	26
2	9	9	6
		33	6
	14	23	15
	23	1	14
			29
		19	21
3	1	6	7
	3	26	19
	15	9	6
		12	2
		61	7

1. Thes.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
2	19	49	5
4	7	44	20
5	3	15	1
		47	11
		29	17

2. Thes.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
1	6,7	51	23
		61	2
	8	66	15
2	3	54	9
	8	11	4
	9	41	23
	11	41	22
		44	18
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2	8	1	15
		56	7
		65	16
		66	20
3	15	40	9
		43	10
		49	3
		65	9
	16	2	4
			14
4	1	54	9
	8	30	23
		65	10
6	10	57	17
	15	37	15
	16	25	9

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Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
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	12	40	12
2	13	41	10
		64	11

2. Tim.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
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	25	2	6
3	16	30	8
		50	4

Titus.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
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	9	11	4

Hebr.		Isaiah.	
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	5	9	6
	14	62	6
		63	9
2	8	61	6
	13	8	18
	14	12	5
	17	42	1
4	9	66	23
	12	11	4
		49	2
	13	37	4
		41	25
		45	23
	15	7	15
		53	6
	16	65	25
5	4	49	1
6	16	45	23
		62	8
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	13	66	13
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	25	40	8
2	2	28	9
	4	8	15
	5	60	13
	5	60	6
		66	23
	6	28	16
	9	23	18
		41	8
		52	11
		61	6
		66	21
	9	43	21
		60	21
	22	53	6
	23	53	7
3	13	32	17
	14	8	12
4	11	21	10
	17	10	12
		13	1
		22	5
	18	21	11
5	5	16	7
	6	45	9
	7	1	17
		26	7
		41	27
		43	3

1. Pet.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
		60	19
		63	15

2. Pet.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
1	19	45	19
3	4	1	19
		38	16
	8	43	19
	18	11	9

1. Iohn.		Isaiah.	
Chap.	*Vers.*	*Chap.*	*Vers.*
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Ivde.		Isaiah.	
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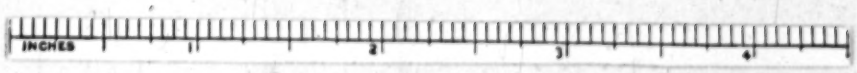
FINIS.

Faults eſcaped.

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